

# **GWENT POLICE**

## **STRESS POLICY**



Heddlu  
Gwent  
Police

### **SUMMARY**

The policy of Gwent Police is to be committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of our employees and to recognising that workplace stress is a health and safety issue, acknowledging the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

This policy will apply to all staff in Gwent Police and managers are responsible for implementation whilst the organisation will provide the necessary resources.

**PRINTED VERSIONS SHOULD NOT BE RELIED UPON. THE MOST UP TO DATE VERSION CAN BE FOUND ON THE INTRANET POLICIES SITE.**

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## 1.0 Policy Identification Page

**Policy Title: STRESS POLICY**

**Reference: 517/10 a issue 1**

**Policy Ownership:** Head of Human Resources

**Portfolio/Business Area Owner:** ACPO Operational Support

**Policy Written By:** Personnel Manager / Policy Officer

**Department Responsible:** Human Resources

**Policy Lead:** Personnel Manager

**Authorised by Policy Owner for submission to Strategic Committee**

**Policy Quality Assured by:** Head of Human Resources

**Links to other Policies/Procedures:**, Dignity at Work, Working Away from Police Premises, Lone Worker, Data Protection, Information Security, Health and Safety.

**Policy Implementation Date:** STCG 28<sup>th</sup> August 2007

**Policy:** two years from implementation

## 2.0 Policy Statement & Intentions

### 2.1 Principle & Scope of Policy:

The principle of this policy is to seek to comply with the below definition:-

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

The scope of the document will apply to all staff in Gwent Police with the following responsibilities.

#### **Managers**

Actions by managers to counter stress in their areas will include:-

- Conduct and implement recommendations from risks assessments within their jurisdiction. There is a requirement to complete a stress assessment for their areas.
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties.
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities.
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking. Monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.
- Attend training as requested in good management practice and health and safety.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their jurisdiction.
- Be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work e.g. bereavement or separation.
- Managers should consider referral to Occupational Health Unit.
- Consideration for support from the Minority Groups
- Consideration of the legal duty to make reasonable adjustments where the circumstances of the stress related illness is classified as a disability within the meaning of the Disability Discrimination Act. Advice in relation to this should be sought from Human Resources.
- Advice should be sought from Human Resources in relation to Stress and Disability related leave, and Disability related sickness recording.

### **Occupational health and safety staff**

- Provide specialist advice and awareness training on stress.
- Train and support managers in implementing stress risk assessments.
- Support individuals who have been off sick with stress and advise them and their management on a planned return to work.
- Refer to workplace counsellors or specialist agencies as required.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to reduce stress.
- Inform the employer and the health and safety committee of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work.

### **Human resources**

- Give guidance to managers on the stress policy.
- Assist in monitoring the effectiveness of measures to address stress by collating sickness absence statistics.
- Advise managers and individuals on training requirements.
- Provide continuing support to managers and individuals in a changing environment and encourage referral to occupational workplace counsellors where appropriate.

### **Employees**

- Raise issues of concern with your Safety Representative, line manager or occupational health.
- Accept opportunities for counselling and other support when recommended.

### **Safety representatives**

- Safety Representatives must be meaningfully consulted where appropriate on any changes to work practices or work design that could precipitate stress.
- Safety Representatives must be able to consult with members on the issue of stress including conducting any workplace surveys.
- Safety Representatives must be meaningfully involved in the risk assessment process.
- Safety Representatives should be allowed access to collective and anonymous data from HR.
- Safety Representatives should be provided with reasonable paid time away from normal duties to attend Trade Union/Staff Association training relating to workplace stress.
- Safety Representatives should conduct joint inspections of the workplace at least every 3 months to ensure that environmental stressors are properly controlled.

### **Safety Committee**

- The Health and Safety Policy Group will perform a pivotal role in ensuring that this policy is implemented.
- The Safety Committee will oversee monitoring of the efficacy of the policy and other measures to reduce stress and promote workplace health and safety.

### **Health and Safety**

- Managers and Supervisors are required to consider making the appropriate risk assessment when implementing this procedure.
- Police staff should apply the Gwent Police Service Dynamic Assessment. A training package in the use of this risk assessment will be provided to all police staff.

## **2.2 Aims of Policy**

Gwent Police will aim:-

- to identify all workplace stressors and conduct risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed.
- to consult with Trade Union and Police Federation Safety Representatives on proposed action relating to the prevention of workplace stress.
- to provide training for all managers and supervisory staff in good management practices.
- to consider confidential counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors.
- to provide adequate resources to enable managers to implement Gwent Police's agreed stress management strategy.

### **3.0 Introduction**

#### **3.1 Origins/Background Information**

In compliance with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and other associated legislation and in support of the Force Health & Safety Policy, Gwent Police is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of all its staff. We recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stress.

The Force recognises that people are our most valuable resource and the health, safety and welfare of employees must be proactively managed. This policy places a duty of care on managers and supervisors to perform the necessary risk assessments to reduce the risk to employees of work related stress caused by organisational factors.

#### **3.2 The Legal Basis and Legitimate Aims**

The legal basis is to comply with relevant Health and Safety legislation, police regulations and police staff terms and conditions of employment .

### **4.0 Implications of the Policy**

#### **4.1 Financial Implications/Best Value**

There should be no additional financial implications with the updating and continuance of this policy.

