

Roads Ahead

Police Federation Roads Policing Newsletter

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Welcome

Alan Jones

Welcome to this special conference edition of the roads policing newsletter in which we have tried to capture some key issues from the event. Our thanks goes to all those who attended, gave presentations, exhibited and sponsored the event, including the donation from the raffle prize to the East Midlands Air Ambulance charity. The feedback has been enormously encouraging once again. I urge all delegates to use the learning experience from the event towards their continual professional development.

Warm congratulations to Det Sgt Ian Orton from West Midlands who was the first recipient of the national award for excellence in roads policing and to two very worthy runners up, Adam Pipe from Essex Police and Mark Pilling from Oxfordshire, Thames Valley. All those nominated were excellent candidates.

The Roads Policing Federation Group is looking to host a parliamentary reception on the 25th April where we will use the opportunity to lobby for and highlight your concerns. Amongst many issues, the impact cuts are having on the front line will be discussed.

We are always looking for feedback, comments, concerns and suggestions in relation to the roads policing role, so please don't be shy; get in touch and we promise to do all we can to assist or take up the cause.

Good news for PC James Holden from Hampshire, who was thankfully acquitted by a jury after a lengthy trial on a charge of dangerous driving. The incident arose whilst in lawful pursuit of a vehicle. James was very well supported by the local and national federation throughout this ordeal and his legal team did a first class job. Good result.

Finally, keep up the excellent work, stay focused and despite the current economic woes enjoy what is the best job in policing!



Conference Update

Speedier collision investigations, lone officers and tackling drug-driving considered at National Roads Policing Conference



Speeding up road traffic incidents on major roads, using single-crewing officers and tackling drug-drivers are some of the

considerations that were discussed at this year's National Roads Policing Conference.

The conference held on 19th and 20th January in Hinckley, Leicestershire, held by the National Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), discussed 'The Challenge of Change' and the future of roads policing.

The event saw 250 attendees including the roads safety minister, MP Mike Penning, who appealed to forces to use new technology to help speed up collisions on major roads in order to do their bit for the economy, and the ACPO lead on roads policing, Suzette Davenport who outlined the new strategy for roads policing.

Other speakers included Stuart Donald, assistant chief constable of Humberside Police who put the case forward for considering single-crewing officers to get more out of fewer resources, and Marilyn Wignall from Devon and Cornwall police who addressed the subject of

officers dealing with stress and trauma.

We also heard from Chief Constable Adrian Lee, Northamptonshire Police who looked at the National Decision Making Model and argued that officers need to use greater professional judgment, take greater risks in their decision making and to use their discretion in order to achieve the highest levels of trust and confidence in policing. In return they will have the full support of their force. It comes for the need to replace bureaucracy and multiple decision making models with a simple tool that officers and staff can follow.

The event included a gala dinner and raffle in which £1,435 was raised for the East Midlands Air Ambulance. For the first time, there was also a national outstanding achievement award for the individual who made the most meritorious and outstanding contribution to roads policing. Details of the winner and runners up can be found in this newsletter.

The PFEW and ACPO would like to say a big thank you to all the organisers, sponsors and exhibitors, whom without the conference would not have been possible.



*Suzette Davenport,
ACPO*

The human side of dealing with trauma



On average a total of 13 ½ million working days are lost in Britain each year due to work related stress and each case leads to around 30 days off work. According to

the Press Report, 2008, stress and anxiety cost one force more than £280,000 and lost them more than 1230 working days.

Roads policing officers often face 'task-related' stress when attending major road collision incidents. These incidents can sometimes be extremely traumatic for officers, but not everyone experiences a serious stress situation. 80 percent of officers walk away from incidents unaffected but what about the other 20 percent? This often depends on the officers' confidence, experience, knowledge, sense of control, interpretation of the

event and other demands at the time.

It is therefore vital that more time is invested in educating and preparing young officers about what they will expect to see and do at major road collision incidents, including post-incident stress recognition and simple coping strategies. This in turn will reduce their anxiety levels.

In addition, forces need to recognise the importance of providing support to their officers through employee assistance programmes, chaplains, staff associations and Trim (Trauma Risk Management.) For too long now, there has been a stigma associated with stress related illness in emergency services and the military, which needs to be addressed.

