



**The Professional Trades Union for Prison,  
Correctional & Secure Psychiatric Workers**

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**General Secretary:** Steve Gillan

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## **POA Circular 046/2022**

**For information: England & Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Special  
Hospitals, Private Sector & IRCs**

7<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Dear Colleagues

### **PAY REVIEW BODY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Please find attached letters that are self-explanatory. I know that Government is in disarray but the delay to the announcement on pay for Prison Officer Grades and OSGs is totally unacceptable.

Please bring the contents of this circular to your members at local level.

Yours sincerely

**STEVE GILLAN**  
General Secretary

**ENCLOSURE**



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**Our Ref: PRB 2022  
IR/698/22/SG**

7<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Dear Mr Raab

**PAY REVIEW BODY 2022/23**

As you know the Pay Review body has taken evidence from the remit group by way of written evidence and oral evidence from the recognised trade unions of which the POA adhered to the deadlines for those written submissions and oral evidence. We know that HMPPS on behalf of Government also gave written submissions and gave oral evidence.

I recognise that Government is in disarray with resignations left right and centre and at the time of writing this letter it would appear 49 Officials have resigned including the Prisons Minister Victoria Atkins.

Whilst I do not intend to comment on the political issues as it is well documented I am more concerned about the unnecessary delay in Government responding to the Pay Review Body recommendations whatever they may be. It is well known since the Pay Review Body was established that Prison Officer Grades and OSGs should have a pay award from April of each year. That was always the position but unfortunately the process has been delayed time and time again under this Government and it is the same this year.

When we met earlier this year with Prison Service Officials and indeed with the Prisons Minister both the National Chair Mark Fairhurst and I stated that it was unacceptable. We also made the case that Operational Support Grades should be dealt with through collective bargaining and outside of the remit of the Pay Review Body as ultimately, they have the right to take industrial action. We have not had a response to date on whether you agree going forward that OSGs are taken out the remit group.

This unnecessary delay as I am sure you are aware is putting pressure on an already demoralised workforce where even Governors at certain prisons have set up food banks for staff. I never thought or envisaged this would ever happen in HMPPS, but it is a sign of the critical crisis that my members are facing in the cost-of-living crisis.

There is no argument about the recruitment and retention crisis in HMPPS as for every 4 recruited only 1 person remains. Further delays to a decent pay rise will only

enhance the issues of retention and cost the taxpayer more in the recruitment process.

As you know we had a consultative ballot with our OSGs members as to whether they would consider industrial action up to and including strike action. There was a positive outcome from those members in that ballot. We informed you at the meeting that if it was necessary to move to a statutory ballot then we would do. As a gesture of goodwill, we explained to our Conference in May that we would delay that in order to see what the Pay review body recommended for that particular grade but we will not hold off indefinitely and I am afraid our NEC is running out of patience as we believe the announcement from Government is not top of your agenda due to the internal strife in Government. For the record we will not hold off on such a ballot if the announcement is delayed until after the recess.

Government cannot simply bury their head in the sand on Prison Officer Grades and OSG pay. HMPPS is in a staffing crisis and pay is the driving force behind recruitment and retention your own data establishes that fact and it needs addressed now. You rightly thanked staff for their commitment and bravery. They delivered for the country as key workers during the COVID 19 pandemic which incidentally is still rife in our prisons. POA members show a resilience at work each day keeping the public safe, but nice words do not pay their bills.

I firmly believe you need to act now without any further delay. Daily I am getting evidence where individuals are finding it difficult to put food on the table, pay bills or indeed fill the car up with petrol to get to work. This simply cannot go on. The evidence is clear, and I fear a mass exodus of not just experienced staff to other occupations but making it impossible to retain staff in the future which will have a massive impact on your aspirations in the White Paper as they are reliant on having proper staffing levels which do not exist presently in HMPPS.

I look forward to your urgent response before the summer recess. I will be circulating this letter to the POA membership in England and Wales.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Gillan', followed by a period.

