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SI2217

Overtime

The Police Service of Northern Ireland is committed to making the best use of all available resources. There are occasions when the use of overtime is the most effective and efficient way to ensure that the right resources are correctly deployed to target prevailing demand or to address local policing issues.



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1. Introduction

Overtime should not be the default option to meet a resourcing demand.

This policy applies to police officer overtime. It does not include overtime worked by Police Staff.

2. General Principles of Overtime Usage

All overtime worked must be essential, approved and fully recorded.

Overtime should only be approved when it is necessary, after other reasonable alternatives have been considered and excluded, and always in advance of the overtime being worked. The use of overtime should always be minimised.

Such procedures, appropriately applied, will provide for a consistent and corporate approach to Police overtime management and assurance that is in line with Police Pay and Allowances Code as well as the Working Time Regulations 1998, and Work Place Agreement entered into by an individual with the Police Service of Northern Ireland (Flexible Working).

The organisational drivers for overtime usage should be focused on the safety of the public and police, mitigation of prevailing threats or organisational risks and delivery of the strategic and local policing priorities.

3. Staff Welfare and Resilience

The use of overtime, by its very nature, requires officers to work hours additional to their salaried hours. Any decision to deploy officers on overtime must take into consideration officer welfare and resilience, and legislative provisions.

An officer's willingness to work overtime does not mitigate the organisational duty of care to employees. No officer will work overtime without the appropriate prior approval (this includes overtime 'swapping'). Supervisors have a responsibility to be aware of excessive hours being worked by their staff and should address any resultant welfare, resilience or disciplinary concerns.

4. Approval of Overtime

Overtime, which can be claimed, will only be worked with prior approval. For pre-detailed overtime this will be recorded on Options prior to deployment if possible. For casual overtime this will require pre-approval by an officer not below the rank of Inspector or staff grade equivalent.

5. Overtime Recording

All Police Overtime must be recorded and managed using the Options system. All overtime must be clocked and converted on Options. As per the Police Pay and Allowances Code claiming officers should ensure that this process is completed **no later than three days** after the overtime has been worked. Overtime should not be clocked or approved for payment on Options before it has been worked.

6. Overtime Claim Assurance

The Police Pay and Allowances Code provides guidance to officers on the correct entitlements in relation to overtime claims.

Police officers shall ensure that accurate records are kept of their duties.

It is the claimant's responsibility to ensure that the overtime claimed is for the approved and worked hours only, and that the appropriate conversion rate is applied in accordance with Police Pay and Allowances.

The code reinforces the need for individual accountability and integrity when making any claim for pay and expenses.

Countersigning and Approving Officers have a responsibility to actively assess and satisfy themselves as to the accuracy of the information provided.

7. Service Overtime

Authorisation & Audit Form

A form has been created on Outlook to enable these guidelines to be corporately and consistently implemented. This form is located in the following location:-

Microsoft Outlook > Developer > Choose Form >Organizational Forms Library> Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form

(The form has a front email message page, a middle page incorporating a form designed to enable completion in sections of approval, overtime swapping and monthly supervisory checks and a final page of advisory notes. Users can jump between the three pages using the 'show' instruction above the email address box.)

8. Pre-detailed Overtime

Pre-detailed overtime is overtime where the officer has been informed of it prior to, or at the commencement of, their tour of duty. It includes any briefing and de-briefing time. All overtime must be submitted using the Options system.

Pre-detailed overtime use is authorised by the Budget Owner (person as delegated by Departmental Head / District Commander) and managed, approved and detailed by Operational Planning/ Resourcing staff.

Overtime will be detailed on Options by the Operational Planning/ Resourcing staff and should include the reason for the overtime.

Overtime should never be self-detailed.

If overtime is pre-detailed outside of normal office hours, and therefore cannot be logged on Options, it is the responsibility of the Authorising Officer to Inform Operational Planning of the details via email, so that a record can be retained for Audit purposes. This will allow the officer to clock and convert the overtime within three days. The pre-detailed Officer should, when applying the process on Options, reflect time of notification and who authorised in the message box.

