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Sent: Tuesday, December 04, 2007 3:53 PM
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Subject: hand book new format
Hi John

I hope this is helpful.

Should you have any further queries, please contact me.

Sharon Johnston

Disabled Police Officers Association Northern Ireland



Member's Handbook & Code of Conduct

3rd edition
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DPOA CONSTITUTION

The Association's objectives are to promote the relief and benefit of the members of the Disabled Police Officers Association of Northern Ireland (herein after called the Association) who have received serious personal injury whether physical or mental whilst in service with the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the Royal Ulster Constabulary Reserve or the Police Service Northern Ireland by the provision of rehabilitation with the object of preserving and protecting the health of and improving the conditions of life of such members of the Association.

The Disabled Police Officers Association is a registered Charity – Number XR12274 and a Company Limited by Guarantee NI43461 and is grant aided by the Northern Ireland Police Fund, the European Union Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation through the Community Foundation NI, the Community Relations Council and by voluntary donations

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SECTION 1

THE ASSOCIATION

The DPOA was established in May 1983 by a small number of members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and Royal Ulster Constabulary Reserve who had been maimed and injured as a result of the Troubles. Originally a support group where officers who had sustained serious injury on duty with the RUC could get together and share their experiences.

Formerly constituted in 1989 with charity status recognised by the Inland Revenue the Association continued to grow. Today it provides a comprehensive support service to its members.

Many changes occurred over the next 12 years; including the disbandment of the RUC and the birth of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, this necessitated the changing of the original constitution to include members of the PSNI.

One fundamental change which had a major effect on the Association was the obtaining of grant aid from the European Union under the Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation from which the organisation could benefit if the administration could be brought up to EU standard which included the observance of legislation in relation to the running of a charitable organisation being adhered to. This required the employment of experienced staff to manage the financial and administrative aspects of the Association. Thanks to grant aid from the NI Police Fund this was made possible. The EU grant was to be used for the delivery of certain projects organised by the Association.

June 12th 2002 saw the end of the old DPOA, to be replaced the following day by the DPOA NI Ltd, a newly restructured organisation, with the legal identity of a Company Limited by Guarantee. After several years of uncertainty about the future of the organisation the new Association immersed stronger and more professional in its make up.

One aspect of the organisation, which has not changed, is the support offered to the members; by other members and by the staff and Board of Directors, links to and between the members have strengthened considerably over the past four years, mainly due to the introduction of projects which involve members province wide.

From the onset of the current Troubles in 1968 now referred to (since the signing of the Good Friday or Belfast Agreement), as the "Present Security Situation" some 11,841 officers of the RUC, RUC Reserve and the PSNI have been injured. Indeed 3619 officers have been injured since the introduction of "Peace" in 1998. Last year (2005/06) the number of officers of the PSNI injured as a result of the conflict totalled 406. (PSNI statistics 2006)

The current membership of the DPOA comprises of 232 members. Many of these members suffered appalling injuries not only at the hands of terrorists but also while carrying out normal policing duties. Among the members are more than 25 amputees, double, single and one triple amputee.

Blindness and or deafness, brain damage, paraplegia, paralysed limbs, just some of the physical conditions that the men and women suffer, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression and anxiety is suffered by many.

One preconceived notion held by many observers is that the Association is for victims of terrorism only? This is not the case. The DPOA was set up to provide “Relief and Benefit to all members of the RUC and RUC/R who had suffered serious, permanent injury, whilst carrying out their duties.” However the current makeup of members is 80% terrorist related 20% injury on duty.

PROJECTS

Membership of this organisation provides many benefits to its members;

Monthly Away Days provide the opportunity for members to meet old friends and ex-colleagues around the province, to attend workshops such as; pension clinics, therapy and trauma information sessions, have lunch and enjoy some local entertainment. Travel and professional care assistance is provided where possible.

Art Classes for those who find painting therapeutic and a day out. Lunch is provided and the cost of materials is paid as well as a contribution towards travel expenses.

Home and hospital visits to members (if we have been notified by family or friends) members receive either a basket of fruit or flowers and a card. Many ageing or housebound members may not be in a position to attend organised events therefore directors living in their areas may visit and have a bit of ‘craic’ so that they don’t feel left out.