Stress will ultimately get higher as the thin blue line gets thinner and resources are stretched to the max. Senior officers, managers, and officers alike need to be aware of the symptoms and support one another during these times.

Government urge speeding up investigation of road traffic accidents to help economy

Police officers need to deal with road traffic accidents on major roads more speedily in order to do their bit to help Britain's economy, according to MP Mike Penning.

In 2010 there were more than 18,000 full or part closures on motorways lasting more than 20,000 hours in total and Mr Penning, Under Secretary of State for Transport, appealed to forces to use new technology.

He spoke to delegates at the Federation and ACPO National Roads Policing Conference earlier this year and said that many forces had still not bid for specialist 3D scanners which can speed up the investigation of the scene of an incident.

The Government made £2.7 million available to fund new technology which can make a 3D scan of the whole of an incident scene rather than having to use a number of investigators looking age different sections of a scene.

Mr Penning said that although he understood an incident had to be properly investigated and the scene protected 'I cannot afford for the majority of the road network to be closed for as long as it is now'. Some motorway closures can last up to 12 hours.

He also said that they are looking at legislation regarding drug drivers to make it easier for police officers to prosecute

offenders. The government has asked a panel of experts to look at introducing a law following lobbying by the Federation's Road Policing Group.

Figures from the Department for Transport show drug driving was seen as a 'contributing factor' in 1,094 road traffic accidents in 2010 – including 51 which proved fatal.

Mr Penning, a former fireman, added that he himself had been to accidents where the driver appeared 'out of their tree' and it was assumed they were drunk but that it was difficult to tell. Currently neither adequate legislation to define drug driving or the technology to test for drugs is in place. The government has announced they will provide drug testing kits for use within police stations.



Lone officers would increase visibility on roads



Police leaders in roads policing should consider single-crewing officers to get more out of less resources.

Stuart Donald, assistant chief constable of Humberside Police, spoke to delegates at the Federation and ACPO National Roads Policing Conference this month and advocated single-crewing as a means to increase 'visibility' and 'confidence'.

The senior officer, who has commanded his own force's traffic unit, said: "I really see community support officers and police officers patrolling on their own. We need to get more out of the existing resources."

He added that research suggests officers are

much more likely to engage with the public when they are not talking to their colleague although he acknowledged it was a contentious issue and proper risk assessments would still need to be done.

Mr Donald, a member of ACPO's Roads Policing Business Area, said where he was based in Grimsby they had made regular use of Special Constables to patrol as well as community wardens.

He added: "Is it policing on the cheap? Well of course it is cheaper but if it's done well it's maybe part of the new challenge or part of whatever the big society is."

He also called for roads policing officers to be 're-empowered' and to give them their discretion back to help increase time on the streets and reduce the amount paperwork.

Mr Donald said: "I do think we can re-position roads policing officers and get them recognised as the professionals they so clearly are."

RIP David Rathband

We are all extremely sad to hear of the death of David Rathband who was seriously injured at the hands of gunman Raoul Moat. David was an inspiration following this tragic incident and has become a well-known police officer nationally. Our deepest sympathies go to his family, friends and colleagues. His name and legacy will live on.

Drug drivers could escape capture if action is not taken

There will need to be adequate numbers of police officers alongside the right roadside drug testing equipment and changes in legislation in order to target drug drivers effectively, according to police leaders.

The Government is likely to include a new offence of drug driving in a Justice Bill in the Queen's Speech due in the spring and have announced they are going to make drug testing machines available in police stations.

Steve White, secretary of the Police Federation's Road Policing Group, speaking at the National Roads Policing Conference this week, says that there will need to be enough roads policing officers to ensure drug drivers are caught and prosecuted in the first place as well as specific legislation and technology which allows them to carry out roadside testing.

Mr White told Police magazine: "We need to get the legislation sorted out, the technology to enable officers to do roadside drug testing and sufficient numbers of cops with the right skills to enforce it."

The Federation is in the process of assessing how Government cuts have impacted on Roads Policing Units around the country.

