

No. 021/2019

16 January 2019

Our Ref: P18/19

To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

RM Uniform Trousers - "Posting Peg" Pocket: (Anti-Dog Bite Finger Injury Device):

The National Joint Dog Attack Working Group has been considering the recent significant increase in finger injury and finger amputation dog bites through letter boxes along with feedback from members in delivery offices with high dog attack numbers and re-examining the feedback from an earlier trial of postmen and postwomen's trousers modified with an additional, specifically designed Posting Peg pocket added - the feedback from which was very positive. The Posting Peg pocket is a 'ruler type' design pocket usually found on workmen's overalls.

In all of these finger bite through letter box injury cases, the victims broke the 'Golden Rule' of not putting their fingers through the letter box opening and when asked why they hadn't used the 'Posting Peg', many victims replied that they had forgotten it and had either left it back at the office, left it in the van or left it on the trolley so the Dog Awareness Working Group are of the view that a specific pocket for the 'Posting Peg', designed into the trousers, may overcome that problem and make it easier to carry as the Posting Peg is awkward to carry in the standard design pockets.

Discussions have taken place with Royal Mail Assets and the National Uniform Manager about the benefits of adding a 'Posting Peg' pocket, to the uniform trousers from which there are potential benefits and the cost of introducing this additional pocket is minimal.

Engagement sessions held at CWU National Conference, Uniform Roadshows and Courier questionnaire returns from the front line workforce have also regularly supported the idea of an additional 'Posting Peg' pocket.

The current National Royal Mail/CWU Joint Dog Attack High Impact Units Campaign has also seen this suggestion for a 'Posting Peg' pocket requested by many CWU delivery members.

The National Uniform Manager has confirmed to the Health, Safety & Environment Department that Royal Mail is currently out to tender for the uniform supply contract, the outcome of which will be the awarding of a new contract from April 2020. As a result of this, the design brief for delivery staff trousers includes the need for a posting peg pocket in the design.

As a final footnote to this, the following should not be forgotten; The Law (Dangerous Dogs Act) requires dog owners to keep their dogs under control at all times and to prevent their

animals from attacking and injuring postal workers and others on both private property as well as in public places. This law change was won by the CWU after a 7 year campaign. Dog bites through the letter box are a criminal offence. Owners should prevent their dogs attacking the letterbox or if not, then they can fit a letterbox cage or an outside letter box which are options to prevent attacks. Additionally the Posting Peg is not suitable for all items of mail and indeed all types of letter boxes but is a tool provided to be used appropriately by postmen and women which the Union fully supports. However, there are occasions where some managers try to blame members for attacks through the letter box which is totally wrong and should not be the case as the dog owner has committed a criminal offence against the postal worker.

In conclusion, the current trend of finger injuries is worrying and anything that can be done to reduce the trend is worth considering. The change to be introduced to the trousers design by the National Uniform Manager Sam Dixon is therefore welcomed.

Attachments:

1. Trial Feedback
2. Posting Peg Pocket Sketch Design

Yours sincerely



Dave Joyce
National Health, Safety & Environment Officer