

**2017**

# **Annual report**

**Home Office Group**

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**1 Nigel Buller**

13th September 1960 – 10th September 2017



**Public and Commercial Services Union** | [pcs.org.uk](http://pcs.org.uk)



## FOREWORD

I find myself writing this foreword to the 2017 annual report for the worst of reasons. In September our President, Nigel Buller, passed away. Of course his loss is felt by all of us in the union, his friends and his family but especially his wife, Jane. I met Nigel through the union and was immediately impressed with his diligence and dedication to making sure he provided professional leadership to members in the Home Office. I also got to know him a little personally and he was someone you wanted to be around; full of tales of his time in Customs, and his experiences in the union over the years. We'll all miss him.

2017 was a year in which wider political issues impacted massively on members in the Home Office. Article 50 was triggered in March, and plans to leave the EU have dominated much of what has followed. So much of the detail remains subject to negotiations that departmental planning is perhaps not as far down the line as it should be. What we do know is that our department will require significant staffing, whether it be in customs areas, in Euro casework or in many of the other areas affected directly or indirectly. This was certainly the central theme to the evidence that our union provided to the Home Affairs Select Committee in November of 2017. Whilst the autumn budget made no extra allowances for funding to cope with this, we know that the department is receiving extra funding from the Treasury to anticipate the extra staffing needs. In the coming year we need to ensure that we are getting the extra staff that is required and that we are not losing staff in areas that are not affected by EU exit.

The other political earthquake was the general election and from this distance it's difficult to remember some of the predictions prior to the election. The Labour party entered the election with, amongst other things, a promise to get rid of the pay cap, and return to national pay bargaining in the Civil Service. In fact the Labour manifesto was in the main written by an ex PCS Union employee! PCS is not an affiliated union and we do not give any money to political parties, but many of us individually believed that a change in government would deliver conditions much more favourable to our members. Ultimately the result is now well known. Having said PCS is not party affiliated, we are unashamedly still political, and have made a number of interventions over the last year. Your representatives also met with the Shadow Home Secretary in October of 2017.

Having mentioned Pay, and the cap earlier, this turned into the focus of our activities in the second half of the year. Our offer in the Home Office was again constrained by the 1% pay cap imposed by the government. We were one of the first groups to start collecting signatures for a petition against the cap, and organising pay day protests. This was followed by the indicative national ballot, and the decisive vote to reject the cap and indicate willingness to take action. Whilst we missed the 50% turnout requirement for statutory ballots imposed under the Trade Union Act, we were within spitting distance, and delivered the largest national turnout we have ever had in this union. Let's celebrate that, but understand that we still need to improve turnout and engagement with all our members in order to continue improving.

2017 brought with it a new Permanent Secretary to join a relatively new second Permanent Secretary. As one of the senior reps in the group I think that there is an increased desire for proper engagement with PCS and to work constructively. This culminated in the agreement on a Pay Framework over how we approach annual pay negotiations, a document that will not of itself deliver better pay, but gives us a better footing to make our case for increases. But, realistically any slight improvements to engagement must be balanced with the political environment we live in. For example the 1% pay cap, the austerity that has

affected our members, and potential outsourcing, and casualisation of the remaining workforce. These remain huge challenges for us.

If, like me, you witnessed the documentary on Brook House during the year you will also have been horrified by the scenes shown. Many of us will make decisions in our jobs that result in individuals being detained. We do so in the belief that they will be treated with dignity. What is clear is that this is not so clear cut as all of us would like to believe. It would be easy to blame outsourcing in total for the problem and certainly I believe that it should only be the state that is involved in the withdrawal of an individual's liberty, however this is a complex issue. What is certain is that the profit motive, lax approach to recruitment and training by companies such as G4S that we outsource to has contributed to the disgraceful scenes in that documentary. We have made strong representations about the events depicted and continue our opposition to privatisation.

During the course of the year there were three major cases in the courts I'd like to talk about, one taken by Unison, one taken by our union, and one taken specifically by our group in the Home Office. They were the landmark judgement against fees for employment tribunals, which all of us reps already see is having such a major impact. The judicial review PCS took against the changes to the Compensation Scheme meant that the detrimental changes to pay outs were reversed – a material difference to members who had left or were contemplating leaving. The final case was that of Essop and Ors v Home Office which reached the Supreme Court and is now a major precedent in indirect discrimination. This case was taken against the assessment centres the department used to run at HEO level, since scrapped.

Looking inward, our last conference passed the organising strategy which acknowledged that organising must be our primary focus moving forward. To increase our successes we need to increase our membership levels, our density, the number of reps and increase participation and activity. I'm pleased to say that as of the end of the year we have increased our membership levels. This follows a number of years of decline especially in the aftermath of check off removal. Our challenge is to continue these upward trends and remain on the front foot, as they have in Merseyside with large scale recruitment of new employees in Bootle, and in Sheffield where a deployment of full time staff supported our reps to significantly increase membership levels.

One area where we can increase our membership is with the recent increase in recruitment of apprentices. PCS is well placed to represent these members, especially with a central protocol agreed nationally between the Cabinet Office and our NEC. In the Home Office we have already started collecting data and anecdotal evidence about the treatment of our members and we are very concerned that these apprentices are being potentially exploited. Despite the requirement for external training and 20% of their time being spent on independent learning, many apprentices in the Home Office recruited in July had nothing until at least December. Furthermore many find themselves being used to paper over cracks of staffing reductions, and let's not forget this is all at the reduced pay rates of £18,000 in London and £15,000 Nationally.

In the coming year there are going to be further challenges, a fresh assault on the Compensation Scheme, potential dispute around pay, job cuts in certain areas, continued levels of bullying, harassment and discrimination that our reps regularly work on. When confronted with these changes and challenges we need to build a response that is led and orientated by member participation. Whilst PCS punches above its weight in the press, our parliamentary group and through legal challenges we should recognise our advantage over the employer is our numbers. The increase in membership is a good start but we also need

to increase our activist base, so anyone interested in being a rep or an advocate please get in touch with your local branch.

I believe that we continue to have some of the best reps and members in our union or any other. We have had great support from the Group Office, including a fantastic Group Secretary in Mike Jones, who has helped me so much this year. I'd like to thank all GEC members for their efforts this year, all the reps up and down the country for keeping up the fight at the sharp end. And most importantly you the members, without who nothing would be possible.

**James Cox**  
**Group Vice President**

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## Section 1

### Group Vice President, James Cox

#### Pay

1. Since the 2013 pay agreement, successive years have been blighted by the government imposed 1% pay cap. This has had a significant material impact on members in the Home Office as all our wages have fallen behind price rises, utility bills, and travel costs. The real value of what we take home at the end of the month is worth a lot less than it used to be and the lowest paid are suffering the most.
2. Entering into another year of pay negotiations PCS submitted our pay claim. Broadly our demands were;
  - a. A significant pay increase, above the rate of inflation, to compensate members for the cut in their living standards in recent years, of 5% or £1200, whichever is the greater.
  - b. Minimum pay rates which incorporate a Living Wage of at least £10 per hour (calculated on the general 42hr working week for full time staff)
  - c. The implementation of 'spot rates' at the range maximum at every grade, with priority attention given to the EO and HEO ranges.
  - d. Staff who remain on legacy allowances should receive an award in line with others at their particular grade.
3. Whilst these demands are significantly greater than the 1% remit, they reflect the fact that inflation is running well above 3% (RPI) and that years of pay restraint have eroded the real value of our pay.
4. We backed up our demands with academic research from the University of Surrey showing that the true value of earnings in the civil service have fallen further than the private sector between 2010 and 2016, and using a conservative estimates this may amount to 9%. These figures also do not take account of the increased pension contributions that have hit us in those years.
5. Negotiations were interrupted this year by the general election, and a decision was taken to suspend discussions given the outcome could have such an impact on the talks. Unfortunately the Tories were returned to office and despite such noted workers' friends as Iain Duncan Smith advocating the end of the public sector pay cap, confirmation was received that the austerity would continue and there would be no extra monies.
6. Talks were resumed, but proved difficult when confronted by such a small amount of extra money to be talking about. With limited money there was little that could be done to address the issues that members were mostly concerned over – basic rates of pay, and progression to the rates for the role.

#### The Offer

7. This main elements of the offer were:
  - a. All eligible employees received a pay award of at least 1%, through a combination of consolidated and non-consolidated elements as detailed below. Consolidated means that members move up the scale, but non-consolidated means that a one of payment will be made.

- b. The salary range maximum of all Home Office grades was frozen at their current rates. This rate is what we believe to be the 'rate for the job' so a freeze on this value is very disappointing, and means that long standing members will only receive non-consolidated payments if at the top of their scale.
- c. All Home Office AO grade spot rates were increased by 0.6% with the remaining 0.4% paid as non-consolidated; all Home Office AA grade and equivalent grade spot rates were increased by 1% or £200, whichever was greater.
- d. The minima of the HEO, G7 and G6 grades was increased to reduce the range lengths to 15% (HEO), 15.5% (G7) and 16% (G6). Employees were moved to the range position in the new shortened range that they were on in the old pay range i.e. someone who had moved 25% through the pay range will be repositioned 25% through the new pay range.
- e. Employees in these grades who receive less than 0.6% received a consolidated top up to 0.6%, capped at range maximum.
- f. The minima of the EO and SEO grades were frozen (as the range lengths were already 15%), along with Fast Stream grades. Employees received an award of between 1.2% (at range minimum) and 0.6%, depending on their position on the pay range, capped at range maximum.
- g. Any employee eligible for the pay award in grades AO to G6 not gaining at least 1.0% from the steps above received a non-consolidated payment sufficient to deliver 1.0% award in total, unless specifically excluded.
- h. Employees whose performance was assessed in their appraisal for the year 2016/2017 as unsatisfactory were not eligible for the pay award.
- i. Employees on Home Office terms and conditions who were assessed as a top performer in the 2016/17 performance year were paid a non-consolidated payment of 2% of the relevant salary range maximum with their July salary.
- j. Top performers on HMPO arrangements received an adjustment to their non-consolidated payment due to the change in reporting year and to bring them in line with Home Office arrangements.
- k. Members who were still in receipt of legacy allowances received nothing despite PCS putting forward a compromise proposal that the 1% be made as a non-consolidated payment.

### **Our response**

- 8. PCS wrote to the department noting the imposition of the offer but were not able to agree it. Quite simply the amount of money on the table was nowhere near what was required to address low pay rates. The failure to move any of the maximums meant that the going rate for the role had not altered from 2016. Furthermore the freezing of the EO minimum means that the entry rate of pay is the same as it was in the second half of 2016.
- 9. Once again the department refused to extend the award to those on legacy allowances (SDA/AAA). Despite the compromise put forward by PCS of a non-consolidated payment the department outrageously rejected this in favour of effectively trying to starve people out of their terms and conditions.
- 10. At the root of our problems was the 1% cap imposed by the Treasury. This cap of course affects all civil servants and our national response was to run an indicative ballot. The results of this ballot were decisively in favour of rejection of the cap and to take action. However this was only indicative and not statutory. Furthermore, whilst the turnout was the highest that PCS had ever achieved for a national ballot, it still fell just short of the 50% threshold required by the new Trade Union Act.



## 2018

11. As we move into 2018 the campaign to get rid of the pay cap continues. At the time of writing the Civil Service Pay Guidance and Remit has not been published. However from statements the Chancellor has made it seems likely that the pay cap will continue for another year. This means that we will need to keep up the campaign and pressure into the New Year.
12. Other issues which have been raised in relation to pay within the last year are around levels of holiday pay, agency pay rises, levels of pay for apprentices and compliance with the national minimum wage.

