

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

POLICY ON THE REASSESSMENT OF INJURY ON DUTY AWARDS

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May 2026

Version Number	Version Date	Summary of Changes	Changes processed by:	Changes approved by:	Date of Implementation	Document Location
1.	April 2026	N/A	PPIB Branch	Resources Committee	May 2026 (Scheduled Reassessments to be implemented once resources are available to commence)	CM: 667329

Alternative Formats

This document may also be made available upon request in alternative formats or languages. Requests for alternative formats should be made to the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Northern Ireland Policing Board (the **Board**) is responsible for administering all applications made by serving officers for Ill Health Retirement (**IHR**) and/ or an Injury on Duty (**IOD**) Award and former officers for an IOD Award. The Board's responsibilities in respect of police pension and injury benefits are overseen by the Board's Resources Committee. This work is delegated to Police Pensions and Injuries Benefits (**PIIB**) Directorate.

2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

2.1 This Policy sets out the circumstances and processes by which a recipient of an IOD award will be reassessed. The Policy will outline the legislative basis for reassessment, the categories of reassessments to be implemented, including exemptions, and the Board's equality and data protection obligations.

3. IOD PROCESS

3.1 IOD is a process which allows former officers to apply for financial compensation (for loss of earnings) if they believe that they have potentially been made permanently disabled due to an injury received on duty. In respect of serving officers, they may apply for an IOD if applying for Ill health Retirement (IHR) and if agreed for IHR, their IOD application would be progressed.

3.2 The threshold for an IOD Award is set out in the *PSNI and PSNI Reserve Injury Benefits Regulations 2006* (the **2006 Regulations**). The Board determines entitlement in the first instance as per *Regulation 29 (1)* of the *2006 Regulations*. When considering whether a person is permanently disabled, the Board refers to a duly qualified medical practitioner i.e.

Selected Medical Practitioner (**SMP**) or Independent Medical Referee (**IMR**) the following statutory questions:

- (a) whether the person concerned is disabled.*
- (b) whether the disablement is likely to be permanent.*
- (c) whether the disablement is the result of an injury received in the execution of duty; and*
- (d) the degree of the person's disablement.*

3.3 An IOD award is expressed as a banding and categorised into one of four bands below:

- **BAND 1** - 25% or less (slight disablement).
- **BAND 2** more than 25% - but not more than 50% (minor disablement).
- **BAND 3** more than 50%- but not more than 75% (major disablement); or
- **BAND 4** more than 75% (very severe disablement).

The degree of disablement reflects the applicant's loss of earning capacity.

3.4 In addition to answering the above statutory questions, the SMP/ IMR will also be asked to advise the Board on the appropriate date of implementation of any IOD Award (former officers) and when the degree of disablement should be reassessed. The importance of citing an implementation date is to inform PSNI Pensions Branch when any IOD Award should be paid from. The importance of citing a reassessment date is to suggest when it would be appropriate for an SMP to further examine the applicant to determine whether their medical condition has substantially altered. If it has, the award will be revised accordingly.

3.5 IOD Awards are administered, calculated, and paid by PSNI Pensions Branch.

4. REASSESSMENT POLICY

4.1 *Regulation 35(1) of the 2006 Regulations* specifies:

‘The Board shall, at such intervals as may be suitable, consider whether the degree of the pensioner’s disablement has altered; and if after such consideration the Board finds that the degree of the pensioner’s disablement has substantially altered, the pension shall be revised accordingly’.

4.2 This Policy provides the Board’s processes for reassessments which will fall into the following three categories:

1. Scheduled reassessments.
2. Former officer requested reassessments; and
3. Reassessments initiated by the Board.

Information on each type of reassessment can be found below.

Reassessment Categories

4.3 Category 1 - Scheduled Reassessments

The last medical authority to assess a former officer, i.e., an SMP or where there has been an appeal, an IMR, may recommend a reassessment date and this will be included in the former officer’s SMP or IMR certificate. Scheduled reassessments will take place for those former officers awarded a band 1, 2, 3 or 4.

In such instances, the Board will recall the former officer for reassessment in line with the date specified within the certificate, unless a reassessment is initiated by the Board. Former officers will be recalled in chronological order, i.e., oldest reassessment cases to newest reassessment cases.

