

TD/EP/4656.

17<sup>th</sup> October, 2017.

Michael Matheson  
Member of the Scottish Parliament  
Cabinet Secretary for Justice  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Dear Mr Matheson,

**RE: GMB MEMBERS G4S CARE AND JUSTICE, SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONTRACT.**

I am writing to raise the issue of the treatment of GMB members working for the above employer and funded by the Scottish Government.

Seldom have I witnessed such callous disregard for the health, safety and welfare of an entire workforce and that this behaviour is funded by the tax payers of this country.

I have tried to be patient with G4S Care and Justice, and met with their Operations Director, Mr Willie Galloway to raise concerns and find common ground.

Having met with Mr Galloway on 13<sup>th</sup> October I thought some progress was being made, however for reasons that are not for this letter Mr Galloway's words proved to be disingenuous and our members continue to suffer in a difficult enough job.

While I understand the constraints that all public sector and arms lengths organisations operate under I refuse to accept on any level the way our hard working, committed members are being treated by G4S Care and Justice at the tax payers' expense.

G4S Care and Justice have turned our members into modern day slaves and the GMB are obliged to put a stop to this injustice.

Cont/d...

**GMB SCOTLAND – PROTECTING YOU AT WORK**

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The GMB has carried out a survey of its members, and we have met with them several times, the results of the survey which we are compiling into a report to forward to you or a designated Officer and for the Health and Safety Executive make stark reading, and we are seeking a Freedom of Information Act submission on various points as we speak.

The survey provides an insight in to the working life for Prison Custody Officers employed by G4S Care and Justice.

Our members are being forced into working exceptionally long hours, fifteen to sixteen hours a day and those that can't are issued with a task refusal. One such member a sixty four year old man with a good work record on a thirty five hour contract who regularly works ten to fifteen hours overtime per week was issued a task refusal and issued a twelve month written warning for refusing a fourteen hour straight shift, this behaviour is replicated across Scotland due to high turnover of staff, low morale and poor management. I understand recruitment and retention is also an issue.

The G4S disciplinary policy and process has been weaponised and works against employees as it is devoid of natural justice, it is a stick to hit people with. It is a poorly worded document, not fit for purpose and although it boasts to comply with ACAS and the Employment Protection Act 1996 the lack of natural justice and the use of the policy as a weapon is abhorrent.

Our members who work on the contract even if not in a process state they are intimidated, worried and in fear of their jobs. Regularly they are sent to places as far away as possible to ensure they can't finish on time, enforced overtime over and above that which is reasonable is a danger to health, the impact on family life shameful.

It is not unusual for a member to be summoned by letter to a disciplinary or capability hearing only for management not to turn up or even make their apologies; this leaves our members worried and anxious for extended periods of time, they are denied the ability to seek representation, the whole management structure is lamentably unprofessional and disorganised.

I want to be clear that we will not tolerate our membership being treated in this manner on a publicly funded contract, and all of our attempts to resolve matters amicably have not worked.

I would welcome a meeting with a designated person from your department to provide our findings for consideration and look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

*Tony Dowling*

Tony Dowling, GMB Senior Officer,  
**Manufacturing and Commercial Services.**