## Pay Framework

13. The conduct of pay negotiations over the last few years has proved frustrating for the union. Our concerns are that not only is the money available to discuss insufficient, but the way that negotiations are conducted are not satisfactory. In order to address this PCS wrote to the Permanent Secretary proposing a framework agreement over how negotiations are conducted each year.
14. This set out to ensure that PCS was able to influence departmental plans at the earliest stage, and that there was enough time built into the process to ensure that we could consult with members appropriately.
15. This Framework was agreed at the end of the year and will be used as we move into 2018 negotiations. We will have paid time off for members' meetings to discuss our claim and then also the offer at the end of the process. I believe that this is a positive development; it won't deliver pay rises on its own, but it puts us in a better position to influence the process.

## Jobs

16. Comparative figures regarding staffing numbers are shown in the table below.

	<b>November 2017</b>	<b>December 2016</b>	<b>December 2015</b>
<b>Total Paid Civil Servants</b>	27,305.04	25,702.8	26,678.47
<b>Of which FTA</b>	1,171.53	610.27	1,146.84
<b>Agency Staff</b>	1,297.37	934.68	642.20
<b>Contractors</b>	259.44	581.93	322.89

(All figures FTE)

17. The last year has seen an increase in numbers of Civil Servants in the department. This is clearly a positive, although most of us would agree that this is completely justified considering continued high workloads and the prevalence of overtime used to paper over the cracks. Of course one of the drivers of this increase is the triggering of Article 50 and the preparation for EU exit.

18. One area of concern for us is the continued, and increasing levels of use of FTA and agency staff. Whilst FTA contracts are preferable to agency contracts we maintain concerns that they are being used improperly leaving members on precarious contracts which being time limited leave them unable to get mortgages, loans and be comfortable in stable employment. The Home Office policy on FTA staff is that they should not be employed for over 24 months. However 137 individuals in the department have been employed for over 2 years still on fixed term contracts.
19. Levels of agency staff remain high and despite being given explanations related to short term cover and delays in recruiting permanent staff it is clear that they are being used to cover longer term vacancies. Home Office guidance indicates that agency staff should not be engaged for longer than 11 months, despite this 700 individuals across the department have been employed for over 12 months.
20. We continue to make representations to the department that in many cases these are actual permanent vacancies and should be advertised as such to give incumbents the opportunity to get the jobs permanently.
21. The outlook for jobs in the next year is difficult to quantify. The department is committed to following the stringent budget projections from the 2015 spending review which anticipates 16% admin budget cuts by 2020. However the department has also secured funds to help plan and implement EU exit, which will necessitate greater staffing levels. Turnover of staff as of March 2017 is at 7.22%.
22. In the background the government estates strategy plays out with many departments reducing their accommodation footprint. In the Home Office this has manifested itself in the large scale moves to Croydon from London, but also in some of the closures of smaller offices such as in the HMPO CSO network and in Immigration Enforcement.

### **Compensation Scheme and Protocols**

23. In 2016 the government imposed new terms to the Civil Service Compensation Scheme (CSCS) and revised the Cabinet Office Protocols for handling surplus staff. Both these changes were rejected comprehensively by members in a ballot. It's been well publicised, but worth remembering that PCS were successful in taking the Cabinet Office to court over failing to properly consult regarding the changes to the CSCS. We were successful in our arguments and the terms were reverted to the 2010 terms. This meant that those who had left the department with terms based on the revisions from 2016 are being contacted to top up their payments. Those still employed have been offered higher amounts of voluntary redundancy based on the 2010 terms. The government have already demonstrated their intention to return for a second bite of the cherry, but our court victory was an important win and we can approach these new negotiations with an open mind and renewed resolve.
24. Ostensibly on the back of the revisions to the Protocol, the department engaged in consultation over changes to the redundancy, redeployment and restructuring policy

and process. The major changes in the new Redundancy Policy and associated manager's guidance, are:

- a. Increased emphasis on the importance of departmental workforce planning to identify future skills and workforce numbers to support earlier intervention and mitigation, where redundancy may be a possibility;
  - b. Revised consultation periods of: 45 days for 100 employees or more; 30 days for 99 employees or fewer;
  - c. Commitment to provide an offer of suitable alternative employment and continued support until the final week of service for those who wish to continue their Civil Service career, offering a flexibility to become redeployed until the last stages of the process;
  - d. Reduction in length of redeployment support from 3 months to 4 weeks;
  - e. An increased emphasis on the importance of Cabinet Office, TUS, Home Office and employees working together to mitigate redundancies;
  - f. Removal of 'surplus' status in line with Cabinet Office changes, however there will continue to be support for employees at risk of redundancy.
25. Whilst we took part in the consultation and secured changes to the original drafts of the policy and guidance we were not able to agree the final policy with the Department and have written to the department making this clear.
26. The new procedure does contain a number of positive changes including a requirement for early consultation with PCS over staffing and a requirement to implement avoidance measures prior to the commencement of formal procedures. However the significant reduction in time between being declared 'at risk' of redundancy and subsequent consideration of compulsory redundancy from 3 months to 4 weeks is unacceptable to us.
27. PCS believe that purpose of any policy should be the avoidance of redundancies, and we see this change as more to do with facilitating quicker exits from the organization. Information provided by the department indicates that staff in redeployment were averaging 93 days before placement in a new role. Reducing the time available is clearly going to affect many more staff members.
28. Whilst there has been a reduction in redeployment time after being made 'at risk', the policy states that this clock will not start until after an offer of voluntary redundancy has been made and considered. We therefore believe that even if members' intention is to remain in the department it is advisable to apply for a quote as this will provide greater time to apply for alternate positions.
29. As yet no staff covered by the new protocol have reached the redundancy mitigation stage, so many of the beneficial changes including the offer of suitable alternative employment remain unproven.

### **Civil service Recruitment Framework**

30. As part of the changes brought in by the imposition of the new Compensation Scheme terms, various other changes were also implemented. They included changes to the

Jobs Protocol, which has now lead to the replacement of the National Vacancy Filling Scheme with the new Civil Service Recruitment Framework (CSRF).

- 31.** From 1 April 2017 the new CSRF went live, the headline differences of the new guidance are:
- a. There will no longer be any priority access to Civil Service wide vacancies for staff declared surplus.
  - b. From now on, there will be 3 potential avenues of recruitment for departments to choose from - Internal Recruitment, Other Government Department (OGD) Recruitment, External Recruitment.
  - c. There will be no requirement for departments to advertise internally or OGD wide before recruiting externally – instead employers will be able to choose how they recruit.
- 32.** This immediately became obvious in the removal of the stages process on CS Jobs. Furthermore if you are surplus or at risk of redundancy you will also no longer have priority status, so a pretty significant change. We managed to secure, through changes to the redundancy policy, agreement that priority status should still be in place for internal Home Office roles. The requirement to offer all surplus staff a suitable alternative role is another important counter balance to this, but it is largely untested at this time.
- 33.** We remain concerned that the changes have had a deleterious effect on the ability to mitigate against redundancy and will continue to monitor their effect and the success or otherwise of the new provisions in the redundancy policy.

**CTS and ‘At Risk’ staff**

- 34.** As of the end of December the number of staff currently coming under the Career Transition Service (CTS) and at risk of redundancy is in the below table:

AA	AO	AIO	EO	IO	HEO	CIO	SEO	G7	G6	SCS
5	18	1	47	9	17	1	13	7	4	2

- 35.** Some of this number are awaiting leaving dates on voluntary redundancy, however there remain a number looking for alternative roles. PCS representatives have attended redundancy mitigation reviews during the year, as part of the validation process for the protocols. If members find themselves going through this process close liaison with your trade union representative is advisable.

## Section 2

### Group Secretary, Mike Jones

#### In honour of group president Nigel Buller

1. In a deviation from my usual annual report contribution I would like to focus this year's group secretary report by remembering the contribution Nigel Buller made to PCS union.
2. Nigel took a real pride in his role of PCS Home Office group president. He also considered the annual report as an important document. This was an opportunity for those bestowed the honour of being elected onto the GEC to set out what they had done throughout the year on members' behalf. Nigel spent time thinking about the content of his contribution(s) to the annual report. They were always very informative and detailed. This served two important purposes. Firstly it demonstrated to members the extensive work Nigel had carried out throughout the year but also served as a useful reference for anyone who wished to refer back to the detail of a particular pay award or other negotiated settlement, even years after.
3. I hope this annual report for 2017 and subsequent years' annual reports continue in the same vein - as a testament to the high standards Nigel set.
4. For many in the PCS Home Office group this year had been tainted by the loss of our good friend and comrade Nigel Buller. Affectionately known by his close friends and comrades as El Presidente.
5. Nigel tragically died on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 2017 after a short battle with cancer at the age of just 56.
6. In May last year at group conference in Brighton Nigel was in his usual impeccable form running conference from the chair as group president with his calm style and his famed laugh booming out across the conference floor.
7. For me I will always remember Nigel's attention to detail. He was meticulous and took his role as group president very seriously. We'd sit down together before group executive committee meetings or before the annual group conference in Brighton and go through the agenda and proceedings. Nigel always came prepared. He'd read all of the papers and motions, he had all his papers in neat piles accompanied with his own neat written notes with important sections marked by his trusty highlighter pen. He made things run smoothly and appear effortless but it was anything but. It was because he had put in the time and effort and his attention to detail made things run smoothly.
8. Shortly after conference in May Nigel visited the doctors and underwent a number of tests in hospital. Initial results showed high calcium in his blood. Despite feeling tired and poorly he was determined to continue to turn up to work in Dover each day. But he felt he could not undertake his full duties as group president to his usual high standards and in early July he tendered his resignation to the GEC. Respecting Nigel's wishes the GEC accepted his resignation but the executive committee refused to fill the vacant president position as a mark of respect to his outstanding work. The vice president assumed the president duties.

9. Before I go on to comment on Nigel's momentous contributions to PCS and the wider trade union movement I would like to give thanks to James Cox. James as vice president was called upon to take on the unenviable task of following Nigel.
10. In such circumstances and being thrown into a role he really hadn't expected James has performed admirably. He remained as vice president throughout this term of office but he has picked up all the president duties as well. He has dealt with this with great dignity and respectfulness to Nigel's service. He's been diligent and never complained about extra tasks thrown his way. Personally I have to say he's been a great support to me through this difficult period. I'm sure members appreciate this too and will want to thank James for his selfless efforts on their behalf.
11. Nigel from joining customs and excise in December 1977 became a Rep for CPSA at Folkestone at 21. By 1982 at the age of 22 he was the union branch secretary for Dover. And then went on to be the branch vice chair for a further 5 years from 1984-89. He ended up being the Home Office South East England branch president for 13 consecutive years until his passing in 2017. But on top of his union branch roles he held a variety of other union positions in the Customs and Home Office groups within CPSA, NUCPS, PTC and now PCS. He was:
- Customs and Excise Section Executive Committee member
  - C&E Section Assistant Secretary
  - C&E Group Vice President
  - Kent & Sussex Area Coordinating Committee organiser
  - Kent & Sussex Area Coordinating Committee Secretary
  - Kent District Committee Assistant Secretary
  - Special Merger Conference Delegate
  - SE Region TUC delegate
  - C&E Section Conference Delegate
  - Home Office group executive Assistant Secretary
  - Home Office group Vice President
  - Home Office group President
  - And a National Conference branch delegate for more years than anyone can care to remember.
12. From the early 1980's Nigel helped to build a Civil Service Trade Union based on democracy and one that was not afraid to stand up to the employer. We have all benefited from Nigel's part in building PCS into the union we now take for granted. Nigel was a stalwart of the trade union movement for over 35 years and his achievements have been significant.
13. While I can't cover all his achievements, people reading this will have their own memories and stories of how Nigel helped and supported them; memories of fighting alongside him on many disputes and strikes; or alongside him in negotiations cajoling the employer into making improvements on members pay or working conditions.
14. From the early 1980's Nigel struck up a lasting friendship with assistant group secretary Kevin Mills. Kevin recounted a number of humorous stories at Nigel's funeral with accounts of their escapades as customs officers going back 30 plus years.
15. Kevin recalled his first meeting with Nigel in February 1984 and how Nigel got him to join the CPSA branch committee. Nigel affectionately referred to Kevin as 'pit prop' as he had come from the local pit. Nigel was quick to advise that as Kevin had come from an

industrial Trade Union. CPSA was a bit different explaining why the first motion at the CPSA 1984 national Conference some 2 months after the miners' strike started was to campaign for all offices to have soft Toilet roll - something Nigel was proud to tell Kevin had already been achieved in Customs and Excise.

