

# MORAY UNISON

## SINGLE STATUS – BULLETIN 2 - DECEMBER 2001

Welcome to the second edition of the Moray Branch Single Status Bulletin. As well as giving you information on the current position regarding Single Status, there is another opportunity for you to feed your comments into your branch Working Group. With discussions still taking place at the time of writing, much of this bulletin aims to keep you informed of the story so far.

In This Issue :-

- Update on local and national issues
- Feedback from member's responses received following the last bulletin
- Branch action

### Single Status Working Group

The members of the Single Status Working Group are:-

Ken Matthews	Branch Secretary	tel 01343 563170
Jean-Anne Goodbrand	Branch Chair	tel 01343 563151
Gerry Harkins	Service Conditions Officer	tel 01343 552699
Eric Foley	Publicity Officer	tel 01343 563224
Steve Clegg	Health & Safety Officer	tel 01343 557300
Jeanie Henderson	Welfare Officer	tel 01343 562600
David Jack	Steward	tel 01343 543139
Naill Thom	Steward	tel 01261 815516

# UPDATE

Discussions have continued at a national level on a number of fronts. This has influenced the local discussions. The most notable issues are:-

## **Job Evaluation**

The Councils across Scotland have called for a delay in implementing job evaluation from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2002 until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004. The trade unions have highlighted that such a delay will have an implication for members who had lodged a regrading claim at the time of the Single Status agreement. Members had been told that job evaluation would address their claim. Other members had decided not to lodge a claim for the same reason. We would therefore see members having waited for a regrading claim for up to four years from the introduction of Single Status and job evaluation. National negotiations are therefore exploring these issues and at the time of writing, the employers were submitting a response to the trade union side of the Scottish Joint Council on their proposals for handling regrading claims and a national appeals procedure.

At a local level, discussion has also taken place concerning the proposed change of the implementation date. The Moray Council has indicated that with the current number of analysts, the job evaluation process could be completed during 2003. No agreement will be reached at a local level until a formal position is agreed at a national level.

## **Spinal Column Points**

The Single Status Agreement includes a nationally agreed set of pay points known as the Spinal Column. This will be used to form the basis of a new pay and grading structure at a local level. At the time of writing, the employers have submitted proposals which will now be considered by the trade union side.

As this is a national agreement, there will be no negotiations held at a local level.

## **Car Allowances**

The employers seem determined to introduce a system of car allowances using the Inland Revenue Scheme. This would remove at a stroke the existing arrangements, particularly those in respect of essential users who are paid a lump sum. These proposals have been fully rejected by the trade union side and currently, no resolution is in sight. Again, as this is a national agreement, there will be no negotiations at a local level.

# WHAT YOU SAID

Many thanks to all the members who responded to our request for information and comment on the proposals tabled by the Council. Here's a summary of what you said:-

## Job Evaluation

- Awareness of job evaluation, the process and the outcomes remains low.
- Questions raised included the effects on pay and grading, how job evaluation deals with the same job but differing responsibilities e.g. School Technicians, agreeing the outcome of the job interview and the role of managers.

## Pay Scales

- Clear response here !
- Members favour a long pay scale.
- Some support in principal for short pay scales but there is suspicion over the process for moving onto the fourth pay point.
- Single pay points received very little support.

## Working Week

- Again a very clear response.
- Members favour a 36 ¼ hour working week.
- If a move to 37 hours then this must come with additional pay for those currently working 36 ¼ hours.
- 37 hours with additional annual leave was not highly supported.
- A straight move to 37 hours for everyone with no trade-off was widely rejected.

## Flexible Working

- Flexible working practices are widely used throughout the Council already.

# BRANCH ACTION

So what action are we currently taking as a branch on Single Status in representing your views and interests:-

- Moray UNISON continues to fully participate in the local negotiations through the Trade Union/Council Officer Forum and the Job Evaluation Steering Group.
- Moray UNISON is fully represented at a national level within the union on the Local Government Forum, and UNISON's Scottish Council.
- A branch officer from Moray UNISON is involved in the Job Evaluation process through the Evaluation Panel.
- Legal advice is currently awaited by the branch on a number of issues including pay and grading scales, the working week and bonus. The responses will be reported in a future issue of this bulletin.
- To assist members, a member's guide to job evaluation is being compiled based on your questions and national information.
- In early 2002, the branch proposes to hold a Workplace Road Show for members on issues within the Single Status Agreement and Job Evaluation.
- The branch would encourage members to continue to feed back comments and queries using the response form with each bulletin.
- Bulletins will continue to be produced until the full implementation of the Single Status Agreement.

## INFORMATION REQUEST

If you have been involved in the Primary or Secondary Benchmarking process, we want to hear your comments.

We especially want to hear from members who've been involved in the Primary Benchmark process. Have you agreed and signed your Job Overview ? Did you feel under any pressure to agree with it even when you really didn't ? To put it bluntly, did you feel harassed into signing it by your line manager or anyone else for that matter ? Do you have any comments or concerns about the process ?

We would also like to hear from any member who's involved in the Secondary Benchmark process. What's your experiences of this process ? Have you received an Overview yet ? Do you agree with it ? Do you have any comments or concerns about the process ?

Please complete the enclosed feedback sheet and return it to the branch office.

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