As per the Police pay and Allowances Code the claiming Officer should clock and convert their overtime '**at the earliest opportunity thereafter and in any case not later than 3 days after**' completing the period of duty. This requirement ensures that the organisation has an accurate and updated record relating to its financial liability and is in a position to identify and address officer welfare concerns. Any reasons as to why this requirement could not be met should be recorded in the Options message box during claim.

Overtime should never be clocked and converted by the officer, or approved for payment by Operational Planning/ Resourcing staff before it has been worked.

(The only exception to this being clockings made during the final 15 minutes before termination of a period of overtime).

The Operational Planning/Resourcing staff will either grant and submit the overtime for payment; or deny the application pending further information.

Should pre-detailed overtime not be worked or a request to exchange the overtime be made by another officer - [‘overtime not worked’](#) should be referred to.

If an officer fails to work a period of detailed overtime supervisors should ensure that Ops Planning/Resourcing offices are informed.

9. Casual overtime

Casual (unplanned overtime) is retention overtime, which the officer has not been advised of prior to, or at the commencement of, their duty.

All casual overtime must be authorised by an officer not below the rank of Inspector or staff grade equivalent

The Officer requiring overtime will advise an Inspector or staff grade equivalent of the explanation as to why overtime is necessary.

In exceptional circumstances, when an urgent and imminent deployment is necessary and an Inspector or staff grade equivalent is not immediately available a supervisory officer may provide approval. The supervisor should inform an officer not below the rank of Inspector or staff grade equivalent of the approval as soon as possible.

The Inspector or staff grade equivalent must confirm the duty requirement and check if alternative resources or other options are available prior to considering approval of overtime. If alternative resources or options are available, the overtime request will be declined and the officer will terminate at the original detailed time.

If the duty is required and an alternative resource or option is not suitable or available the Inspector or staff grade equivalent will approve the overtime, ensuring that it is Working Time Regulation compliant.

The Inspector or staff grade equivalent will approve and submit the **Outlook Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form** once the overtime has been worked. The completed form should include a brief explanation as to why the overtime is required, the specific officers (or unit) involved and period of time anticipated. This form should be submitted within 5 days.

The **Outlook Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form** should be sent to the relevant Operational Planning/Resourcing Office e-mail address. For operational effectiveness it may be appropriate to cc the Duty Supervisor.

It is the responsibility of the officer working casual overtime to ensure that the duty supervisor is informed of an early termination of approved casual overtime.

The Claiming Officer will clock and convert their overtime claim on Options with a full explanation in the message box; including Command and Control (C&C) reference number if applicable, approving officer, any extensions if appropriate and which Supervisor was informed re any early termination time.

As per the Police pay and Allowances Code the claiming Officer should clock and convert their overtime 'at the earliest opportunity thereafter and in any case not later than 3 days after' completing the period of duty. This requirement ensures that the organisation has an accurate and updated record relating to its financial liability and is in a position to identify and address officer welfare concerns. Any reasons as to why this requirement could not be met should be recorded in the Options message box during claim.

Operational Planning/Resourcing Office staff will check the overtime clocked and converted on Options by the claiming officer and confirm the contents against the **Outlook Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form** submitted by the Inspector/Staff grade equivalent and the Supervisor.

Operational Planning/Resourcing Office staff must check that the overtime is in accordance with policy and is Working Time Regulation compliant. In the event of any query, Operational Planning/Resourcing Office staff will escalate the query via line management for resolution.

The overtime application will be granted and submitted for payment on the **Outlook Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form** may be returned to the authorising officer for further information.

Overtime should never be clocked and converted by the officer or approved for payment by Operational Planning/Resourcing staff before it has been worked. (The only exception to this being clockings made during the final 15 minutes before termination of a period of overtime).

Operational Planning will store completed **Outlook Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Forms** in a dedicated mailbox on Microsoft Outlook for future audit.

The retention of the documentation is a requirement for future audit.