16. As with his national role as Group President Nigel also ran a tight ship in his Branch. Agendas, reports and records of decisions were scrutinised and kept to ensure accuracy and action points completed. The mornings of branch executive committee meetings were always fraught due to Nigel's dislike of early starts and the need to rush around the office finalising the Branch position usually with about 2 minutes to go. It reached a point where branch reps ran a sweepstake in the office on what time Nigel would appear. "Who won today?" became the first thing Nigel would say as he entered the office on BEC days.
17. Nigel also retained the position of Coquelles steward and was proud during industrial action of the near 100% support from Customs members in what he called "the Peoples Republic of Coquelles"
18. Nigel always held his own views in everything and had a strong sense of right and wrong, especially if Nigel felt the wrong had been done to him. He never forgot the Annual General meeting in Hastings and wouldn't let the branch committee forget it either. The bus was going to pick up in Dover and Folkestone and Nigel missed it by probably 5/10 minutes. Most people would have put it down to experience and missed the meeting. Not Nigel he got a Taxi from Folkestone and insisted that he tried to flag the Coach down all the way to Hastings. He then spent the next several years trying to claim the taxi fare. Eventually it was put to the vote of the BEC and all parties were content with the outcome but Nigel never forgot who voted against him getting the money and reminded reps regularly!
19. People surmised it was a fear of change that led Nigel to printing every email he ever received! The paper copy seemed to comfort him in some way that he hadn't moved into the technology age, referring to anyone who knew how to do anything with a computer as a 'techy'. The email "Archive" was often a source of conflict in the union office as the piles of papers grew even larger, consuming cupboard, filing cabinet, drawer and floor space wherever he could, be it Dover, Coquelles or at home in Ashford. Members can look forward to the pay rise from the savings the Department will make on paper and ink!
20. In the time we worked together, with me as the group secretary and Nigel as group president we struck up a really good friendship. Despite our clear differences over our which football teams we supported - Nigel being a staunch Evertonian and me from the red side of Liverpool. However we never fell out and always came to a consensus on how to move forward on union matters that we both could live with. I always appreciated his thoughts and his reasoning and I learnt a great deal from Nigel.
21. The 2012-13 Home Office pay deal particularly demonstrated to me the measure of Nigel. These negotiations were difficult and protracted over many months. At times talks stalled and the process became extremely frustrating as the employer was nowhere near to meeting our demands. A significantly improved offer was eventually made that the executive committee felt we could go out to members with. Nigel was never one to shirk responsibility and immediately put himself forward to get out to every workplace where members meetings were set. Both Nigel and Martin Kelsey toured the length and breadth of the country discussing the offer with members taking their questions and queries. Over a three week period they spoke at 69 members meetings between them from as far afield as Glasgow, Folkestone and even Paris in what became known as the '*No sleep 'til Folkestone tour*'.

- 22.** The Home Office group will greatly miss Nigel's guidance, dedication, knowledge and expertise. His contribution and leadership leaves an enduring legacy in the Group and PCS generally.
- 23.** Nigel sacrificed any possible career progression in Revenue and Customs or Home Office to devote himself to representing PCS members' interests. However he was proud of his work as a customs officer. I can imagine his reaction to the Home Office plans to bring in volunteers to do Border Force work in the form of Dad's Army style 'Specials'. His response to this may have contained some choice words. I'm sure he would smile at the PCS response as the issue received significant national press coverage as a result of the concerns we raised and the support from MPs.
- 24.** You will see from the contributions in other sections of this annual report our work has not stopped. But we fight on in Nigel's name.
- 25.** Nigel will be remembered for a number of his endearing little quirks; none more so than his use of French phrases; admittedly his linguistic skills were not what you would describe as fluent. More Del Boy Trotter than Gerard Depardieu!
- 26.** A good friend, trade unionist and a solid comrade. A dyed in the wool Evertonian and forever our El Presidente.
- 27.** Farewell Mon Ami. Nigel will be sorely missed but never forgotten.



## Section 3

Group Treasurer, Sarah Wright

### **Financial Report for the Home Office Group Annual Report 2017**

1. Our funding from PCS increased slightly this year to £55,000 and, taking into account our small surplus from 2016, in real terms we had £61,000 available to us.
2. In 2017 the Home Office Group reduced the size of the Executive to 25. This, together with the resignation of the Group President in July and subsequent decision not to fill the role for the rest of the union year, has had an impact on our spending. It is anticipated that expenditure in 2018 will increase to that of previous years
3. All of the financial controls previously introduced by the Executive have been carried forward to 2017 including encouraging greater use of telephone conference facilities, scheduling later meetings to utilise off peak travel and requesting the official side pay towards travel costs and I would again like to thank the GEC for their co-operation with these measures.
4. In view of increased travel and accommodation costs we hope that our funding for 2018 will be in line with that of 2017 however anticipate that the financial controls mentioned previously will apply for the foreseeable future.
5. The accounts have been submitted to PCS funding for audit and I look forward to presenting these at Conference.
6. The Hardship account currently only has 2 regular contributors. I would like to encourage everyone to consider making a regular donation, however small, as members cannot predict when they may need to apply for assistance themselves. The balance of the Hardship account as at 31st December 2017 was £13,675.

## Section 4

**Group Secretary, Mike Jones on behalf of  
Assistant Group Secretary, Malcolm Davey**

### **Group Organising report**

1. The Group Organiser Lawrence Dunne tendered his resignation to the Home Office GEC in November. The group are indebted to Lawrence for his achievements and the work he did on behalf of members in DBS and across the Home office group for a number of years.
2. The November GEC agreed that Malcolm Davey take over the role of Group Organiser. Unfortunately at the time of publication of the annual report Malcolm was taken ill and therefore as group secretary I've committed to write a few words on the group organising work over the past year.
3. The Home Office group Organising Strategy 2017/18 was passed in May at conference 2017. This set out a clear strategy for the year with 4 key themes:
  - a) There will be a PCS voice and presence in every Home Office workplace
  - b) All branches will undertake regular organising activity and record outcomes
  - c) Our structures will reflect the diversity of our membership
  - d) We will strengthen the support and training for reps to carry out their work
4. The GEC have endeavoured to support branches in delivering on these objectives.
5. Due to years of attacks on jobs, the removal of check-off in 2014/15 and many members deciding to leave the Home Office or its agencies and public bodies we had seen a gradual decline in membership over a number of years.
6. The headline achievement for 2017 is that the group membership has now grown for the first time in years. We have seen month on month growth across many branches and our membership was higher at the end of 2017 than at the start of the year. This is real progress and everyone involved in delivering this should feel proud of the work they have put in.
7. We have sought to monitor membership growth and address issues around members leaving or lapsing. Branch secretaries are sent a spreadsheet each month that shows the number of joiners and the number of leavers for their branch over the previous month.
8. GEC liaison officers have worked with branches to encourage recruitment activity and to provide advice and practical help to branch reps.
9. We have encouraged pairing of braches to give practical aid where one branch executive may have been under particular stain. Sharing of resources and supporting reps development has helped keep branches functioning and to get back on their feet. This has work well between Home Office Merseyside and HMPO North West; Home Office Wales and HMPO Wales & South West; Home Office West Yorkshire &

North East and South Yorkshire branches. Additionally there has been joint working between Disclosure and Barring Service branch and TCS branch; and HMPO Northern branch have actively encouraged Sopra Steria reps to attend their Branch Executive Committees.

- 10.** On top of the work the GEC and branch reps have done in providing support to each other the PCS strategic review has enabled branches to take advantage of PCS full time officer support in relation to building their branch organisation and structures, mentoring new reps and recruitment work. We have seen particularly good recruitment results in Home Office Merseyside branch, Home Office Croydon branch, HMPO Northern branch and Home Office South Yorkshire branch as a result of the strategic review initiated by the general secretary.
- 11.** Throughout 2017 we recruited 1112 new members into the Home Office group which has meant our overall membership has gone up.
- 12.** Despite the progress we have made there is still much we can achieve. We still haven't got an active PCS rep in every workplace. Many reps are still struggling with the volume of work they are having to do with limited facility time. We need to encourage more people to come forward to help with union work and get members more active. Training will be key to give new and existing reps every chance of success and give the support for people to develop.
- 13.** With a PCS membership that is 52.4% female this is not reflected in the composition of branch officers where only 30% are female. In the Home Office nearly a quarter of staff are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities. However BME employees tend to be concentrated in the lower grades and among younger employees. The figure for PCS members in Home Office group identifying themselves as BME is 16%. And PCS membership for people 27 and under is at just 5.3%. With an influx of apprentices into the Home Office this is an opportunity for us to get younger people into the union and to get active. There is therefore some way to go for us to be truly reflective of our diverse membership.
- 14.** Overall the Home Office group organising strategy is delivering results. We must continue with this plan to see further growth, more activity and inclusion of members so we are truly in a position to stand up and deliver a better place to work.

## **Section 5**

### **Assistant Group Secretary, Sharon Edwards**

#### **HM Passport Office**

##### **Communication with Branches**

1. Regular conference calls between Branch Reps and the GEC HMPO Team were established shortly after Group Conference for the year ahead. There have been some issues getting Reps from each HMPO Branch to participate, but it has helped to improve two-way communications. Notes of these meetings are then issued as quickly as possible to Branches by GEC members.

##### **Privatisation of Core Roles**

2. PCS negotiators have been continually challenging the decisions made by HMPO on what we see as the privatisation/outsourcing of core Civil Service roles/tasks. We have previously challenged on the File Holding duties being moved to the remit of Sopra Steria, as well as the Lost/Stolen/Recovered Passports work.
3. PCS continue to disagree with Mark Thomson's assertion that it's in the remit of Sopra Steria to have the responsibility of cancelling British passports on AMS. Fundamentally the cancellation of passports is being undertaken by a private company and is unacceptable.
4. We are now aware that HMPO is possibly looking for Sopra Steria to deal with Deceased Passports (currently a trial) and also the old passports for Digital Application Processing (DAP) casework. This obviously entails the physical and electronic cancellation of British passports, which has always been the responsibility of PO3 grade staff. Also moving the old passport for DAP being handled by Sopra Steria will have an impact on PO3 examiners and also a major impact on PO1 roles in Production Teams and in Post Rooms.

##### **2018 Fee Increase**

5. With the imminent price increase for passports, once agreed by Parliament, HMPO are introducing a tiered system of fees. HMPO are forcing the public's hand to apply for their passport online by increasing the postal fee substantially in comparison to the online service.
6. As the fee increase has already appeared in the media, it is likely to cause a massive influx of applications before the deadline in March. HMPO are now bringing in surge teams to deal with this increased workload, however they are also bringing in more permanent staff which means more staff offline to train them.
7. There is also a serious shortage of PO1 staff across HMPO, which is having an impact on their wellbeing due to the extra workloads and time pressures. It is understood by PCS that PO1 staff who have gained promotion or are on TCA should be back filled by Agency staff.