The former officer will be notified that they will shortly be invited for a reassessment appointment and will be provided with the opportunity to provide any available medical evidence not previously considered by the last medical authority i.e. SMP or IMR. Following this, Board officials will prepare a file for the SMP, to conduct a face-to-face assessment. The SMP will address the following questions:

- *Has the member's degree of disablement (i.e. loss of earning capacity) altered since the last assessment?*
- *If so, is the alteration substantial?*
- *If so, what is the current degree of disablement?*
- *When should the member's disablement be reassessed?*

The outcome of reassessment may include continuation of existing benefits or adjustment of the banding of the IOD Award and will be communicated to the former officer in line with PPIB's current process, provided in **Annex A**.

4.4 Category 2 – Former Officer Requested Reassessments

If a former officer [in receipt of a band, 1, 2, 3 or 4] believes that their condition has substantially altered, they may request a reassessment by the Board. This includes the cases of former officers where the medical practitioner has marked the applicant as '*Permanent*' or '*No further review*'. Such cases are not reassessed by the Board under category 1 (Scheduled Reassessments), as it is the determination of the medical practitioner that the former officer's condition will remain. However, any former officer marked as such may request a reassessment by the Board.

Applicants will be asked to complete the requisite reassessment form on the Board's website, as well as providing any available medical evidence not previously considered by the last medical authority i.e. SMP or IMR.

Following this, Board Officials will prepare the file for a face-to-face reassessment by the SMP, who will answer the following questions:

- *Has the members degree of disablement (i.e. loss of earning capacity) altered since the last assessment?*
- *If so, is the alteration substantial?*
- *If so, what is the current degree of disablement?*
- *When should the member's disablement be reassessed?*

The outcome of the reassessment may include continuation of existing benefits or adjustment of the banding of the IOD Award and will be communicated to the former officer in line with PPIB's current process (**Annex A**).

The Board has discretion to decide the interval between either the award of the IOD or the last review and the start of the reassessment process. If a former officer makes multiple requests for a reassessment, within a short period of time, PPIB senior management will be advised and will review all circumstances to determine if the intervals are suitable. If PPIB management believe the intervals are not suitable they may recommend that the Board decline to progress the reassessment.

4.5 Category 3 - Reassessments initiated by the Board

The Board, through the Resources Committee, can request a reassessment where it is aware of information relating to a former officer's medical condition, which may impact on their earning capacity. Depending on the nature of the information, the Board may request that a reassessment is conducted ahead of the former officer's scheduled reassessment date.

In such cases Board Officials will write to the former officer to advise that information has come to light which may impact on their earning capacity

and with that in mind the Board is exercising its powers under *Regulation 35 of the 2006 Regulations*, in order for the SMP to make a medical decision regarding their level of disablement i.e. loss of earning capacity. In line with both scheduled and requested reassessments, the former officer will be provided with the opportunity to provide any further medical evidence, not previously available to the last medical authority i.e. SMP/IMR

Following receipt of all relevant information Board Officials will prepare the file for face-to-face reassessment by the SMP. The outcome of reassessment may include continuation of existing benefits or adjustment of the banding of the IOD Award and will be communicated in line with PPIB's current practice.

5. FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Exceptions

There may be exceptions to a former officer being recalled for their scheduled reassessment. These may include, but are not limited to:

- where a former officer is undergoing active treatment that may compromise accurate medical assessment. In such cases a letter, report or medical evidence from their GP or Specialist (if applicable) will be requested.
- medical conditions that have come to light since last assessment and been assessed by a former officer's treating physician or medical professional to be terminal. In such cases a letter, report or medical evidence from their GP or Specialist (if applicable) will be requested.
- where a former officer lives overseas and cannot attend a face-to-face assessment. In such cases a paper-based or remote assessment will take place instead.

Exceptional cases will be brought to the SMP by PPIB senior management, where appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.

5.2 Determination of terminal diagnosis or death

When the Board receives confirmation that a former officer has a terminal diagnosis or who has passed away, their name will be removed from the scheduled reassessment list.

5.3 Age

The *2006 Regulations* do not specify an upper age limit and the process set out in this guidance will be followed regardless of age.

5.4 Refusal to be medically reassessed

Where a former officer does not respond to correspondence recalling them for reassessment, Board Officials will expedite on two further occasions. Where a former officer willfully or negligently fails to submit requested information or attend a medical examination required by the medical authority, to enable them to make their decision, *Regulation 32* of the *2006 Regulations* may be applied, and the Board will make its determination on such evidence and medical advice as it in its discretion thinks necessary.

