



## SCOTTISH PUBLIC PENSIONS AGENCY

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Dear Sir or Madam

### **POLICE PENSIONS CIRCULAR No 2003/6**

This circular provides information concerning the procedures relating to the medical opinion sought in both injury awards and the assessment of the degree of disablement under Regulations H 1 (2) (c) and (d) of the Police Pension Regulations.

**It should be brought to the immediate attention of force personnel officers, force medical practitioners and the administrators of the Police Pension Scheme.**

SPPA Police Pensions Circular 2003/3 issued on 30 May outlined the changes that police authorities needed to introduce from 1 October as part of the wider set of new procedures for ill-health retirement. The new regulations and procedures were developed following the agreement reached by the Police Negotiating Board in May 2002 on the better management of ill-health retirement.

The original intention when the guidance was issued was that all questions referred under Regulation H1 (2) (i.e. permanent disablement and injury awards) should be included in the revised process of referral to an independent Selected Medical Practitioner (SMP). However, it has now been agreed with the Home Office that those cases which do not involve the assessment of permanent disablement can still be undertaken by the Force Medical Adviser (FMA) acting in the role of the SMP. This change to the procedures outlined in Circular 2003/3 can be summarised as follows:

- **In any case that involves the assessment of permanent disablement should be still be referred to the independent SMP;** (the only exception to this is where the FMA acts as the SMP in cases of urgency or total incapacity (see paragraph 30 of Circular 2003/3).

- **In any case that does not involve the assessment of permanent disablement e.g. an injury award or degree of disablement then the Force's Medical Advisor can undertake the role of SMP and produce the necessary certificate.**

Circular 2003/3 identified that in the majority of cases permanent disablement will need to be determined before consideration can be given to a potential injury award. What this effectively means is that the SMP will be required to be involved twice in cases where an injury award is under consideration following the decision to ill-health retire an officer assessed as permanently disabled.

The number of occasions a police authority will now have to appoint an independent SMP should significantly reduce by allowing the FMA to undertake the SMP role in these particular cases. This change should hopefully help to relieve some of the problems forces may have encountered in identifying and appointing the necessary independent SMP.

This revision to the procedures should be applied immediately. Any cases that have already been dealt with by the independent SMP should be processed as normal.

Yours faithfully



**Jim Preston**

**Policy Manager**