Time Outs for members and their carers – specially organised residentials where alternative therapies etc are demonstrated. The focus is on the carers at these events.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

There is also an active social scene within the group; 12 **Members Days** are held each

year, in addition to annual events such as the **Summer Family BBQ** now a firm favourite with the members and their families, an evening **Christmas Dinner** usually in Belfast and a **Christmas luncheon** in Omagh. Not forgetting our younger members, we have a party for children and grandchildren at Christmas and also provide subsidised **holidays** at home and abroad during the high season (school holidays) and off peak (during term time).

For those who choose to arrange their own breaks there is a fully equipped **caravan** in the North West of the province and a very pleasant three bedroom **flat** in Scotland that members can rent at very reasonable rates.

Subsidised events and holidays are arranged with the needs of the disabled first and foremost in mind.

The Association is here for those who need it most.

To raise funds to help us provide the above services the Association sell a selection of merchandise. This is now available to view on the web site www.dpoani.org, which continues to be under construction. Donations are also welcome however small and can be made via the web site, by post or in person.

SERVICES

Telephone help-line

2002 saw the introduction of a telephone help-line, members with queries or problems can now telephone during office hours for help and support from Staff or Directors. Assistance can be sought for the filling in of complicated forms, application to various bodies for grant aid, pension queries etc. Representation can be made to various agencies' i.e. Social Services, Housing Executive. RCA.

For members who live out side the local area an 0845 number is available.

Communication

The DPOA provides all members with prepaid, preaddressed envelopes for their input into the running of the Association, and for replies when requested from them.

Monthly Newsletter

Sent out to all current members, including those who live in the UK mainland, those who live abroad, and to the widows of deceased members, the circular is a means of disseminating information obtained by the Coordinator.

Members who are unable to attend events look forward to seeing the photographs each month and to catching up with the latest Association news, which unfortunately is not

always good.

The DPOA is partly supported by grant aid from the EU Special Support Scheme for Peace and Reconciliation, the Northern Ireland Police Fund, Greater Manchester Police, and voluntary donations. No core funds or contributions towards running costs are received from the government.

Office space is provided courtesy of the PSNI at the Seapark Complex in Carrickfergus.

SECTION 2

THE ORGANISATION & SECTION 3

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

THE ORGANISATION

2.1

- (a) The DPOA is a Company Limited by Guarantee recognised by the Inland Revenue for charitable purposes.
- (b) It is a legal entity in its own right. A Board of Directors elected by the membership governs it and a Memorandum and Articles of Association regulate the conduct of the company. A copy of these is available to any member.

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

- 3.1 Membership is open to all members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the Royal Ulster Constabulary Reserve and the Police Service of Northern Ireland who have received serious permanent injury whilst carrying out their duties.
- 3.2 Injury on duty must be assessed by the Force Medical Officer to a degree of not less than 35% or 20% by the Industrial Injuries Board of the Social Services.
- 3.3 Applicants for membership **must**:

- (a) fully complete an Association application form.
- (b) provide a certificate from the FMO confirming disability including percentage and/or a letter from Industrial Injuries Branch outlining nature and cause of injury and percentage.
- (c) provide two passport size photographs.

and

- (d) Applicants must agree to sign and to abide by the Association's Code of Conduct.
- 3.4 Successful applicants will be required to pay £10 registration fee and one-year annual subscriptions of £20.

Admission to the Association

- 3.5 The Board of Directors may in exceptional circumstances consider applications, which do not meet the criteria in 3.2

THE DECISION OF THE BOARD IS FINAL.

SECTION 4

DIRECTORS

Roles and responsibilities

&

SECTION 5

FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD

Conduct

4.1 A Director must on accepting office declare that he/she will observe the Code of Conduct set out in Section 7 of this handbook.

4.2 A Director must adhere to the organisations Memorandum and Articles of Association at all times.

4.3 A Director must observe the Disabled Police Officer's Association Code of Conduct whenever he/she:

- (a) conducts the business of the DPOA
- (b) conducts the business of the office to which he/she has been elected or appointed: or
- (c) acts as a representative of the DPOA
- (d) acts as a representative or sits on a committee of any other organisation

4.4 A Director **must**

- (a) act selflessly in the best interest of the whole of the Association
- (b) promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person
- (c) carry out his/her duties and responsibilities with proper care and consideration
- (d) treat fellow Directors, staff and members of the Association with respect