5.5 SMP choice

SMP choice will not be offered to reassessment applications. This is due to the large number of reassessments and SMP availability. Instead, Board Officials will allocate an SMP to each case based on SMP availability and PPIB's Conflict of Interest policy.

5.6 Appeals to the IMR

Following the outcome of the reassessment, a former officer may appeal the SMP's determination in accordance with *Regulation 30* of the *2006 Regulations*. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Board within 28 calendar days of notification of the reassessment outcome. Pending the outcome of the appeal, the original decision will be upheld unless otherwise directed.

5.7 Payment

Where reassessment results in an increase in banding of the IOD Award this will take effect from the assessment date. Any decrease in the banding of the IOD Award will be applied from the next payment by PSNI Pensions Branch after notification of the result is provided.

6. DATA PROTECTION

- 6.1 All medical and personal data will be managed in accordance with the *Data Protection Act 2018* and *UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR)*.

7. EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

- 7.1 Equality Screening has been carried out on this Policy and is published on the Board's website.
- 7.2 In line with all other assessments carried out by the Board, reasonable adjustments will be made where appropriate to support individuals with disabilities.

8. POLICY REVIEW

- 8.1 This Policy will be subject to review in circumstances where there are related regulatory amendments, and otherwise every three years.
- 8.2 Implementation of the Policy, or parts of it, may be paused in the situation where PPIB resources are significantly reduced.