In some forces, such as Warwickshire, which has the second biggest motorway network in the UK, there is no specific traffic department anymore, others have seen roads policing departments slashed, such as Dorset, which has seen a 40 percent cut to roads policing and Suffolk



Government Drug-Drive Campaign

which has seen half of its staff cut. Devon and Cornwall police have also just moved dedicated roads policing officers to general response roles.

Currently there is an offence of being unfit to drive through drugs but it can be difficult to prove because there is no specific threshold of impairment as there is for alcohol and there are many types of drugs which can affect a person's ability to drive.

Suzette Davenport, ACPO lead on roads policing, said she welcomed drug testing kits in stations but said that there needed to be a specific offence on drug driving – defining levels of drugs and which drugs should be included

She added that young people in particular 'will use drugs and get into a vehicle and drive' and a survey by road safety charity Brake found that one in nine motorists aged 17 to 24 admitted to driving after taking drugs.

Portuguese truck driver sentenced to twenty weeks imprisonment



Carlos Antonio Martinc Pinto, a Portuguese truck driver driving for a Spanish haulage company, was sentenced to twenty weeks imprisonment after pleading guilty to nine charges of forgery at Carlisle Crown Court on 24 February, after manipulating his tachograph

charts. He was also disqualified from driving in the UK for 12 months.

Mr Pinto was initially stopped by VOSA (Vehicle and Operator Services Agency) officers in Kent where his charts were seized and were passed on to Cumbria Police as part of their on-going investigation into the Spanish Haulage company. Although he admitted in interview that he had committed the offences due to pressures from his

boss, he had never the less profited from his actions in forms of bonus payments for the number of kilometres travelled.

Forging such documents or interfering with recording devices allows drivers to use vehicles in excess of what is allowed by law. It can also be used by drivers to claim they were never involved in accidents. In sentencing the judge said it is not only a punishment but to send a clear message to other truck drivers.

Sergeant Graeme Hodgson, Cumbria Police Roads Policing Unit said: "Those drivers and vehicles were putting members of the public at risk, not only by their own actions, but also by placing unfair competition pressure on legitimate hauliers. We will continue to work closely with VOSA to ensure dishonest operators are removed from the road and that company directors are brought to court as well as the drivers."

Charity calls for cuts to crucial roads policing officers to end

Dramatic cuts to roads policing teams which have seen officer numbers slashed by more than ten per cent could lead to drivers thinking they can 'get away' with life-threatening crimes, according to a report by road safety charity Brake.

Figures released by the charity follow warnings from Alan Jones, the Federation's lead on roads policing issues, that the 20 per cent cuts to police budgets are having a severe impact on roads policing units.

The findings, obtained by Freedom of Information requests to forces show numbers of roads policing officers have been reduced by 11.6 per cent in the five years from 2007 to 2011. Only recently, West Midlands's police force reported that 65 roads policing officers will be disbanded into other roles.

Mr Jones said that the "cost of cutting back far outweighs the benefits in protecting a key frontline service".

The report said there were 7,525 dedicated traffic police in England and Wales in 1999 but this number fell to 6,511 in 2005.

And Julie Townsend, Brake's deputy chief executive, said: "It is crucial the government acts now to put a stop to these dramatic cuts in life-saving roads policing, by making this a national policing priority. This is crucial in safeguarding the public and preventing needless casualties that lead to terrible suffering, and it also makes economic sense. Road crashes constitute a huge social and economic burden, because of the awful implications for those bereaved and injured, and the strain on health and emergency services. Investing in roads policing, and stepping up critical checks like breath-testing, helps stop crashes before they happen, meaning less families suffering and reduced costs to the taxpayer."

Latest road casualty statistics from Wales

Provisional estimates show that during the September quarter 2011, in Wales 32 road casualties were reported as killed, 298 were seriously injured and 2,004 as slightly injured.

Comparing the most recent period of October 2010 to September 2011 with the previous year, all road casualties were down by seven per cent, but within that the numbers killed were 14 per cent higher and the number of those seriously injured was two per cent higher.

Smoking in cars ban

The Welsh Government has launched a campaign to stop people smoking in their cars when travelling with children.

The three-year campaign, Fresh Start, aims to protect youngsters from second-hand smoking in a confined space after which an outright ban will then be considered.