Confidentiality

4.5

A Director **must not**

- (a) disclose information given to him/her in confidence by anyone, or information acquired which he/she believes is of a confidential nature, unless consent is received from that person to give it, or unless they are required by law to do so.
- (b) seek to prevent another person from gaining access to information which that person is entitled by law
- (c) disclose or use confidential information for personal advantage
- (d) use personal information to discredit the Association or anyone else.
- (e) remove documents from the Association office without prior consent of the board
- (f) use information obtained while serving on the board for their own ends

Impartiality

4.6

A Director must not in his official capacity or any other circumstances, use, offer or threaten to use his/her position as a Director to confer or to use for him/herself or any other person, as an advantage or disadvantage

4.7

A Director **must**

- (a) when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of the Association act in accordance with the Associations requirements;
- (b) ensure that the Association's resources are never used to promote party-political purposes
- (c) when retiring or resigning from the Board of Directors return all documentation belonging to, or containing information belonging to the

Association

(d) when retiring or resigning from the Board of Directors return all property belonging to the Association

Conduct

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A Director must **not**

- (a) deliberately act or cause the Association to act unlawfully in such a manner as would give rise to a finding of misadministration.
- (b) in his official capacity or any other circumstance conduct himself in a manner, which could reasonably be regarded as bringing his office or the Association into disrepute?
- (c) accept any gifts and/or donations for the Association unless by express permission from the Board.
- (d) accept any gifts and/or donations for his/her own personal gain

4.9

A Director **must**

- (a) if he/she becomes aware of any conduct by another Director, which he/she reasonably believes involves a failure to comply with the Memorandum and Articles of Association or the Associations Code of Conduct, a breach of the Charity Commission Guidelines on charity trustees duties, carries out an act which is illegal, submit a written allegation to that effect to the Board of Directors of the DPOA.
- (b) comply with the DPOA regulations in relation to the proper procedure for meetings.

5.1

The Board may make such regulations, as they consider appropriate for the efficient conduct of the business of the board and the Association PROVIDED that such regulations shall NOT be inconsistent with the DPOA (NI)'s Memorandum and Articles.

5.2

The Board may appoint such staff as they consider necessary on such terms and conditions as they may determine not being members of the Board.

SECTION 6

ANNUAL RENEWAL

ANNUAL RENEWAL

6.1

- (a) Membership of the Association is for one year or to the 31st December each year which ever comes first
- (b) Membership is renewable annually
- (c) Members must complete membership renewal forms
- (d) Subscriptions of £20 are due with membership renewal forms
- (e) Members who have not renewed their membership before 28th February will be deemed to have resigned from the Association
- (f) Members must disclose any changes in their circumstances

- (g) No member will have their membership renewal application approved if goods or property owed to or outstanding to the Association have not returned and returned in an acceptable condition.
- (h) Members who refuse to repay to the Association money owed to the Association will not have their membership renewed.

THE DECISION OF THE BOARD IS FINAL IN ALL MATTERS RELATING TO THE RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 7

CONDUCT

CONDUCT

7.1

A member **must**

- (a) before being admitted to the DPOA sign and declare that he/she will observe the Code of Conduct
- (b) adhere to the organisations Memorandum and Articles of Association at all times
- (c) promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person
- (d) agree to abide by the Associations equality and discrimination policies
- (e) treat fellow Directors, members and staff of the Association with respect
- (a1) annually agree to abide by the Association's Code of Conduct when reapplying for membership.

7.2

A member must **not**

- (a) use personal information to discredit the Association or anyone associated with the DPOA i.e. Directors, Staff, Members or Associates.
- (b) remove documents or equipment from the Association office without prior consent of the Board
- (c) disclose information given to him/her in confidence while having served on the Board of Directors by anyone, or information acquired which he/she believes is of a confidential nature, unless consent is received from that person to give it, or unless required by law to do so.
- (d) contact the Association's funders, the media, or any external agency without first having exhausted the Association's grievance procedures.
- (e) conduct him/herself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing the Association in disrepute
- (f) represent the DPOA or imply representation of the DPOA without express permission from the Board of Directors
- (g) as an individual dealing with the media express an opinion as a member of the DPOA unless expressly requested to by the Board of Directors
- (h) act alone or with others in a way that could damage the reputation or credibility of the Association, its Directors or staff.

Members who have been deemed to have acted in a manner, which would bring the Association into disrepute, will face disciplinary action and possible expulsion by the Board of Directors from the DPOA.

Members who are found guilty of any breaches of the DPOA Code of Conduct will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 8 of this handbook.

SECTION 8

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

8.1

Action taken by the Board will be dependant on the severity of the breach.