### **Attack on Rest Breaks**

8. The imposed harmonisation of HMPO terms & conditions has meant that senior managers in HMPO are again trying to remove the rest breaks from staff sighting that they are unmanageable for team leaders. These rest breaks were included in the PIMIS agreement that HMPO has now withdrawn.
9. So far PCS has managed to stall any moves to remove the rest breaks in local areas, apart from a couple of exceptions. As the rest breaks are staggered between members of teams, the argument of them being unmanageable is an untruth. Rest breaks for our frontline and production staff are vital to maintain their wellbeing and relieve periods of extended stress.
10. HMPO Directors are now looking at a working group to look at the best way of managing rest breaks going forward. PCS was asked to join the working group but have declined, we were assured that the aim is not to remove breaks from staff.

### **CSO Closures**

11. Further CSO closures were announced by HMPO, with formal consultation lasting 28 days. Unfortunately the consultation was only on the people aspect of the closures rather than the closures themselves.

### **Bullying, Harassment & Discrimination (BHD)**

12. We have previously raised the issue of BHD across HMPO; not just on the bullying of PCS Reps, but also members of staff with disabilities. On the matter of members of staff with disabilities, the attitude of line managers is far from supportive and does in fact amount to BHD. Comments from the staff at the receiving end of the bullying show that they are worried about their jobs, they don't feel supported, some managers have even refused reasonable adjustments and/or phased returns to work, they feel they are being treated more harshly than other colleagues, and feel targeted by managers to get them out the door.
13. The Home Office want to be the most inclusive employer, however the actions I am describing go totally against this. I am dealing with a number of HMPO cases and it seems clear that there is a complete lack of understanding of the conditions that affect these staff with disabilities. Managers have been disregarding advice given by Occupational Health, GPs, and local PCS Reps. These cases are not managers being assertive in their roles, it goes well beyond this. There are quite a number of staff across HMPO that feel targeted and that HMPO want rid of them by whatever means necessary. These actions have to stop or our cases to Employment Tribunals will significantly increase.

## **Equality**

### **Equality Policies**

14. Negotiators continue to engage in discussions with the Department on equality policy subjects such as Attendance Management, Workplace Reasonable Adjustments, and Flexible Working. The department is starting to focus their attention on bullying, harassment and discrimination in our workplaces, this is welcomed by PCS, however senior leadership teams may find the problem is actually worse than they first thought.

### **Group Equality Advisory Committees**

15. Due to the limited number of nominations received at Group Conference in 2017, the GEC Equality Team have been unable to get the individual equality advisory committees up and running. This is something the incoming GEC will have to focus on, looking at how best we can engage with our members.

## **Section 6**

**Assistant Group Secretary, Martin Andrews**

### **Accommodation, Health & Safety**

#### **ADC Conference Motion A35**

1. The above motion passed at last year's conference mandated the GEC to enter talks with the Home Office to ensure the availability of defibrillators on Home Office property and to ensure that staff are appropriately trained in their use.
2. The timely use of a defib is estimated to improve the survival chances of anyone suffering a cardiac arrest by approximately 20-30% when compared with a victim just receiving CPR, and the use of defibs is referenced in first aid and the Departmentally delivered PST courses.
3. In the last year, following sterling efforts by the respective local branches, defibs have been installed at the Capitol Building in Liverpool and in the port accommodation at Portsmouth, and it appears that defibs will also be available on the new Croydon estate. In addition, defibs are accessible and available to PCS members working at many of the major air and sea ports, but we will continue to push for their installation across the HO estate.
4. PCS had raised this issue at a senior level within the Home Office, who has responded by commissioning a review into the viability of defib provision in all HO properties. PCS has already contributed and we will continue to feed our view into those undertaking the review.

#### **Accommodation**

5. This year's major accommodation issue involved 1200 staff from 2MS moving to the Croydon estate as part of the Smarter Working accommodation project. PCS held monthly meetings with relevant managers and worked at Branch and National level to assist members. 80% of the move is now complete and any residual Croydon estate issues are now being dealt with at Croydon H&S committees by the relevant local Branch officials.
6. PCS continue to hold discussions as appropriate on the future of the Home Office Estate. It is not clear at this stage where the next Smarter Working accommodation project will take place, although it is likely that this will involve the further consolidation of HO accommodation. PCS are also involved on a Civil Service wide level in discussions with the Cabinet Office regarding the Government Estate Hub programme.
7. This programme seeks to co-locate Government Departments in some of the bigger towns /cities across the country and again will result in a reduction in the size of the Government estate. Hub locations already announced are Croydon, Cardiff, Liverpool, Birmingham, Leeds, Canary Wharf, Edinburgh, Stratford (HMRC only), Belfast and Bristol and Glasgow. At this stage the most significant impact will be on

members working in HMRC and DWP, but the Home Office Group will continue to attend relevant meetings/discussions to ensure that HO members are fully represented in all future planning.

8. PCS is also consulting with the employer regarding the future of staff (particularly in Border Force) who are currently located in HMRC buildings which are scheduled to be closed as part of their Building for the Future programme. We have also expressed significant concerns regarding these closures and their impact upon the Home Office's preparations for Brexit when it would be reasonable to assume that a significant uplift in border staffing will be required.

### **Health & Safety**

9. PCS continues to work across all Home Office Directorates to establish agreed and effective structures where PCS members/ reps can raise concerns/issues. Local, regional and Directorate H&S committees have now been established, following significant input from us in Border Force and Immigration Enforcement. UKVI are in the process of establishing a similar framework and whilst HMPO are still dealing with H&S issues at a local level only, PCS will be asking for a similar escalation route to be established as soon as practicable.
10. Across the country local and national PCS accredited H&S reps continue to work (often in very difficult challenging circumstances) to raise H&S concerns and hold the employer to account and it is to be hoped that these newly established escalation routes will allow us to influence the Department's response and actions in a timely and effective manner.
11. The PCS Home Office Group H&S Team has also contributed to reviews of the following areas:
  - a) Verbal Assault, Provision of appropriate/proportionate body armour/stab vests, PST improvements and pre-course health screening, RIDDOR investigations, the standardisation of risk assessments and safe systems of work, BHD, stress at work and mental health support and awareness.
  - b) Mental and physical wellbeing has rightly become an area of increasing importance within the Home Office and the provision of support and advice contacts on Horizon from the employer has increased but we continue our campaign for greater support for PCS members in this area.
12. Our central campaigning challenge going forward is linking the increasing provision of mental health/wellbeing support and recognition into the operational side of the business. Staffing levels, increased workloads, long hours and the application of the Attendance Management Policy have a very significant impact on the mental/physical wellbeing of our members and colleagues. We will continue to lobby towards the goal of preventing and recognising illness/injury in the first place before any support becomes necessary.



## **Section 7**

### **Assistant Group Secretary, Pete Wright**

#### **HR / Personnel**

1. I must begin my annual report by acknowledging the sad passing of my close friend, colleague and Group President Nigel Buller. His assistance and support on so many issues that have fallen to me was invaluable and he has left a considerable legacy of knowledge in both the Home Office Group and the South East England branch. He will be sorely missed.

#### **Attendance Management (AM)**

2. As always the attendance management policy remains a bone of contention. In order to progress a number of conference motions I have been regularly engaging with the PDR team to try and improve both the policy and also understanding and application of the policy at the point of implementation.
3. To this end, I worked with the HR leads to create a simple attendance management quick guide which I am hoping will be rolled out shortly. This should assist line managers in correctly applying the policy and clear up some of the ongoing grey areas within the policy.
4. I remain committed to improving this policy and ensuring that it is correctly applied and will continue to work with the Attendance management leads to change and improve the current situation.

#### **PDR Negotiations**

5. Since last year's annual report we have managed to change from the forced distribution, moderated, PDR system, and in the main, members are of the view that the replacement system is an improvement over the old system. That said the new system is far from perfect.
6. The PDR policy is now in place, and remains subject of review. In the main the mid-year process has now been completed. GEC members have been conducting PDR meetings at their allocated branches, but from the feedback received so far there are a number of serious concerns.
7. It would appear that members are not checking to see if their goals are achievable or relate to the work they undertake. This causes PCS considerable concern, as members must understand that, unlike previous years, they will be measured objectively against their goals rather than relative assessment. It is therefore vital that members ensure that their goals are achievable, measurable and relevant to their work, also that goals are adjusted to take into account personal attributes such as reasonable adjustments, part time working, work availability and capability in relation to training.

8. It has also come to light that the majority of those canvassed had not received regular conversations, performance reviews or coaching
9. Metis also, in the main remains a mystery to a significant number of the members spoken to.
10. The PCS position of opposing year-end bonus payments and demanding that this extra money is transferred to the pay pot to increase pay rises for all was almost unanimously supported.
11. I met with the PDR implementation team and the PDR interventions team to make them aware of the numerous issues raised by members during these meetings, and look forward to ensuring that member's views are heard in all appropriate forums.
12. On a positive note, members made me aware, that at this stage, they feel that the current system is an improvement over the previous process.

### **Grievance Consultation: BHD**

13. The GEC have been very aware that the current system of using the grievance process to deal with BHD can be cumbersome and prolong any dispute which in the main is not helpful in resolving the issue. Whilst we accept that where the case will result in serious disciplinary outcome, that there needs to be a clear and auditable path to that conclusion, in more simple cases the procedure can cause more distress that it deals with. PCS are therefore working with HR to try and develop amendments to the procedure to enable a prompt and satisfactory outcome to complaints raised.

### **People Survey**

14. Following the carrying of motion A16 at the 2017 Group Conference the GEC opted to continue our boycott of the People survey. PCS advised Home Office of our continuing boycott and advised members and branches through BB 29/17 and MB 55/17. Whilst I have yet to do a full analysis of the survey results, it would appear that the boycott was well supported with a minimal improvement in engagement and response rate. The GEC continue to engage with Home Office to improve the outcome of the staff survey results and attempt to ensure that appropriate action is taken as a result of the survey.

### **Travel & Subsistence**

15. I have been consistently aware that despite the changes to the policy on subsistence claims and the move to actual, last year, the .limits up to which actual can be claimed have not been amended. Although I have made representations in the strongest terms that the limits should be increased. I was unable to make much progress on this subject during the year. To try and change this situation I have raised this issue up to Second Permanent Secretary level and hope that by the next Annual report we can report that this issue is now resolved.

### **Apprenticeships**

16. The apprentice scheme has now begun, and Home Office have recruited a number of apprentices across the department. Unfortunately I have to report that the apprenticeship experience, in the main has so far not been a good one. This has been brought about by insufficient training, lack of guidance for apprentice managers and limited opportunities for apprentices to experience varied work.
17. PCS have engaged regularly to attempt to improve this situation and will continue to do so, until we feel that the apprentices are getting a fair deal, and managers receiving the support and guidance necessary to ensure that apprentices receive a valuable and constructive experience.

### **Pensions and Allowances**

18. This year has involved complex negotiations on underpayment of pension contributions on certain allowances. MB68 & 69/17 were issued to members to try and update the situation, and as we go forward and Home Office calculate what potential arrears may be for members the negotiations will continue to address the many issues. In the meantime all I can offer is a reassurance that we will be pressing that member's best interests are represented and I will continue to issue updates as and when I receive them.

### **Professional and Managers Association**

19. There has been little to report in relation to the PMA, but we are hoping in the coming year that we will be able to engage and promote PMA amongst eligible members.