Chief Medical Officer for Wales, DR Tony Jewell said: "There is robust evidence that the level of toxic chemicals is very high in cars, even with a window open. The Fresh Start Wales campaign aims to make people aware that smoking in cars is dangerous for their passengers, particularly children. Exposure to these chemicals put children at risk from a range of conditions, including sudden infant death syndrome and asthma."

But some say that a ban would be expensive, a step too far and totally unnecessary.

Alan Jones said: "We understand the concerns being raised but if this initiative is taken forward into

legislation by the Welsh Government, it needs to be 100 per cent self-regulated and smokers need to recognise the risks exposure to cigarette smoke has on their children. It would be another piece of legislation for the Police to enforce, which we could well do without when we are already stretched to the limit."



Outstanding Achievement Award

An officer from West Midlands received the national award for outstanding contribution to roads policing, organised by the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) at the National Roads Policing Conference in Hinckley, Leicestershire.

Winner D Sgt Ian Orton has achieved outstanding results during his five year tenure with the Central Motorway Policing Group (CMPG), particularly in the area of major crime and disorder. He has been instrumental in developing critical analysis of ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) technology and other vehicle profiling products, which is now being considered as standard practice in all areas of major crime investigation.

Using his expertise, Ian has provided telecoms analysis and intelligence to numerous fatal road traffic collisions leading to the identification of offenders, one of which was a double fatal collision involving a professional football player, attracting national interest. Due to Ian's assistance the offender was convicted and received a lengthy custodial sentence.

He has identified offenders from an armed robbery via convoy analysis who were arrested within one hour of the offence, identified a group of Colombian nationals who were convicted of numerous armed robberies and provided crucial intelligence and ANPR analysis that led to the arrests and convictions of offenders involved in high value freight crime.

Whilst he is not out catching criminals, Ian's expertise is such that he regularly presents to a number of stakeholder audiences and was invited to Holland to assist in the implementation of ANPR analysis in drug investigations. He also promotes the use of ANPR for witness protection. Ian has received numerous commendations during his service and is the epitome of the modern roads policing officer.

Two other officers received runner-up awards for their contribution to roads policing.

Runner up Adam Pipe from Essex Police secured a number of funding initiatives, including £370,000 a year to drive road safety activities and a dedicated patrol team who attended an additional 1000 incidents on the road. He has also set up events to raise awareness of poor motorcycle riding and road safety issues for children. This has led to a 13.5 per cent reduction in those killed or seriously injured in motorcycle accidents and a 19.6 per cent reduction in children that were killed or seriously injured during 2010 to 2011. In his spare time, Adam also volunteers as a



Suzette Davenport ACPO, Adam Pipe, D Sgt, Ian Orton, PC Mark Pilling, Alan Jones PFEW

member of the Special Constabulary.

Runner up Mark Pilling from Oxfordshire, Thames Valley is another vital part of the roads policing team tackling road crime and targeting prolific offenders, and has featured on the popular Road Wars TV series. He has received a number of commendations and awards for his dedication and commitment; in one week he arrested 21 prolific offenders. As a result of Mark's hard work, the road safety performance figures in the county dwarf that of the other two counties in the area. Mark has never taken a day off sick in 12 years.

Alan Jones, Police Federation of England and Wales roads policing lead says: "These awards recognise those who have been nominated for outstanding and meritorious achievement within the delivery of an essential front line service to policing. There can only be one overall winner and D Sgt Ian Orton is very worthy of that accolade. He has shown tremendous initiative and his contribution to disrupting criminal activity is justifiably recognised. Both PC Mark Pilling and Adam Pipe narrowly missed the top award, but their contribution is also highly commendable."

Suzette Davenport, ACPO roads policing lead, says: "I never failed to be impressed by the level of dedication and commitment displayed by both the winners and nominees for this much coveted award. I'm immensely proud of the work that officers up and down the country are doing day in and day out to make our roads a safer place. This award clearly demonstrates the importance of ANPR and roads policing in not only making our roads safe, but denying criminals and criminal organisations the use of the roads. Sergeant Orton is a deserving winner and I know he will be proud to receive the award."