(a) Any infringement of the Code of Conduct by a member will be investigated by an appointed member of the Board who will report his/her findings to the Board.

(b) A member accused of breaching the Code of Conduct will be asked to attend an Informal meeting, which will consist of three board members.

(c) A report on that meeting will be presented to the full Board of Directors and the evidence carefully considered.

(d) The Chairperson will then meet with the member concerned and the decision taken by the board discussed.

(e) Members found guilty of a breach of conduct will be informed of the decision of the Board.

Dependent on the breach a member may

(f) receive a warning about their conduct, which will be recorded in their file for a specified period of time.

(g) be suspended from the Association for a period of time determined by the Board. Members during the suspension will be not be entitled to the benefits afforded to other members during that time.

(h) be expelled from the Association

8.2

If the breach is of a serious nature the Board of Directors may report the matter to the Company Solicitor and the PSNI Liaison Officer or seek legal advice.

In the interest of all concerned meetings will be recorded

8.3

Procedure for dealing with a complaint by another member or individual; against a member of the Association.

- (a) When an allegation/complaint is made against a member of the Association, the member concerned will be invited to attend an Informal meeting with a panel selected by the Board. There they will be informed of the allegations/complaint against them and given the opportunity to state their case. The panel will then decide what, if any, further action is to be taken.
- (b) Members attending informal meetings are entitled to be accompanied by one other person.
- (c) The outcome of the meeting will determine the course of action to be taken.
- (d) If necessary further investigation into the matter will be carried out and if required, a second Informal meeting will be arranged.
- (e) If the allegations/complaints are founded then a formal disciplinary meeting will be arranged.

IN ALL THE CASES THE DECISION OF THE BOARD IS FINAL

SECTION 9

GRIEVANCE & APPEAL PROCEDURES

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

9.1

Members have the right of redress

9.2

Members who feel aggrieved by the conduct of the Board of Directors or staff have the right to have their grievance addressed.

9.3

Complaints or objections should be sent in writing to the Secretary of the Association, they will then receive an acknowledgement; the Secretary will then bring the matter before the next monthly meeting of the Board of Directors.

9.4

Only in extreme cases will a special meeting of the board be called to attend to complaints or objections.

- (a) the nature of the grievance must be in writing
- (b) grievances will only be heard from individuals
- (c) the allegation or complaint must concern the author of the grievance
- (d) grievances will not be accepted from third party authorities unless the member has exhausted the Associations own procedures

9.5

A member of the board will be assigned to investigate the allegation/s and will;

- (a) contact the complainant directly, and
- (b) report his/her finding back to the Board where the matter may be further discussed.
- (c) the member will be informed by the Secretary whether or not any further action will be taken.

9.6

- (a) members who are not satisfied with the outcome of the action will then have the right to meet with a panel established for the purpose of hearing the case The panel will consist of two members of the Board of Directors and the Chief Constables representative.
- (b) the complainant will have the right to be accompanied by another member of

the Association

- (c) members who wish to be accompanied by legal representation must submit in writing the name of the representative prior to the meeting.
- (d) In the case of 8.3 (b) the DPOA may chose to invite their legal representative.
- (e) this panel will then make a decision on the course of action to be taken

IN ALL MATTERS THE DECISION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS IS FINAL.

FAILURE TO ATTEND MEETINGS

- (a) Members who have been requested to, and fail to attend an Informal meeting will be requested to attend a disciplinary meeting
- (b) If the member fails to attend without prior notification and without good reason the meeting will be held in their absence.
- (c) The member will be informed of the result of the disciplinary meeting within 5 working days.

APPEAL PROCEDURE

- (a) Any member who has been accused of a breach of the Code of Conduct may, after the conclusion of the disciplinary meeting, appeal against the decision.
- (b) The appeal must be received in writing within 5 working days from the member concerned.
- (c) The member must state the reason for the appeal.
- (d) The Board will not enter in dialogue with third parties representing the member until all procedures have been exhausted.
- (e) At this stage a sub committee consisting of two Directors who were not involved in the original disciplinary meeting and one independent panellist, will be established.
- (f) The panel will consider the merits of the appeal in a fair and just manner and make their recommendations to the Board.

The regulations contained in this document may be subject to change at the discretion of the Board of Directors for the benefit of the Disabled Police Officers Association PROVIDED THAT these regulations shall NOT be inconsistent with anything contained in the DPOA (NI) Memorandum and Articles of Association.