## **Section 8**

### **Assistant Group Secretary, Kevin Mills**

#### **Border Force**

1. 2017 has seen some significant senior management changes in Border Force (BF) with the departures of the Director General, Sir Charles Montgomery, Chief Operating Officer Philip Duffy, and Head of HR Steve Corkerton. The arrival of Paul Lincoln (DG) and Emma Moore (COO) has resulted in some changes to engagement and policy, which PCS are hoping can remain positive and we have expressed our willingness to progress engagement and negotiate the best deals possible for our Border Force members. I will touch on some of the major areas in my report.

#### **Brexit**

2. I have met with Home Office, up to Second Perm Secretary level regarding possible impact of Brexit on BF. At this time there appears to be little information available regarding the impact, apart from the fears, I am sure that all members feel that we are not prepared. Positive action appears to be the additional 300 staff. I am advised that the advertisement for the balance of the 252 posts already advertised has now been agreed. PCS fear that although these are currently additional posts, they will eventually be absorbed into normal head count so without the required funding going forward this uplift will be eventually lost. The 300 are to be employed pre Brexit to allow existing teams to receive the required training.
3. I have continued to raise the concerns which could potentially impact on international trade and the potential impact of no deal on trade, and will continue to press on this issue as the implications will be wide ranging and significant.
4. PCS have and will continue to campaign for an adequately resourced Department to face not only the current but future challenges facing us.

#### **Operation Swiftarrow**

5. Swiftarrow is a joint operation run with HMRC. It is the UK's response to two critical reports on HMRC's activity to tackle undervaluation. BF agreed to provide the Tobacco resource which was funded by HMRC. PCS insisted that it should involve volunteer's only and raised concerns re any unworked premium hours.
6. The two locations identified for the intensification exercise were LHR and Bicester. Volunteers were only sought for the latter. After initial concerns I have not been made aware of any issues. We will continue to monitor the situation and deal with issues as they arise.

#### **BF H&S**

7. As with all areas of Home Office Health and Safety remains of paramount importance. During the year I have raised a number of issues ranging from fitness testing, diesel particulates and stab vest trials and proper support for members suffering from PTSD. I shall work closely with the GEC H&S team to protect member's interests.

### **Independent Inspector**

8. I have during the year met with David Bolt to discuss reports that have been produced by his team. I am aware that there are a number of forthcoming inspections and will work with the Independent Inspector to deal with ongoing issues which his reports will no doubt highlight.

### **Duress**

9. Following a recent well publicised case I raised the issue of duress, and where and to whom would an officer highlight their concern should they or their family be threatened (the bank manager scenario) .It has become apparent that we have no policy on this. Initially I have been advised that officers should report it to their line manager. Following further questions BF advised staff that if they feel unable to report it to their line managers they were to contact the HO Security Aftercare Team, providing an E mail address. I advised the Director NOCC and OAD that this was not acceptable and that a policy needed to be formulated. I am hoping that we will be engaging in the near future to formulate an acceptable policy to deal with this.

### **Seasonal Workforce (SWF)**

10. PCS has continually raised concerns at the over reliance on SWF, lack of training and that they are not held to the same level of account as substantive staff. Concerns have also been raised as to the roles that they are covering. The Chief Operating Officer advised me that they are reviewing SWF with the intention of changing the way they are employed.
11. Following PCS pressure, BF has now issued a reminder that SWF must only be used for what they were recruited for i.e. PCP work up to the IS81 stage. BF gave an assurance to the Civil Service Commissioners that the SWF would be from a restricted cohort and only used for a limited range of work. I am advised that The Civil Service Commission is now auditing the Home Office Quarterly, in part because of concerns raised about SWF usage.

### **BF Specials**

12. Members will no doubt have seen the press reports relating to the issue of the deployment of volunteers to conduct frontline work. PCS have been opposed to this from the outset, and will continue to make our views heard should this progress beyond the "Ideas" stage.

### **AHW**

13. A number of Branches have raised concerns regarding AHA/AHW and in an attempt to raise the level of knowledge in the Branches, every branch has been invited to send delegates to workshops organized by the AHW team.

- 14.** In addition to my Border Force role, I remain part of the Personnel and AHW team, and as has been reported elsewhere ensure that BF member's views and issues are raised in these forums to deliver where possible the outcomes members would expect.
- 15.** Can I also pass on my thanks to the current BF Team and officers of the GEC for their support and assistance during the year.

## Section 9

### Assistant Group Secretary, Chris Kelly

#### UKVI

1. A very difficult and uncertain year has passed for UKVI. This is not the end of it, the forthcoming year (2018) has more uncertainty, not helped by the Government and the Department running around like headless chickens over leaving the European Union and whatever treaty is agreed or not. You can expect more office closures, or consolidation, more transformation (whatever that is), more re-structure, yet ever more unnecessary change and of course new ways of working which in reality is just renaming what is done already. What does this do to you? It leaves you with uncertainty, lack of cohesion and worried about your job.
2. Another year has passed with very little progress on the concerns and problems faced by members working in UKVI. We start a new year with this uncertainty, especially the decision to leave the EU and its impact on the work of our members, together with ongoing budgetary constraints. The desire to have you multi-skilled and transferable may be great for some careers, but for others it's over worked with learning too many skills in too many areas. The Joint Workforce Program has now become a permanent way of working, but this has been mainly one way traffic. However, the Director General (DG) of HMPO/UKVI has made it clear that the future will have staff from both HMPO and UKVI working in each area as the demand requires.
3. Most of you will be aware of the heavy reliance by the department on overtime, incentivised over time together with increased target levels to deal with the ever increasing WIP. Surely an indicator of low staffing levels. Some areas will, and have already been impacted by the decision to leave the EU. How this unplanned-for work is dealt with in the future will be the subject of many discussions with management. This work will increase as soon as any detail of leaving the EU is known.
4. PCS have met with the new DG (Mark Thomson) of UKVI and HMPO on a number of occasions and expressed your concerns. He stated that he wanted to continue with a mixed economy with a mixed work force using part timers, agency, transferring staff and overtime as the business needed. PCS raised our concerns with this approach and that a permanent regular work force would be better and should be aimed for.

#### UKVI General Issues

5. There has been a re-organization of UKVI and the ramifications for staff have still to be established and the new roles and areas assimilated.
6. Again the people's survey has highlighted the significant high levels of BHD within UKVI, and this has been raised both with the Director General, Mark Thompson but also with the second permanent Home Secretary. This will be an issue PCS will be highlighting and pursuing with the Department.

7. Throughout the UKVI PCS has concerns with grading and has raised this time and again with the Department who have ignored PCS and your concerns.

### **Appeals and Litigation (ALD)**

8. This year saw the closure of the office in Stoke, with most staff relocating to either Birmingham or Manchester and a small number moving into the CTS, possibly leaving the Department. PCS worked closely with the Department to ensure that staff redundancies were to be kept to the minimum.

### **Asylum (ACD)**

9. This year saw the opening of what was to be an experimental way of working, with elements that gave grave concern to PCS; Operation Foxborough and the new (ish) office in Bootle, (see members brief HO/MB065/17 on this). This office is highly likely to be permanent and its new staff which is good news. However, Next Generation Casework is the head banner for the Department but in reality it's the same system with a new title. There are many issues to be resolved with this project, but one of many outcomes has been the recruitment of more staff and the conversion of agency staff to full time employees.
10. Yet again, further and extensive criticism of Asylum intake and casework by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICIBI), of these issues many have been around for years. One of the highlighted concerns for the Inspector (ICIBI) and major concern for PCS is that last year's report by ICIBI, which again criticised the Department was not acted upon by the Department. The department has effectively apologised for that inaction but PCS will pursue this.

### **Premium Service Centres (PSC)**

11. Unfortunately the Department has made the decision to close the PSC network and put out to contract the frontline services. The negotiations on this have only just started, with staff affected informed. PCS has raised many concerns, to which some answers are still awaited. PCS will do all it can to prevent job losses, and the transfer of any staff to any new provider under TUPE.

### **Permanent Migration (PM)**

12. It is now clear that as a result of the EU referendum EURO work has significantly increased, and will continue to do so as the UK moves closer to leaving the EU. It is also clear to PCS that a lack of, or limited pre-consideration has been given to this eventuality. Hence there appears to be panic within Euro and the wider UKVI senior management with the realisation that leaving the EU is just around the corner and there will be 3.5 million Europeans to be processed for some form of residence in the UK within two years. More staff will be required, more resources and with a big question mark over the new IT (ATLAS) system working, or not, let alone even being compatible. But no need to panic the Department have Plan B ready! PCS has written to management with a list of concerns and how the Department intends to proceed with this work and we await a reply. At the same time PCS is in continuous engagement with Directors and the DG on this and other issues.



## **Section 10**

**Assistant Group Secretary, Stephen Taylor**

No contribution received.

## Section 11

Assistant Group Secretary, Patricia Corrigan

### **Personal Casework Coordination, Freedom of Information & specific Policy areas**

1. I assumed responsibility for this area of work in November 2017.
2. The team consists of Mike Chew, Malcolm Speechley and myself. Some health issues have prevented a planned handover from the original team. This has affected the pace of progress with these areas of work but we have pulled together to produce a list of caseworking advice specifically based on problematic evidence gathered from PCS HO GEC members. We will also refer reps to the general caseworking guidance on the PCS website.
3. The GEC has asked that we produce a BB specifically around CSIBS (Civil Service Injury Benefit Scheme) process and include reference to the PCS HO Attendance Management Toolkit.
4. We have asked colleagues to contact us to highlight particularly difficult types of cases and particularly high volumes of case types with which their branches are dealing. This will allow us to track trends and provide statistics to GEC colleagues.
5. Requests for assistance around Freedom of Information requests have been minimal.
6. More work needs to be done around the Policy area of my responsibility, in which I'm supported by Dil Joshi, in the SCT (Security & Counter Terrorism), CPF (Crime Policing & Fire) and IIP (International & Immigration Policy). Next year's report will contain more detail of engagement & progress in these areas.

## Appendix A

### Home Office Group Executive Committee 2017/18

<b>Group President</b>	Nigel BULLER (until July 17)
<b>Group Vice President</b>	James COX (from May 17)
<b>Group Secretary</b>	Mike JONES
<b>Assistant Group Secretaries</b>	Martin ANDREWS Malcolm DAVEY Lawrence DUNNE (from May 17 to Dec 17) Sharon EDWARDS (from May 17) Christopher KELLY Kevin MILLS Stephen TAYLOR (from May 17) Pete WRIGHT
<b>Group Organiser</b>	Lawrence DUNNE (until Dec 17)
<b>Group Treasurer</b>	Sarah WRIGHT
<b>Committee Members</b>	Karen ALDERSON (until Dec 17) Michael CHEW Patricia CORRIGAN (from May 17) Michael CRADLE (until May 17) Joe HARTLEY Dennis HARTY (until May 17) Joel HEYES (from May 17) Owen HUGHES (from May 17) Mark HUTTON (until May 17) Dil JOSHI Neil MASTERS Fidel MCLEAN (until May 17) Richard PAYNE Michael RICHARDS Alan SHAW Denise SPEAKMAN Malcolm SPEECHLEY Gerard VAUGHAN (until May 17) Simon WILLIAMS

## Appendix B

### GEC Attendance 2017

The following table shows, the attendance record of GEC members at Group Executive Committee meetings between **February and December 2017: 7-8 February 2017, 9-10 May 2017, 21 June 2017, 19-20 July 2017, 4-5 October 2017 & 28-29 November 2017**, Absence from GEC meetings could be due to other urgent union business, sick leave or domestic leave.