10. Overtime not Worked

It is accepted that due to unforeseen and exceptional circumstances an officer may not be able to carry out pre-detailed overtime. Should this situation occur the officer should seek to swap the duty with

another colleague with the necessary skills and who can work at the same rate of overtime as that originally detailed. These details should be forwarded to the Operational Planning/Resourcing Office e-mail address for consideration ASAP.

Where such swap will incur a higher rate of overtime, or is not possible, this must be referred back to Ops Planning for further conversation.

During Operational Planning/Resourcing Office Hours - the originally detailed officer should email the Operational Planning/Resourcing office of the changes suggested using the **Outlook Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form**, copying the email to the proposed replacement officer.

Operational Planning/Resourcing staff will routinely check the office email inbox during office hours.

Operational Planning/Resourcing staff will conduct a suitability check in relation to the proposed volunteer. This includes checking the following information:

- Volunteer's details;
- Volunteer has the appropriate skills or training for the role;

- Availability of volunteer (not restricted by adjustment/leave/sick); and
- Compliance with working time regulations and any associated welfare concerns.

If the volunteer officer is found to be unsuitable the request is declined and both officers are emailed the original **Outlook Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form** to inform them. The originally detailed officer remains detailed for the overtime and is required to work the hours originally pre-detailed.

If the volunteer is approved, the overtime at the original rate of overtime is detailed on Options. Options will be amended to remove the original officer's detailing.

Any changes are not confirmed until they are detailed on Options or the following provision applies:-

If amendments are required **outside of the Operational Planning/Resourcing Office Hours** and/or it is not practicable to inform Operational Planning/Resourcing staff due to the imminence of the required change, the detailed officer will email the **Outlook Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form** to the Duty Supervisor for approval.

If approved the Supervisor will forward the **Outlook Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form** to the Operational Planning e-mail address advising of the change of overtime and the volunteer's details.

The obligation rests on the supervisor to conduct the necessary checks prior to approval:

- Volunteer's details;
- Volunteer has the appropriate skills or training for the role;
- Availability of volunteer (not restricted by adjustment/leave/sick); and
- Compliance with working time regulations and welfare concerns.

The volunteer will claim this overtime on Options at the original rate and include an explanation, details of the officer changed with and details of the approving officer. The officer originally detailed is required to clock and convert the overtime, applying the code of **NOT WORKED**.

11. General Guidance

Officers who terminate overtime duty earlier than detailed are obliged to clock the full pre-detailed hours on Options but

only convert the correct worked overtime for payment using the Overtime Conversion function. Then, using the **SHOW PARTIAL CONVERSION** function, they should convert the remaining unworked portion to **NOT WORKED** with reasons for early termination included.

It is the personal responsibility of claiming officers to ensure that overtime being worked has been approved and the necessary processes have been complied with. Failure to comply may lead to non-payment.

12. Guidance for Operational Planning/Resourcing Staff

Operational Planning/Resourcing Staff will check that the overtime hours clocked and converted on Options match the overtime hours approved on the **Outlook Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form**.

They will also check that any casual overtime was correctly approved by an Inspector or staff grade equivalent.

They will confirm that the officer has recorded the correct overtime reason for a period of casual overtime on Options.

The Operational Planning/Resourcing Staff will check that the message box within Options includes the detailed reason for the overtime claimed and who authorised it. This may include one or more of the following:

- Command & Control reference;
- Niche reference; and/or
- LOCATE.

If the information supplied is not sufficient to validate the appropriate approval of the claim or incorrect details are provided then it should be denied. It is the responsibility of the claiming officer to resubmit.

The overtime reason applied by Operational Planning/Resourcing staff will be in accordance with the Options corporate coding guidelines.

Overtime should NEVER be self-detailed or self-approved by a member of Operational Planning/Resourcing staff.

Overtime should never be clocked and converted by the claiming officer or

approved for payment by Operational Planning/Resourcing staff before it has been worked.

It is the claiming officer's responsibility to resubmit a denied overtime claim on Options once a non-compliance issue is resolved.