Approved – 23 April 2026

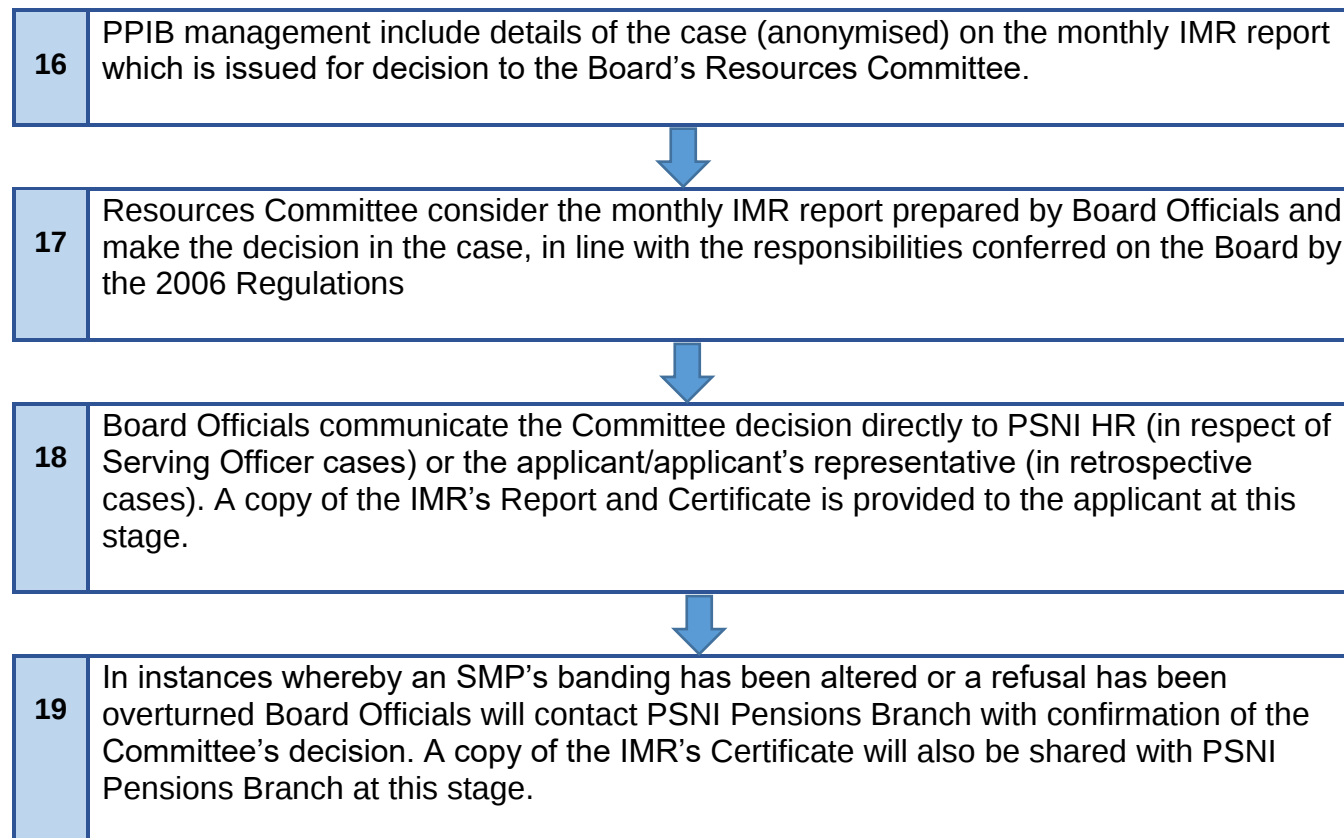
ANNEX A

END TO END PROCESS MAP – 2006 INJURY ON DUTY (IOD) SCHEME

APPLICATION PROCESS UNDER THE PSNI & PSNI RESERVE (INJURY BENEFIT) REGULATIONS 2006

- 1 Application is received by the Northern Ireland Policing Board (the **Board**) from either a serving or retired officer in respect of an award under the *PSNI & PSNI Reserve (Injury Benefit) Regulations 2006* (the **2006 Regulations**).
- 2 The case is allocated to a caseworker within Police Pensions and Injury Benefit Directorate (**PPIB**) who will progress the case in line with PPIB's internal processes prior to the scheduling of an appointment with a Selected Medical Practitioner (**SMP**).
- 3 SMP Assessment takes place during which the SMP produces a Report and Certificate and a decision on the medical evidence.
- 4 PPIB management undertake quality control processes on the SMP's Report and Certificate to ensure that the SMP has discharged their statutory and contractual duties.
- 5 PPIB management include details of the case (anonymised) on the monthly SMP report which is issued for decision to the Board's Resources Committee.
- 6 Resources Committee consider the monthly SMP report prepared by Board Officials and make the decision in the case, in line with the responsibilities conferred on the Board by the 2006 Regulations
- 7 Board Officials communicate the Committee decision directly to PSNI HR (in respect of Serving Officer cases) or the applicant/applicant's representative (in retrospective cases). A copy of the SMP's Report and Certificate is provided to the applicant at this stage.
- 8 If an award has been approved Board Officials will contact PSNI Pensions Branch with confirmation of the Committee's decision. A copy of the SMP's Certificate will also be shared with PSNI Pensions Branch at this stage.

- 9 Notification of Appeal to the Independent Medical Referee (**IMR**) pursuant to *Regulation 30* of the 2006 Regulations received by Board within 28 days after an applicant has received a copy of the final report and certificate of the SMP.
- 10 Statement of Grounds of Appeal to be forwarded to the Board by the applicant within a further 28 days of the initial Notification of Appeal.
- 11 Board Officials provide copies (in duplicate) of the following to the Department of Justice (**DOJ**):
 - Grounds of appeal
 - SMP Report & Certificate
 - Case Referral bundle considered by the SMP
- 12 DOJ confirm what (if any) documents "*determined as necessary*" are to be supplied (in addition to those outlined at Stage above) prior to the appeal hearing. If no further documentation is requested then an appointment shall be arranged for appeal hearing.
- 13 IMR assessment is arranged and reasonable notice thereof is provided to both the applicant and the Board. Board Officials and the applicant will notify the DOJ if they intends to be represented at the hearing and/or submit written evidence.
- 14 IMR assessment takes place during which the IMR produces a Report and Certificate. expressing their "*decision on any of the questions referred to the selected medical practitioner on which he disagrees with the latter's decision.*"
- 15 DOJ provide a copy of the IMR's Report & Certificate to the Board.



NOTES

- 1.1 Board Officials have prepared the attached flowchart being the process overview for initial applications only to the SMPs and IMRs.
- 1.2 The process relates to initial applications under the 2006 Regulations only and does not include applications made under the various police pension schemes.
- 1.3 This process does not relate to specific applications made by virtue of either *Regulation 31(2)* or *Regulation 35* of the 2006 Regulations.

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DOCUMENT TITLE

**Northern Ireland Policing Board
Policy on the reassessment of
Injury on Duty Awards**

ONLINE FORMAT

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