#### **4.2 Human Resources/Training**

Line managers will be required to support police personnel to ensure that the aims of this policy are complied with.

#### **4.3 Strategic Plan Links**

The Human Resources Strategy supports our aim to be a good and caring employer.

#### **4.4 Diversity**

In the application of this policy consideration must be given to the possible social impact of this policy on the community. A social impact assessment is a requirement to ensure all issues are considered. This is also a requirement of the Gwent Police Race Equality Scheme. Social impact assessments must be undertaken before and after the application of this policy.

Under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 Gwent Police is required to undertake proactive work to meet the General Duty of :

- Eliminating unlawful racial discrimination;
- Promoting equality of opportunity;
- Promoting good relations between people of different ethnic groups.

The General Duty is outlined in Section 71 (1) of the Act, and must be met **in its entirety**.

Monitoring must be undertaken to ensure that there is no adverse impact either positive or negative upon any one particular social group or individual. The results of monitoring must be analysed and be available for publication, and appropriate changes made.

All individuals using this policy must be aware of the potential impact that this policy has on the individuals to whom it is applied. The following strands of diversity and their corresponding pieces of legislation must be considered when answering these questions.

- Welsh Language Act 1993
- Race – Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000.
- Disability - Disability Discrimination Act 2005.
- Gender - Sexual Discrimination Act 1975.
- Gender – Equal Pay Act 1970
- Gender – Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

#### 4.5 **Consultation**

Police Authority  
ACPO  
Divisional / Departmental Heads  
Superintendents' Association  
Police Federation  
UNISON  
Gwent Police Women's Association  
Gwent Black Police Association  
Gwent Police Disability Network  
Gwent Police Gay Support Network  
Freedom of Information Officer  
Diversity Officer  
Force Solicitor

## 5.0 Human Rights Consideration Certification

### 5.1 Auditing for potential interference and discrimination

Q1. What articles of the Human Rights Act 1998 may be engaged?

Article 3  
Article 6  
Article 8  
Article 9  
Article 10  
Article 11  
Article 14

Q2. Where individual rights are engaged what is the potential to discriminate against the parties involved?

" In the application of this policy the Force will not discriminate against any persons regardless of age, sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with national minority, property, birth or other status as defined under article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights ".

### 5.2 Key Human Rights Principles

Q1. What is the legal basis for your policy?

Section 3.2 refers

Q2. Does the policy provide details of what could be considered as a legitimate aim for the potential interference with an individual's rights, through the exercising of this policy?

Restrictions on the rights protected in articles 8 - 11 in the Human Rights Act will be compatible with the convention only if they are aimed at protecting one of the interests listed in articles 8(2), 9(2), 10(2) and 11(2) respectively. The interest protected are broadly the same and generally include:

1. National Security
2. Public Safety
3. The protection of health or morals
4. The prevention of disorder or crime; and The protection of the rights of others.

**Any restrictions relating to human rights will be in accordance with the above principles.**

Q3. How are staff made aware of the clearly defined decision making processes?

Section 2.1 refers

Q4. What are the minimum standards of documentation in relation to decision making?

Section 2.1 refers

Q5. How does your policy provide guidance on the justification for assessment and actions as to whether the action is the least intrusive?

Section 2.1 refers

### **5.3 Rights, Publication, Audit and Inspection**

Q1. Are there any sections of the document which should not be disclosed to the public on the Force Publication Scheme; because they consist of tactical or operational procedures, that would inhibit the apprehension or prosecution of offenders if publicly known, or would compromise the ability of the force to carry out its duties? Please outline the relevant sections that cannot be disclosed.

This policy can be disclosed

Q2. What rights to make representation and appeal process are available?

Persons who wish to make representations regarding the operation of this policy will have recourse to civil law. There is also the right to use both formal, informal and organisational complaints policy in respect to the operation of this policy. Where dismissal is contemplated an individual has a statutory right to attend a hearing to discuss the matter. This includes a statutory right to be accompanied to the meeting by a trade union representative or a work colleague. There is also a statutory right to appeal.

Q3. What internal review and audit process is in place or is proposed?

This policy has been drafted in accordance with the principles and rights contained within the Human Rights Act 1998. It will be reviewed and continuously assessed in the light of any relevant changes and developments in the application of the Act.

Q4. What external independent scrutiny is recommended?

This policy document can be scrutinised during Inspection undertaken by the Police Authority and HMIC.

#### **5.4 Certification of Compliance**

Consideration has been given to the compatibility of this policy and related policies and procedures with the Human Rights Act; with particular reference to the legal basis of its precepts: the legitimacy of its aims; the justification and proportionality of the actions intended by it; that it is the least intrusive and damaging option necessary to achieve the aims; and that it defines the need to document the relevant decision making process's and outcomes of actions.

#### **5.5 Legal Vetting**

**There are no issues in this policy under ECHR which cannot be resolved. This policy has been vetted.**

#### **6.0 Promotion and Distribution**

In order to highlight the existence of this policy to staff there will be the following :

- GO entry following ratification
- Publication on the Force Intranet and internet
- Police staff induction and initial police learning and development programme for probationer police officers. Health and Safety courses and confidential advisors.

#### **7.0 Monitoring / Review**

In the implementation of this policy consideration will be given to the impact on Diversity Groups.

Monitoring of the day to day application of this policy will be undertaken by the Head of Human Resources.