13. Monthly Audit Process Instructions

Audit Checks Conducted By Finance.

Local Finance Offices will undertake a monthly check of 10% of claims to ensure that the correct rate of overtime has been claimed. Further monthly checks on TOIL, Highest Earners and Highest Reward to Work Ratio may also be undertaken. Auditing by Finance will commence as soon as figures arrive and should be completed within 10 days.

- After the overtime processing period each month, Finance offices will select 10% of claims to conduct a further monthly supervisory audit to ensure that overtime claimed on Options reflects the actual hours of overtime worked.

The list of selected officers will be circulated via email to all supervisors who must undertake the relevant checks for their selected staff and email the details using the **Outlook Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form** to the Finance Office within 10 days.

The sample selection will ensure that all officers are subject to a documented audit review not less than once per annum.

If a supervisor fails to submit a return within 10 days, the matter will be expedited to their line manager. Any non-return after a further 5 days will be forwarded to the appropriate Chief Inspector/equivalent line of Command for further action.

When Finance Offices receive the **Outlook Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form** returns electronically from supervisors they will be collated and the forms filed into a dedicated Mailbox on outlook.

This process is a quality assurance audit of overtime claims and processing. It will not delay the process of overtime claims for payment. Should any discrepancy be identified during the audit then the

appropriate action will be taken to retrospectively deal with the payment issue.

Audit Checks Conducted By Supervisors.

The officer who is being audited should send details to their Supervisor. The Supervisor shall make arrangements to meet with each individual officer identified for monthly audit. Supervisors can print out staff F40s by using the My Staff Overtime Summary. This report is retained on COGNOS.

Policenet > Options Duty Rostering > Options Reports > COGNOS > My Reports folder > My Staff Overtime Summary

The supervisor will review the monthly Options F40 with the claiming officer. A minimum of 5 dates should be subject to detailed checks per officer per month (or 100% if less claimed).

The claiming officer will produce (as required by the supervisor) documentary evidence verifying overtime worked which could include a notebook entry, Command & Control reference, NICHE log or LOCATE details.

If a supervisor identifies any issues such as excessive working hours, regular working on rest days or unusual claims, this shall be discussed with the officer. Any concerns identified should be acted upon and documented.

The officer will be informed of any discrepancies and requested to provide an explanation or clarification for the claimed overtime.

The supervisor must confirm the hours worked as claimed by the officer, document the specific checks (minimum 5 dates unless fewer worked) on the **Outlook Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form**, and will email the completed form to the relevant Finance Office inbox within 10 days.

Overtime management is a basic supervisory responsibility. The audit process is a necessary compliance assurance process and will be conducted diligently and expeditiously. Non-compliance reports will be forwarded to the relevant Chief Inspector/equivalent line of Command for action.

Any discrepancies in an officer's claim should be investigated by the officer's supervisor and, where necessary, will be

escalated to the local Discipline Champion for resolution.

This documented check is in addition to a supervisor's responsibility to regularly and routinely monitor staff overtime and address issues or concerns as they arise.