**STEVE GILLAN**  
General Secretary

**Sent via email to: [dominic.raab.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:dominic.raab.mp@parliament.uk)  
[secofstate@justice.gov.uk](mailto:secofstate@justice.gov.uk)**

Rt. Honourable Dominic Raab MP  
Deputy Prime Minister



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**Our Ref: GS/007/22**

8<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Dear Tim

**RECOMMENDATIONS PAY REVIEW BODY**

When the POA met with you and your colleagues from the Review Body on the 7th of April 2022 at the Oral Hearing we were very specific about the timetable at that meeting and stated for the avoidance of doubt that there should be no delay to your recommendations. I am deeply concerned that it has already taken two months for the Pay Review Body to make recommendations to Government. Every day that passes exacerbates the issue of recruitment and retention in HMPPS and Prison staff are leaving the service for better paid jobs elsewhere which is putting significant pressure on workplaces.

This timetable which appears to be reporting to Government by the end of June 2022 in my view is totally unacceptable and does damage to POA members within the remit group who are expectant on the recommendations being made quickly which address the cost-of-living crisis. It would appear to me with all the written evidence and oral evidence given by all parties within the remit group this should have made the process easier with recommendations being given to Government without delay so they could consider those recommendations in a timely manner.

Year on year the process is continually delayed which in turn delays the following year and it appears this year is no exception and will have another knock-on effect where POA members are continually having to put up with unnecessary delays. I wish to remind you that pay for the remit group is 1st April 2022. I would like an explanation as to why there is this delay to the recommendations from the Pay Review Body.

Is it a direction from Government for this delay or is it the case the Review Body have not determined as yet what their recommendations are? If it is the latter, I would find that quite worrying given the evidence produced and all the economic evidence available. I look forward to your response as a matter of urgency.

I would like to remind you the POA would like to have collective bargaining with the right to strike rather than a Review Body but recognise we are restricted by draconian legislation and the Review Body was given to us as a compensatory mechanism. The POA conference backed the NEC in giving evidence and I was pleased that they did so but there is a watching audience and in many sections of our membership the jury is still out. Our members will be watching closely what the recommendations of the Review Body will be in relation to the poor pay that they are receiving, and delays only cause suspicion.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Gillan', with a small horizontal line at the end.

**STEVE GILLAN**  
General Secretary

**Sent via email to:** Tim Flesher, Chair - Pay Review Body – [PSPRB@beis.gov.uk](mailto:PSPRB@beis.gov.uk)



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Steve Gillan  
General Secretary, POA  
[via email]

17 June 2022

Dear Steve,

### **PRISON SERVICE PAY REVIEW BODY 2022 ENGLAND AND WALES REPORT**

Thank you for your letter dated 8 June 2022 regarding the Prison Service Pay Review Body's (PSPRB) 2022 recommendations.

I am pleased to confirm that our 2022 report has now been submitted to Government. I wish to thank you for your continued engagement with the PSPRB and for providing both written and oral evidence to us this year. As you'll be aware, publication of our report is a matter for Government, and we are therefore not in a position to confirm when this may be.

The PSPRB share your concerns and those of your members about remit group staff receiving their pay award long after the 1 April pay effective date, something which we continue to find unacceptable. This is a matter we have consistently raised in our reports each year as we are aware of the issues it causes for staff, particularly those on temporary cover.

In your letter you ask for an explanation as to why there is a delay to the recommendations from the PSPRB. From the point we receive written evidence from the parties, we follow an established timetable. This year, despite the complexities of the pay round and changes to the market supplements mid round, we have delivered our report in accordance with this timetable, as we predicted and without delay. In order for us to submit a report in time for a 1 April implementation date, we would need to receive written evidence from all the parties, at the latest, by the beginning of October the previous year, which is before our activation letter from Government was even received.

It is important to stress that delivering our recommendations on time should not be at the detriment to the integrity of our process. Condensing this timetable would undermine our

ability to provide evidence-based recommendations and would be to the disadvantage of our remit group. We take our role seriously and think it is important that all parties have sufficient time to provide evidence to us and that we have the time to fully consider all the information before us to make our evidence-based decisions.

We have once again flagged the importance of this to Government in our report this year. We recognise however, that it may require incremental steps to get back to a timetable that allows us to submit a report in time for a 1 April implementation date. We welcome the intention from the Prisons Minister, Victoria Atkins MP, to get the pay round back on to its usual timetable and look forward to working with all the parties to achieve this in future pay rounds.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Flesher', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

*Tim Flesher*  
*Chair, Prison Service Pay Review Body*