The PFEW and ACPO wish to thank all those forces who nominated officers for an award. Sadly not everyone can receive an award but in our eyes you are all winners.

Harsher punishments for drink-drivers

The government will consider whether the licences of suspected drink-drivers should be revoked following an appeal by the sister of a young crash victim.

Jamie Still, 16, died in Otley, West Yorkshire, on New Year's Eve 2010 after being hit by a car driven by Max McRae, 21, from Leeds. Mr Still's sister Rebecca said it was unjust that Mr McRae was still able to drive until he was jailed eight months later.

Last week Rebecca Still said anyone charged with drinking and driving should immediately have their licence taken away from them and has set up an online petition calling for the law to be changed.

Raising the matter on behalf of Mr Still's relatives at Prime Minister's Questions, Liberal Democrat MP for Leeds North West Greg Mulholland said: "His family had to face the fact that the person who killed him continued to drive for a further eight months until sentencing." David Cameron has now agreed to look at whether the law should be changed.

PFEW roads policing lead Alan Jones said:



"These matters raised by Rebecca's family and Greg Mulholland will resonate with a high degree of public support. We have sympathy of the concerns raised and feel it would be appropriate to take a serious look at this issue so that those accused of the most serious driving offences feel the immediacy of their actions rather than continue driving until a court trial date which could be months away."

PC cleared of dangerous driving after pursuit



A Hampshire police officer's been found not guilty of dangerous driving while he was following a stolen car - PC James Holden had been accused of putting people's lives at risk.

The minivan involved had been stolen in Petersfield, and the police officer spotted it at McDonalds in Fratton in February 2011. During the pursuit, the minivan went through red lights, the wrong way round a roundabout and the wrong way down a dual carriageway. It eventually smashed into level crossing barriers in Cosham and the driver was arrested.

PC Holden, who's 35 and from Titchfield, had always denied dangerous driving. He was found not guilty after a 7-day trial at Guildford Crown

Court. The 19-year-old driver of the stolen minivan was later found guilty of a string of offences, including dangerous driving, and was sentenced to four years in a Young Offenders Institution.

John Apter, Hampshire Police Federation welcomed the unanimous verdict, but warns officers' confidence in the system has nosedived in the wake of officer PC Holden being charged. He said: "We are clearly very pleased with the result. PC Holden is a highly trained police driver who was doing the job he was trained to do. However I have serious concerns over the fact that this case has ended up in crown court. Police officers are not above the law but when they do what they have been trained to do and that then results in them being charged with dangerous driving then something, somewhere has failed."

Alan Jones said: "We predicted cases like this would happen following the ruling in the Bannister case in 2009. Officers are exposed to prosecution for doing what they are trained to do and what the public expect of them. We thought the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and our own colleagues might understand the difficulties officers face. Sadly this case proves that they are out of touch. We will be holding an urgent meeting with ACPO and the CPS again to discuss this matter."

Police Federation gives evidence at Transport Select Committee

On Tuesday 7th February 2012, PFEW roads policing lead Alan Jones was called to give evidence to the inquiry into the Government's Strategic Framework for Road Safety by the Transport Select Committee alongside ACPO roads policing lead DCC Suzette Davenport, and Chief Fire Officers Association road safety lead David Etheridge.

Mr Jones praised the decline in deaths and seriously injured collisions on the activity of officers up and down the country but feared that the current decline in police officer numbers could undermine this trend saying; "with 16,000 fewer officers, chief officers have to consider their priorities and we are witnessing forces reducing commitment to roads policing as a result. There could be disastrous consequences."

The issue of raising the motorway speed limit to 80mph was also discussed by Mr Jones. "If you raise the speed limit to 80mph, will you add on the 10 percent leeway meaning that drivers could drive up to 90mph without punishment? How will it be policed? Serious enforcement parameters need to be made. There are still many questions that need to be answered before this is implemented."

The leaders also highlighted that getting rid of government targets was a risky business; 'Targets set the standard across all agencies which have been invaluable in reducing collisions over a number of years. How do we work on a local basis without any direction from Government? The Home Office and the Department for Transport need to work collaboratively together to come up with a solution.'



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