

Scotland merger timetable to be revised by Joint Programme Board

Since Autumn last year, we have been working closely with BTPA, Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority to understand the challenges and risks involved with transferring our Scottish functions into Police Scotland.

We were particularly interested to find out whether the proposed date of April 2019 was achievable for the full integration of these functions.

As part of this approach, several joint workshops were held to explore issues such as employee terms and conditions, pensions, contracts and equipment, financial impact, IT networks and cross border working arrangements.

As a result of these sessions, it was agreed more time was needed to look at these issues in more detail before we could come to a point where Police Scotland are in a position to take responsibility for railway policing.

I have made it clear that if we are not given this time, public safety could be compromised. This position has been supported by independent consultants as well.

I attended the Joint Programme Board (JPB) today (20 February) - which is led by government officials and is responsible for managing the transfer. The board endorsed the recommendation that the project should be given this extra time to explore these issues – before setting a realistic date for full transfer of operations and giving Police Scotland full accountability of railway policing in Scotland.

The Scottish Government has been advised of this position and agreed that BTP and Police Scotland should now take six months to consider these matters further and determine a new timeframe for integration. We will continue to work with them, and will inform you as soon as this information becomes available.

[A copy of the statement from Scottish Government can be found here.](#)

We will continue to work closely with the programme to ensure that all aspects of the transfer have been properly thought through and resolved to the satisfaction of all stakeholders, including most importantly our own staff, before endorsing next steps.

One of the key recommendations from today's board meeting is that engagement with staff must be more detailed in respect of the protection of employee conditions and having more time to understand the proposals will allow us to give you information in plenty of time to assess its weight.

I am really pleased that the joint work with Police Scotland, as well the shared opinion of Iain Livingston, the acting Chief Constable of Police Scotland, has recognised that our officers and staff are essential if the future of railway policing in Scotland is to continue as successfully as it does now.

As always if you have any questions or concerns please contact the [Scotland Project](#) email address in the first instance.

Paul Crowther
Chief Constable