Name	POST	Possible Attendances	Actual Attendance
Nigel BULLER (until July 17)	President	3	2
James COX	Vice President	6	6
Sarah WRIGHT	Treasurer	6	0
Lawrence DUNNE (until Dec 17)	Organiser	6	4
Martin ANDREWS	Assistant Group Secretary	6	4
Malcolm DAVEY	Assistant Group Secretary	6	4
Lawrence DUNNE	Assistant Group Secretary	6	4
Sharon EDWARDS	Assistant Group Secretary	6	6
Christopher KELLY	Assistant Group Secretary	6	6
Kevin MILLS	Assistant Group Secretary	6	6
Stephen TAYLOR	Assistant Group Secretary	6	4
Pete WRIGHT	Assistant Group Secretary	6	6
Karen ALDERSON (until Dec 17)	GEC Member	6	3
Michael CHEW	GEC Member	6	3
Patricia CORRIGAN	GEC Member	6	5
Paul CRADLE (until May 17)	GEC Member	2	2
Joe HARTLEY	GEC Member	6	4
Dennis HARTY (until May 17)	GEC Member	2	1
Joel HEYES (from May 17)	GEC Member	4	3
Owen HUGHES (from May 17)	GEC Member	4	2
Mark HUTTON (until May 17)	GEC Member	2	2
Dil JOSHI	GEC Member	6	5
Neil MASTERS	GEC Member	6	5
Fidel MCLEAN (until May 17)	GEC Member	2	1
Richard PAYNE	GEC Member	6	4
Michael RICHARDS	GEC Member	6	5
Alan SHAW	GEC Member	6	5
Denise SPEAKMAN	GEC Member	6	5
Malcolm SPEECHLEY	GEC Member	6	6
Gerard VAUGHAN (until May 17)	GEC Member	2	1
Simon WILLIAMS	GEC Member	6	4
Mike JONES	Group Secretary	6	5

## Appendix C

### Index of Branch Briefings 2017

No.	Date	Title	Author
001	12/01/17	Conference Briefing No. 1	Mike Jones
002	25/01/17	Strengthening Our Union	Lawrence Dunne
003	22/02/17	Notify Group Office of Branch Reps following AGMs	Mike Jones
004	28/02/17	HO Position on Granting Time to Attend AGMs, Mandating Meetings and Conference	Mike Jones
005	02/03/17	Access to New Recruits	James Cox, Kevin Mills
006	13/03/17	Conference Briefing No. 2	Mike Jones
007	17/03/17	Access to Work	Pete Wright
008	22/03/17	Pay Day Protests- Are you Prepared	Lawrence Dunne
009	23/03/17	Conference Paper - Group Organising Strategy	Lawrence Dunne
010	24/03/17	Conference Briefing No. 3	Mike Jones
011	31/03/17	Monthly Joiners, Leavers and Personal Comms reports	Lawrence Dunne
012	31/03/17	PDR 2017 Year End	Pete Wright
013	03/04/17	Pay Up Campaign - Branch Survey	Mike Jones
014	06/04/17	Conference Briefing No. 4 - SOC1	Mike Jones
015	13/04/17	Monthly Joiners, Leavers and Personal Comms reports	Lawrence Dunne
016	08/05/17	Monthly Joiners, Leavers and Personal Comms reports	Lawrence Dunne
017	11/05/17	PCS Home Office Group Accounts 2016	Sarah Wright
018	31/05/17	Record of Decisions conference 2017	Mike Jones
019	31.05.17	monthly rep calls	Sharon Edwards
020	05/06/17	Monthly Joiners, Leavers and Personal Comms reports	Lawrence Dunne
021	13/07/17	Monthly Joiners, Leavers and Personal Comms reports	Lawrence Dunne
022	31/07/17	Home Office Group Directory 2017/18	Mike Jones
023	15/08/17	Pay Up campaign (joint with HMRC)	James Cox, Mike Jones, Lorna Merry, Martin Kelsey
024	16/08/17	Home Office Apprentices Update	Pete Wright
025	18/08/17	Monthly Joiners, Leavers and Personal Comms reports	Lawrence Dunne
026	21/08/17	Pay Up campaign - Are you ready? (joint with HMRC and MoJ)	James Cox, Mike Jones, Lorna Merry, Martin Kelsey, Jackie Green, Tony Conway
027	22/08/17	SAR - Initial Advice to reps	Mike Jones
028	29/08/17	Payday protests - still time to organise (joint with HMRC and MoJ)	James Cox, Mike Jones, Lorna Merry, Martin Kelsey, Jackie Green, Tony Conway
029	06/09/17	People Survey 2017	Pete Wright, Kevin Mills
030	21/09/17	Monthly Joiners, Leavers and Personal Comms reports	Lawrence Dunne
031	25/09/17	Calling Notice for nominations for Group Vacancies	Mike Jones
032	25/09/17	Get 'Ballot Ready'	Mike Jones
033	11/10/17	PDR: HO Seek to Engage with Members	Pete W, Kevin Mills
034	23/10/17	Group Structures Review	James Cox, Lawrence Dunne, Mike Jones

035	08/11/17	Monthly Joiners, Leavers and Personal Comms reports	Lawrence Dunne
036	10/11/17	Apprenticeships: Valuable Career Gateway or work on the cheap?	Pete Wright
037	10/11/17	Border Force 300	Kevin Mills
038	13/11/17	Scrap The Cap - Keeping up the pressure	Mike Jones
039	15/12/17	Monthly Joiners, Leavers and Personal Comms reports	Mike Jones

## Index of Members' Briefings 2017

No.	Date	Title	Author
001	12/01/2017	Front Line Magazine Issue 1 2017	Mike Jones
002	20/01/2017	Sopra Steria pay negotiations begin	Mike Jones
003	25/01/2017	Your Union Needs You	Lawrence Dunne
004	27/01/2017	HMPO Examiner Transformation Programme	Denise Speakman, Sharon Edwards
005	30/01/2017	Performance Management: Transitional Arrangements	Peter Wright
006	03/02/2017	Performance Management 2017 - update	Peter Wright
007	09/02/2017	Annual Report 2016	Nigel Buller
008	21/02/2017	HMPO Attendance Management	Sharon Edwards
009	21/02/2017	HMPO PO3 Remit	Sharon Edwards
010	24/02/2017	Orgreave Truth & Justice Campaign Demo 13 March	Mike Jones
011	13/03/2017	Social Media Changes	Pete Wright
012	13/03/2017	HO Redundancy Procedures	James Cox
013	22/03/2017	Support Our Campaign	Lawrence Dunne
014	23/03/2017	UK Visas Work - A Tale of Woe	Stephen Taylor, Chris Kelly
015	03/04/2017	Performance Management Introduction	Pete Wright
016	13/04/2017	New Civil Service Recruitment Framework	Lawrence Dunne, James Cox
017	19/04/2017	Sopra Steria Pay Ballot 2017	Mike Jones
018	19/04/2017	ACS Trial	Kevin Mills/Stephen Taylor
019	20/04/2017	Pay Delay	Mike Jones
020	24/04/2017	General Election 2017: MYVC	Mike Jones
021	25/04/2017	Yammer in HMPO	Sharon Edwards, Karen Alderson
022	26/04/2017	UKVI Update	Chris Kelly
023	26/04/2017	General Election 2017: Message to Civil Servants	Mike Jones
024	03/05/2017	Sopra Steria (HMPO) Pay Ballot Result 2017	Mike Jones
025	04/05/2017	Licence to Operate - Update	Kevin Mills
026	08/05/2017	AWH Year End Balances	Pete Wright/Kevin Mills
027	08/05/2017	JEGS - How does it relate to You?	Patricia Corrigan/Stephen Taylor
028	11/05/2017	PCS thoughts around Telematics Guidance	Patricia Corrigan/Simon Williams
029	17/05/2017	GEC Election 2017: Results	Mike Jones
030	18/05/2017	FRONT LINE (ISSUE 2) 2017 PAY UP!	Mike Jones
031	18/05/2017	Home Office Pay Negotiations Begin	Mike Jones
032	31/05/2017	HMPO multi skilled teams survey	Sharon Edwards
033	31/05/2017	General Election you can change the outcome	Mike Jones
034	12/06/2017	Equality Survey	Sharon Edwards
035	14/06/2017	Performance Management BF Goals	Pete Wright
036	16/06/2017	HO Pay 2017-18: Pause to Scrap the Cap	HO Pay Team
037	16/06/2017	RRR Changes	James Cox
038	20/06/2017	Yammer in HMPO	Sharon Edwards
039	20/06/2017	MST Survey Closing	Sharon Edwards
040	20/06/2017	HMPO PO3 Remit update	Sharon Edwards
041	22/06/2017	July 1st Demo	Lawrence Dunne

042	26/06/2017	IE Plans to Shut Down CFI and ICE Units	Stephen Taylor, James Cox
043	30/06/2017	Immigration Enforcement's CFI & ICE Plans PCS Raise A Formal Complaint	Stephen Taylor
044	06/07/2017	Op Camas	Stephen Taylor/Patricia Corrigan
045	18/07/2017	Smarter Working	Martin Andrews
046	21/07/2017	CCTV On Enforcement Vehicles	Stephen Taylor/Martin Andrews
047	21/07/2017	Group President Resignation	Mike Jones
048	27/07/2017	Premium Service Centre Closures	Chris Kelly
049	28/07/2017	Enforcement Lapses in PST3 Refresher Training	Stephen Taylor/Martin Andres
050	03/08/2017	HO Pay 2017-18: Further Talks Take Place	Mike Jones, James Cox, Lawrence Dunne
051	09/08/2017	HO Pay 2017 -18: Final Offer Received	HO Pay Team
052	16/08/2017	Scrap the cap - Pay up in Home Office!	HO Pay Team
053	05/09/2017	Pension Problems for SDA Staff	Stephen Taylor
054	11/09/2017	Farewell Mon Ami	Mike Jones
055	14/09/2017	Home Office People Survey	Pete Wright and Kevin Mills
056	18/09/2017	Nigel Buller Funeral Details	Mike Jones
057	25/09/2017	Home Office Brexit Plans Leak	Mike Jones
058	28/09/2017	Scrap the Cap - Get Involved	Lawrence Dunne
059	13/10/2017	Redgrave Concerns	Mike Richards
060	01/11/2017	Free gift for all PCS members	Mike Jones
061	07/11/2017	E-Gate Monitoring Officer Role Doubled	Kevin Mills, Stephen Taylor, Mike Chew
062	09/11/2017	Support Colleagues in DWP	Mike Jones
063	09/11/2017	Government Told to Pay up Now by its own workers	Mike Jones
064	14/11/2017	ROMs Transformation	Stephen Taylor
065	28/11/2017	Asylum - Next Generation Casework	Mike Richards
066	28/11/2017	HMPO CSO Closures Latest	Sharon Edwards, Denise Speakman, Malcolm Speechley
067	08/12/2017	Lanyard Liabilities	Martin Andrews, Patricia Corrigan, H&S Team
068	11/12/2017	Pension Contribution Problems	Pete Wright, Stephen Taylor
069	13/12/2017	Pension Contribution Problems: Further Update	Pete Wright