Appendix A Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form on Outlook

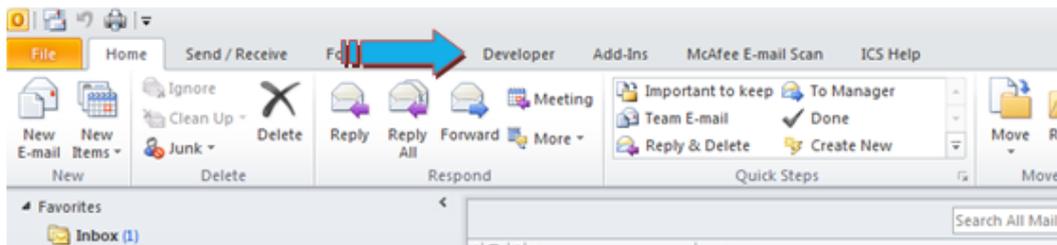


Figure 1 Microsoft Outlook > Developer

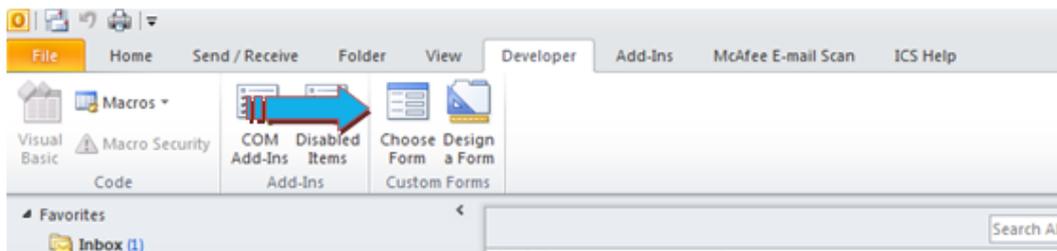


Figure 2 Choose Form

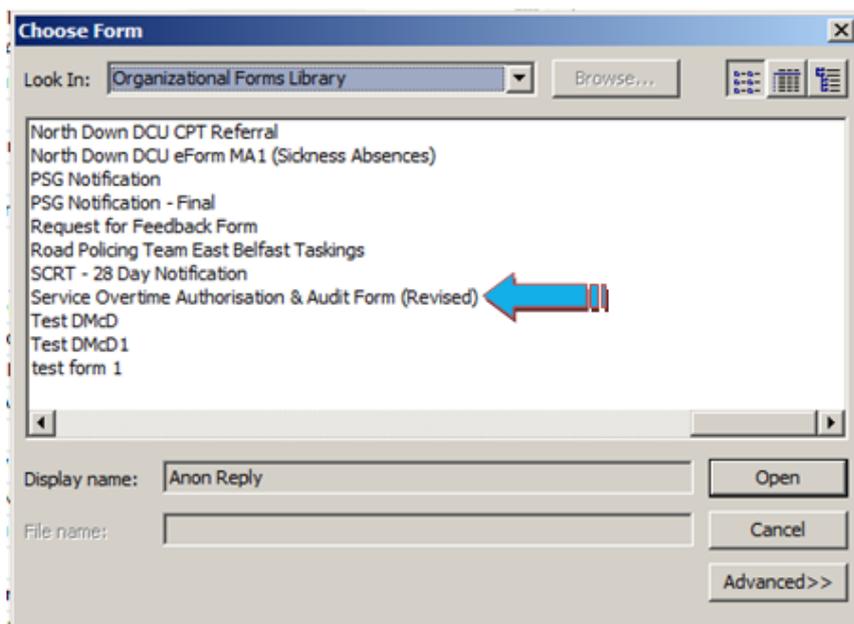


Figure 3 Organizational Forms Library > Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form

