**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO**

**The Police Trainee (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations (Northern Ireland)**

**SR 2020 No. 65**

## 1. Introduction

This Explanatory Memorandum has been prepared by the Department of Justice to accompany the Statutory Rule (details above) which is laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The Statutory Rule is made under powers conferred by sections 36 and 41 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, and is subject to the negative resolution procedure.

## 2. Purpose

This Statutory Rule will amend the Police Trainee Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2001 (as amended in 2003), which govern practice and procedure for the training of police officers in the Police Service of Northern Ireland. The Rule will amend Regulations 3(3)(a) and 11(2A) to temporarily defer the current requirement for trainees to have completed 145 training days or longer to allow for some trainees to be attested as constables earlier than currently required. This will provide the Chief Constable with discretion to reduce the mandatory training period in appropriate circumstances, during the current pandemic crisis.

The Regulation comes into operation on 10 April 2020.

## 3. Background

The amendment is intended to support PSNI operational planning in response to the Coronavirus pandemic.

The amendment allows the Chief Constable greater flexibility regarding the attestation and deployment of police trainees to meet a potential resourcing demand during the Coronavirus pandemic. The intention would be to identify those trainees who, having completed certain crucial elements of their training, are assessed as being capable of performing satisfactorily in the role of Constable, during this period, in support of colleagues. The potential for a reduced period of training is only envisaged as applying during the period of the Coronavirus pandemic and, subsequently, the requirement for at least 145 days of training will apply again. When deemed appropriate to end the temporary measures, amending Regulations will be made. The Department of Justice will consult with the Chief Constable, Department of Health and other relevant authorities in deciding on the timing of any new amending Regulations.

## 4. Consultation

The Department has completed a targeted consultation process with policing stakeholders.

## 5. Equality Impact

This Statutory Rule applies equally to all PSNI trainees. There is no adverse impact on those listed under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

## 6. Regulatory Impact

A Regulatory Impact Assessment has not been prepared for this rule as it has no impact on business, charities or voluntary bodies.

## 7. Financial Implications

It is anticipated that there will be modest cost implications for the PSNI, given that student officers will become probationary constables more quickly as a result of this Statutory Rule. Such costs will be short term and can be met from the PSNI budget.

## 8. Section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

The proposed rule is considered compatible with section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

## 9. EU Implications

Not applicable.

## 10. Parity or Replicatory Measure

This rule introduces legislation governing training requirements for police officers in Northern Ireland. There is no similar minimum requirement for 'training days' in England and Wales and the proposal to amend has therefore no corresponding implications for policing legislation in the rest of the UK.

## 11. Additional Information

Not applicable.