## Appendix D

### Progress of motions - Home Office group conference 2017

Motion	No.	Instruction	Progress
<b>Section: Organising</b>			
A1 GEC Carried Group Organising Strategy	1	<p><b>There will be a PCS voice and presence in every Home Office workplace:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· One or more union rep or contact point/advocate in every workplace in the Group</li> <li>· Separate branch BEC positions to be filled by individual members</li> <li>· BEC's meeting regularly and functioning effectively</li> <li>· Significant increase in PCS advocates</li> </ul>	The PCS strategic review has resulted in PCS full time officers work being directed to supporting branches where necessary on recruitment work and building up their reps structures. Work has continued on identifying and supporting new reps and workplace advocates. However this is an ongoing process and more needs to be done to see all branches in a healthy position with full BEC's and reps in every workplace.
	2	<p><b>All branches will undertake regular organising activity and record outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Retaining members and recruiting non-members, including ensuring union intervention at induction events.</li> <li>· Improving our density levels.</li> <li>· Mapping branch membership so we know who and where our members are.</li> <li>· Distribution and communication methods in place so we can communicate independently from the employer and in a range of ways which interest members and motivate them to engage in the work of the union.</li> <li>· GECLO's to support branches in their activity and provide detailed reports to the GEC.</li> <li>· To further support our bargaining and industrial strategy members should be encouraged to contribute to the PCS fighting fund.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Membership joiners and leavers issued to all braches monthly.</li> <li>· Year 2017 (1 Jan-31 Dec) joiners 1112 / leavers 1094 (+18). Compare year 2016 (1 Jan-31 Dec) joiners 884 / leavers 1252 (-368)</li> <li>· Personal email and mobile number collection data has been issued to all branches each month.</li> <li>· Comms. independent from the employer: Year to date (1 Jan-1Nov 2017) +527 mobile no.s / +382 personal emails / +252 work emails</li> <li>· GEC Liaison Officer's report to each GEC on branches they have responsibility for.</li> <li>· PCS full time officer deployment support has been given to branches. Projects in Croydon and Sheffield have been reasonably successful in building organisation and recruitment of new members.</li> </ul>

	3	<p><b>Our structures will reflect the diversity of our membership:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Implement a Young Members Organising Strategy.</li> <li>· Improving the data we hold on black, disabled and LGBT members.</li> <li>· Re-build our Group equality networks to ensure that members in protected groups have a voice in our work and decision making.</li> <li>· Significantly increase amount of women activists in the Group.</li> </ul>	This is an area where the group have not made as much progress as we would have wished. We recognise the importance of this and will refocus our efforts in delivering on these objectives.
	4	<p><b>We will strengthen the support and training for reps to carry out their work:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Further development and roll out of Group specific training for reps.</li> <li>· Organising toolkit for branches to be developed and issued.</li> <li>· Reps Development checklist to be issued, to assist branches in tracking the development of new reps.</li> <li>· Pairing branches where necessary to share best practice.</li> </ul>	· Where possible and necessary we have paired branches. For example HO Merseyside branch are allowing HMPO North West branch to use their website and have helped with distribution of briefings. HO Wales branch have paired with HMPO Wales & SW branch that is moribund to distribute members briefings and pick up personal cases.
A2 HMPO Northern Carried HMO Joint Working	5	<b>Determine a regular schedule of teleconferences, advertised to branches well in advance to maximise participation.</b>	Schedule shared with Branch Officers in July/August 2017 up until May 2018.
	6	<b>Use these meetings to develop a bargaining agenda for formal employment relations with the employer within HMPO</b>	Information from these calls is used to progress & highlight HMPO issues, and are added to the bargaining agenda.
	7	<b>Commit to timely dissemination of minutes from the teleconferences to HMPO Branch Executive Committees</b>	Notes of meetings are taken by a volunteer on the call, when cleared by a GEC member they are shared as soon as possible.
	8	<b>Consider how to use these structures to improve joint working between members in HMPO and Sopra Steria to progress the PCS bargaining agenda, improve members' remuneration and working conditions, and challenge the privatisation agenda.</b>	Joint working happening in some offices. However, not all sites have a Sopra Steria rep. Work ongoing on this.
	9	<b>Further consider whether PCS Link can be utilised to improve this process.</b>	This is only feasible if staff can travel to their local PCS hub, due to the lack of participation this option wouldn't work.
A6 HMPO Northern Carried	10	<b>Liase with all HMPO branches with regards to developing a campaign for the return in-house of File Holding activities</b>	Discussed on rep calls but little feedback received on how to progress a campaign.
	11	<b>Consider novel ways of engaging members to apply pressure to the employer and on Home Office Ministers</b>	Outsourcing raised with Diane Abbott, Feb 2018.

Privatisation of the file holding function of HMPO	12	<b>Seek the assistance of the PCS Parliamentary Group in this campaign</b>	A number of HMPO issues have been raised with the PCS Parliamentary group throughout the year including HMPO relationship with Sopra Steria.
	13	<b>Co-ordinate joint working between HMPO and Sopra Steria branches in order to campaign for parity of pay, terms and conditions, thus negating the financial benefits of out-sourcing, and the eventual inward transfer of Sopra Steria staff under Transfer of Undertaking, Protection of Employment legislation</b>	There has been some joint working at branch level however more needs to be done on this. We have raised objections to work being given to private employers and have continued to call for outsourced work to be brought back in house.
	14	<b>Further develop this joint working to improve organisational structures and membership density in all branches.</b>	Further work needs to be done to meet this instruction.
<b>Section: Departmental Structures and Staffing</b>			
A10 HO West London Carried Casualisation of BF	15	<b>Instructs the incoming GEC to do everything it can to address these concerns in favour of a unionised, properly trained, properly staffed and properly funded organisation</b>	There appears to be a mind shift on Seasonal Workforce (SWF) in the centre with a view that work should be done on contracts, dependency and in favour of permanent staff. Acceptance that they should have full training, including PST.
	16	<b>Raise these issues at a national level, both within the Home Office and PCS.</b>	Staffing/SWF/SURGE are raised at all meetings with BF HR and COO. Continue to feed into PCS Brexit strategy. Issues raised with Independent Inspector.
	17	<b>Consider utilising the media to publically express our concerns at the threat this poses both to our members and to national security as a result.</b>	Local and National media used to raise concerns – especially in light of Brexit. PMQ's – We have worked with Shadow Home Secretary & Parliamentary Group who have raised a number of PMQ's. Meetings with MPs and Shadow Minister. Addressed the Parliamentary sub-committee. Press enquiries – BF specials. Large coverage of plans to bring in volunteers in the form of Border Force Specials and then set out PCS' opposition to this.r
A12 HO Croydon Carried AIO Pathway	18	<b>Raise a complaint firstly within the Department and then with the Civil Service Commissioners (in the case of an unsatisfactory internal response) on the basis that the promotion to IO from AIO at the end of the pathway is not subject to open and fair recruitment principles.</b>	Complaint has been raised with the department over AIO pathway compliance with open & fair competition. The Commission deal with complaints regarding external competition rather than internal promotions. We are currently exploring avenues to address our concerns.

		<b>Conference instructs the GEC to update members of progress of this by the 31 October 2017.</b>	
A13 HO West London Remitted Downgrading of Visa work	19	<b>Prevent grade drift and to ensure that the decision making and credibility work undertaken as part of UKVI visa work remains an EO or equivalent function, and to report back on events by 1st December 2017 at the latest.</b>	We have continued to raise this at appropriate forums including at Director General level. We also raised this when giving oral evidence to the Home Affairs select committee in November 2017. Unfortunately we have not been able to move the employer on this yet.
A14 HO Merseyside Carried Agency Staff	20	<b>Conduct analysis on the total number of agency staff in post across the Home Office, including HMPO.</b>	As of December 2017 1397 (HC) Agency staff work in the Home Office (including HMPO).
	21	<b>Obtain details on the length of time some of our agency colleagues have been in post.</b>	386 individuals have been engaged over one year and less than two. 345 have been with us over two years.
	22	<b>Review whether any legal avenue exists to exert pressures on the Department to review and regularise posts.</b>	Preliminary legal advice indicates that automatic regularisation is not possible.
	23	<b>To ascertain the total cost of the use of agency staff across the Home Office estate including any items such as overtime costs, bonuses, agency fees etc.</b>	The Home Office annual report 2016 showed an increases of £5m paid to agencies on the previous year. This rose from £20m in 2015 to £25m in 2016. We have not seen the 2017 figure yet.  At one Home Office building alone, The Capital Building in Liverpool there were 24,000 days of overtime worked since April 2015 to October 2017. This is the equivalent to employing and extra 100 full time staff.
	24	<b>To call upon the Home Office to regularise post as soon as practically possible, as applicable.</b>	We have continued to raise this with the Home Office. In January 2018 in UKVI nationality, European casework and permanent migration Home Office announced plans to offer 200 agency staff to convert to FTA contracts for 18 months.
	25	<b>To push for a robust mechanism if agency staff are to be used in the future in lieu of Civil Service posts.</b>	The issue of long term agency use has been raised with the Second Permanent Secretary and prioritised by management. We have been informed that HR will be taking a more active compliance role. However, we are yet to see any significant reductions in their number.
	26	<b>Publish an MB outlining the issue to members on progress made.</b>	

A15 HO Croydon Carried Contractors	27	<b>Raise questions with the department to ascertain the capability of those home office posts formerly filled by civil servants now undertaken by agency staff/consultants</b>	
	28	<b>Request a cost analysis of the cost of employing these temporary staff against the cost of employing civil servants</b>	
	29	<b>Highlight to members the waste involved in making staff redundant and re-filling posts with agency workers/consultants</b>	
	30	<b>Use this waste to campaign for a properly resourced department, engaging with the PCS parliamentary group to raise questions in parliament.</b>	
EM1 HMPO Northern Remitted Overtime	31	<b>Continue to campaign for a properly resourced Passport Office, such that work can be completed within normal contracted hours.</b>	
	32	<b>For all staff to be sufficiently paid that the requirement to supplement salary with overtime is negated. In the meantime, before these changes take effect, conference further instructs the GEC to:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Campaign to open up negotiations with HMPO Directors to reverse these changes across the organisation.</li> <li>· Simultaneously organise members to campaign against these changes, including through an overtime ban if members support this.</li> <li>· Involve the widest possible number of stakeholders in an industrial, political and media-focused campaign.</li> <li>· Ensure that members of the HM Revenue &amp; Customs (HMRC) Surge Team covering HMPO work are included in this process.</li> <li>· Ensure that PCS members working in other parts of the Home Office are on terms and conditions no less favourable than these.</li> </ul>	
<b>Section: Industrial Relations</b>			
A16 GEC Carried HO People Survey	33	<b>Conference therefore instructs the GEC to use the threat of a continued boycott to seek further concessions from the employer with a view to amending the group position of boycott should progress be made with the employer.</b>	We were not offered sufficient concessions by October 2017 and the GEC took the decision to continue the boycott for the 2017 Home Office people survey.
	34	<b>Conference gives the GEC the authority to decide whether sufficient concessions and protections have been made before putting a</b>	See point 33 above.