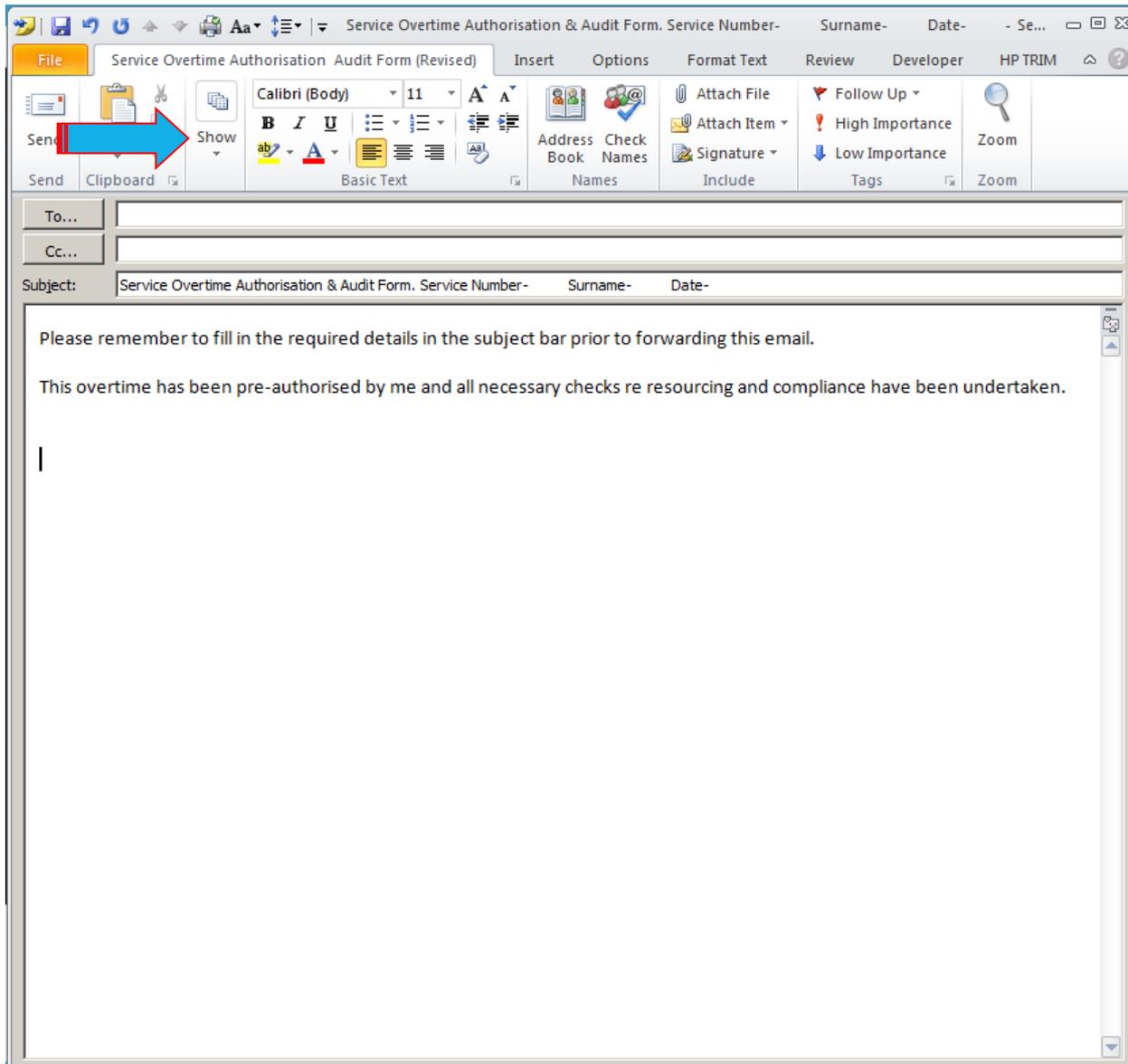


Figure 4 Service Overtime Authorisation & Audit Form, click on Show to see the input form

SERVICE INSTRUCTION

Casual Overime Authorisation

Claiming Officer (Surname/Initial/Rank/Number)

Team/Unit Name

Date of Overtime From To

Authorised by (Surname/Initial/Rank/Number)

Reason for Overtime

C&C Ref Number

Actual Termination Time

Supervisor (Surname/Initial/Rank/Number)

Exchanged Overtime

Detailed Officer (Surname/Initial/Rank/Number)

Date of Overtime

Replacing Officer (Surname/Initial/Rank/Number)

Authorising Supervisor (Surname/Initial/Rank/Number)

For Operational Planning Use Only

Approved

Audit Checks by Supervisor

Date Overtime Worked	Documents Checked	Result

Figure 5 Form to be completed

Appendix B Contact Us

Feedback or queries relating to this Service Instruction should be addressed to the relevant Ops Planning Team:

Belfast

BelfastOpsResourcing@psni.pnn.police.uk

North Area:

NorthAreaOpsPlanning@psni.pnn.police.uk

South Area:

B&CDistrictOpsPlanning@psni.pnn.police.uk

zOpsPlanningEDistrict@psni.pnn.police.uk

F&GDistrictOpsPlanning@psni.pnn.police.uk