

EH/sg

29 April 2004

JBB Circular No: 19/2004

**To: THE CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARY
ALL BRANCH BOARDS**

Dear Colleague

QUALIFICATION FOR JURY SERVICE

The Criminal Justice Act 2003 came into force on the 9 April 2004. The Police Federation was consulted in respect of the Act and indeed actively contributed by replying in depth over a number of proposals. After the Act was agreed by Parliament and before receiving Royal Assent, Schedule 33 was added to the Act. There was no consultation in respect of this addition with the Police Federation.

The effect of Schedule 33 is that now Police Officers are qualified to serve as jurors and not disqualified by reason of their occupation as was previously the case. There is no discretionary excusal available.

It is appreciated that there will be the view that, once it is known by lawyers that an individual on a jury panel is a police officer, then the likelihood of there being an objection raised to that individual sitting as part of a selected jury is almost certain. Therefore the likelihood of actually serving as a juror is, perhaps, remote.

Representations are to be made to the very highest authorities in respect of this matter in the near future and Branch Boards will be kept informed of the situation. Needless to say that at this time any requests for officers to serve as jurors must be complied with.

Yours sincerely,

**Ernie Hanrahan
Deputy General Secretary**