		<b>recommendation to members supporting the continuation of the boycott or completion of the People Survey</b>	<p>PCS have continued to engage with the Home office to seek concessions. We have met with the Permanent Secretary who was keen to find a way of getting PCS to drop its boycott and encourage members to participate in the 2018 survey.</p> <p>We will be going back to the department with our demands to test of agreement can be reached that would allow for a change in the current PCS Home Office group position.</p>
<b>Section: Rules</b>			
A18 GEC Carried Paul McGoay Award	35	<p><b>This conference agrees to amend the Group Constitution as follows: Insert the following new rule after rule 32 and renumber all subsequent rules accordingly:</b></p> <p><i><b>“An award will be presented at conference annually called ‘The Paul McGoay award’. This award will be presented to a PCS member who has demonstrated a meritorious contribution to PCS in the Home Office group through the year. This rule is subject to the nomination process and award provisions outlined at Annex A of this Constitution.”</b></i></p>	<p>In line with MAB.020-17 the group secretary sent the revised constitution to the general secretary’s office on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2017 to be referred to the NEC Constitution and Rules Sub Committee. Response received from the GS office on 1 December 2017 agreeing the amendments.</p> <p>October GEC agreed to two GEC members to deal with the process, timetable and practicalities of calling for nominations and award presentation. In preparation for Conf. 2018. Badges have been ordered and certificates sourced.</p> <p>HO/BB/006/18 Conference Briefing no1. Contained the new revised constitution.</p> <p>HO/BB/004/18 issued on 11/01/18 calling for nominations.</p>
<b>Section: Personnel</b>			
A19 HO West London Carried HR Advice	36	<b>This conference instructs the GEC to negotiate with the Department an agreement that managers receive proper training prior to being asked to make HR related decisions.</b>	Currently progressing but no formal answers received from the Home Office.
	37	<b>All advice from HR or Shared Services, or involvement from more senior managers is minuted and subsequently put to members.</b>	
A20 HO Croydon Remitted Attendance managemen	38	<p><b>Approach the employer and negotiate changes to the guidance regarding line management discretion to include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· A provision which states that staff who have been in accidents or have had unexpected medical emergency’s should also be granted discretion.</li> </ul>	In attempting to deal with the issues raised in Motion A20 we have met with the HR lead on attendance management on a number of occasions.

t line managers discretion		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· A provision which states that line managers should adopt a common sense approach when applying discretion as not all cases will fit perfectly into the examples given.</li> <li>· A clear statement that the examples of when discretion may be appropriate are not an exhaustive list, but merely suggested examples.</li> </ul>	<p>They have highlighted that the examples given in the motion such as IVF are statutory exemptions whereas accidents etc are not. To try and improve the situation around common sense application and discretion, we have worked on a quick guide. This is to be published on Horizon and issued to managers through HRBP's and at wellbeing events.</p> <p>The examples of real life scenarios (Both of which result in no warning) cover both scenarios highlighted.</p>
A21 HO HQ London Carried Attendance Management	39	<p><b>Conference notes 1) Attendance Management Procedure September 2016 2) HR Policy and Guidance on Reasonable Adjustments May 2016 and 3) and Horizon Guidance on Disability Leave</b></p> <p><b>Conference instructs the GEC to negotiate with the Department to make it explicit in the above three HR Policy and Guidance that those staff awaiting implementation of reasonable adjustments should be granted disability leave on full pay, until the required reasonable adjustments are fully in place, where a condition is likely to deteriorate unless those adjustments are put in place, or a member is unable to work effectively without those adjustments</b></p>	<p>Currently progressing but no formal answers received from the Home Office.</p>
A23 DBS Carried Transfers for NDPB employees	40	<p><b>Instructs the GEC to push for all transfers into and out of Home Office NDPBs to be treated as internal moves for terms and conditions purposes.</b></p>	<p>We made representation to the Home Office. However the response we received was 'staff from DBS joining the Home Office are treated in the same way as staff joining the HO from an OGD i.e. they are expected to accept modernised T&amp;Cs as a condition of the move whether on level transfer or promotion. DBS staff are not HO employees as they have separate T&amp;Cs.'</p> <p>Obviously the response is not satisfactory and we will continue to press where the Home Office is the parent Department then staff working for an NDPB transferring from the NDPB to a Home Office role should be treated as an internal move.</p>
A24 HO Croydon	41	<p><b>Approach the Department in order to initiate an investigation into whether adverts for jobs have been adequately equality impact</b></p>	<p>The Home Office equality unit have been approached regarding this issue. In response they stated that there was no central control or</p>

Carried Essential criteria in job adverts		<b>assessed, whether skills and requirements are actually needed and whether they can be objectively justified as requirements.</b>	regulation of job adverts and recruitment criteria prior to the publication of CS Jobs. This unsatisfactory reply continues to be challenged and we request that examples of potentially discriminatory job specifications are forwarded to the GEC.
A25 HO Croydon Carried AWH Policy	42	<b>This conference instructs the GEC to commence talks with the Department with a view to amending the AHW policy to reflect the changes to band D.</b>	
A27 HO Croydon Carried Rail Delays	43	<b>This conference instructs the GEC to renegotiate the travel disruption guidance with the aim of ensuring that delays caused by their public transport provider e.g. cancellations, accidents are covered by flexi updates.</b>	Currently progressing but no formal answers received from the Home Office.
A28 HMPO Northern Part time public holidays	44	<b>Conference instructs the GEC to investigate the issues surrounding part time staff whose working days land predominantly on public holidays. Evaluate whether there are discriminatory aspects to the HO policy and provide direction to members and representatives in how to calculate their pro rata entitlement correctly.</b>	<p>PCS wrote to the Home Office and received a response stating:</p> <p><i>“public and privilege holidays are pro-rated for part time staff, converted to hours and added to their annual leave allowance. When they take a public or privilege holiday, the number of hours they would have worked on that day are deducted from their total entitlement.</i></p> <p><i>“In some cases it may be possible for employees to work in another location or to work on an alternative day if their usual place of work is not open on a public holiday, but this may not always suit business requirements.”</i></p> <p>There is a calculation on part time workers entitlement on <a href="#">Horizon</a></p> <p>Motions progressed although not in the way that the moving branch would have wished. Feedback provided to the moving branch.</p>
<b>Section : Pay</b>			



A29 HO Croydon Carried Performance Related Pay	45	<b>This conference therefore instructs the GEC that any negotiations around pay should not be on the basis of performance related pay or that progression be linked to performance.</b>	<p>PCS have consistently held this line with the Home Office during negotiations. Unfortunately the Home Office have not yet changed their position and non-consolidated bonuses payments linked to PDR outcomes are still being paid.</p> <p>Pay progression has not been linked to performance other than, as has been the case for many years those on a performance improvement plan do not get an award.</p>
A30 HO West London <b>Remitted</b> Pay for members receiving legacy allowances	46	<b>Ensure that members receive a pay rise in 2017 regardless of their terms and conditions.</b>	This was included in the PCS pay claim. We were therefore again disgusted that members who remain on legacy allowances (SDA & AAA) did not receive anything in 2017. The department have justified this by stating that they aim to convert everyone to AHA. However their methodology essentially amounts to starving them out. Recognising, but not accepting the department's position, PCS put forward counter proposals to give members on legacy allowances non-consolidated rises. This would mean that they would not progress within their ranges as they would do normally, but would be a recognition of their financial situation. This proposal would not have created any structural pay liabilities or in our opinion cost significant amounts, however the department rejected this on dogmatic policy grounds.
	47	<b>If the Department chooses to refuse those on Legacy allowances a pay rise in 2017 the GEC should urgently request an equality breakdown of staff who remain on Legacy Allowances on the date the 2017 pay decision is made.</b>	PCS have formally requested this information from the department.
	48	<b>To again seek legal advice in light of the new equality stats with a view to taking matters forward collectively.</b>	Legal advice has not changed.
	49	<b>Even if collective action is not possible this meeting requires the GEC to actively seek volunteers from protected groups with the strongest individual cases of discrimination, and to take a select few of the strongest cases forward in a coordinated challenge to the pay decision on Legacy allowances.</b>	See instruction no.48 above.

A31 HO Croydon Carried Bonuses	50	<b>Conference therefore instructs the GEC to negotiate for the removal of these enjoyable but nonetheless potentially discriminatory and divisive bonuses.</b>	See instruction no.45 above.
<b>Section: Equality</b>			
A32 HO Merseyside Equality analysis	51	<b>Conference instructs the GEC that the lead for equality, to be aided by members of the GEC and branch leads in this area, completes an Equality analysis on race and ethnicity across all workplaces in the group, in the areas of:</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Recruitment</li> <li>· Dismissals</li> <li>· Recorded incidents of racial abuse, whether this be by staff or members of the public against staff.</li> </ul>	A32-34: the GEC Equalities team have continued to engage the department over improving their record on equality and diversity. At the time of writing we are involved with discussions around the department's new equality & inclusion strategy and the diversity data from 2017 mid year reviews, which show that the GEC position that removal of force ranking would improve results for staff with protected characteristics was correct.  The Equalities team will continue to engage with the department around inclusion and flexible working to deliver results for members
	52	<b>All to be included in Groups equality report 2018 and any members' briefings at the GEC's discretion. Upon completion of this analysis the GEC should also consider taking any arising matters forward, as appropriate.</b>	See instruction no.51 above.
A33 HO Merseyside Carried Term time working patterns	53	<b>Conference instructs the GEC to review this provision with the Department in order to protect our members' interests and seek to devise a policy that fits with the Home Office's perceived family friendly outlook.</b>	See instruction no.51 above.
A34 HO East of England Carried Statutory Flexible working	54	<b>This conference instructs the GEC to seek assurance from HO management that it will not allow arbitrary limits being put in place on workplace statutory flexible working agreement (FWA) requests anywhere in the Home Office.</b>	See instruction no.51 above.

<b>Section: Health and Safety</b>			
A35 HO Croydon Carried Access to defibrillators	55	<b>This conference believes that defibrillators should be available on Home Office property for use in emergency situations and that staff are appropriately trained in their use. Conference instructs the GEC to enter talks with the Department to this end.</b>	<p>Preliminary enquiries indicate that access to AEDs in our various work areas is patchy. Many of the sea and airports where our members carry out their duties are already equipped with defibrillators. The newly refurbished buildings on the Croydon estate (or campus) have also seen the installation of AED. Our Merseyside branch waged a long and ultimately successful campaign which has seen them installed in the Capital Building in Liverpool. However this access to AEDs is not mirrored across all of our work areas, and the GEC have sought to ascertain a more complete national picture of AED availability and access.</p> <p>PCS has made contact with managers undertaking the recently commissioned review of the current policy to establish the feasibility of central funding and support for the installation of defibs across the HO estate. The review is currently obtaining evidence from external experts including the London Ambulance Service</p> <p>The November edition of Front Line journal included an article on defibrillators.</p>
<b>Section: Distinguished Life Memberships</b>			
A36 GEC Carried	56	<b>Conference agrees that Richard Gillingham be awarded distinguished life membership in recognition of his hard work and dedication to PCS and its members in the Home Office group.</b>	Invite letter sent 25 October. Richard has responded to accept pending the conference date not clashing with his academic studies.
A37 GEC Carried	57	<b>Conference agrees that Graeme Johnson be awarded distinguished life membership in recognition of his hard work and dedication to PCS and its members in the Home Office group.</b>	Invite letter sent 25 October. Graeme has responded to accept award at Conference 2018. He has volunteered to help with any conference arrangements as the GEC deem necessary
A38 GEC Carried	58	<b>Conference agrees that Ann Martin be awarded distinguished life membership in recognition of her hard work and dedication to PCS and its members in the Home Office group.</b>	Invite letter sent 25 October. Ann has responded to accept award at Conference 2018. She has volunteered to help with any conference arrangements as the GEC deem necessary
A39 GEC Carried	59	<b>Conference agrees that Clayeon McKenzie be awarded distinguished life membership in recognition of his hard work and dedication to PCS and its members in the Home Office group.</b>	Invite letter sent 25 October. No response as yet

A40 GEC Carried	60	<b>Conference agrees that Neil Seepujak be awarded distinguished life membership in recognition of his hard work and dedication to PCS and its members in the Home Office group.</b>	Invite letter sent 25 October. Neil has responded to accept award at Conference 2018.
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<sup>1</sup>Front Cover: **Nigel Buller (1960-2017)**

Nigel made a momentous contribution to PCS and its predecessor unions for over 35 years. He fondly recounted his times as a customs officer however he sacrificed personal career advancement in the interest of serving union members. Nigel held many roles both at branch and group level including leading the Home Office group as its President for almost 4 years. A truly committed trade unionist, comrade to many and dyed in the wool Evertonian.