

Roads Ahead

Police Federation Roads Policing Newsletter

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Welcome

Alan Jones

It is refreshing that the national Roads Policing portfolio is now organised into a sensible structure which revolves around a central hub of governance. Strategically important logic, central to cohesive deployment and use of resources. However, setting the strategic context is meaningless unless there's an operational platform and joined up support for an actively visible and highly skilled front line through which to deliver the vision. It cannot go unnoticed that as times get tougher and budgets more challenging, it is all too convenient to lose focus on policing the roads. A General can set as many battle targets as he likes, but if he does not have adequate resources to fight the campaign, then it's a lost cause. Crucially, budget cuts at a local and national level also stretches the ability of the agencies we rely on to support the roads policing mission.

Whilst we will continue to highlight these concerns at every opportunity, we must be positive about pressing for the national accredited standards we have been striving to achieve for far too long. The Police Federation were the initiators of setting standards for vehicles and technology and we are determined to do the same for a skills award which professionally recognises the important job you all do. It is unacceptable that forces choose to dip in and out of such obvious requirements for the job and we have to address the shortcomings in relation to retaining knowledge and experience - key factors in promoting good judgement and operational confidence.

It was disappointing to note that the number of people killed or seriously injured on British roads increased last year for the first time after many years of decline. Government must take notice of these figures and act to deliver a robust road safety policy.

Finally, a date for your diary. Once again we will jointly host a national Roads Policing Conference with ACPO, 17th and 18th January 2013, Hinckley Island, Leicestershire. If you have any burning suggestions or ideas for discussion then please let us know. Once again we will present an award giving recognition for outstanding achievement within the role, so look out for invitations to nominate a suitable candidate(s).



War on Motorists

When the Transport Minister came into power he said that the war on motorists had ended. We beg to differ as there is still much uncertainty, a lack of clarity and a real problem in terms of enforcement. The Minister has stated that he wants to get rid of automatic enforcement devices. In real terms there is a future requirement to rely on this even more when there is fewer officers to do the job. If the Minister does not see roads policing enforcement as a priority then where does that leave us and more importantly, where does that leave the public we serve?

Fatalities and Injuries

Sadly the number of people killed or seriously injured on British roads increased last year for the first time after many years of decline. PFEW Roads Policing Lead, Alan Jones says; "On a statistical comparison April - September 2010 compared with the same period 2011, 37% of forces within England and Wales reported an increase in KSI (killed or seriously injured). This is quite worrying and we urge Chief Constables to take notice of these figures to ensure action is taken to address this unacceptable anomaly so that it does not become a trend.

In response to the call on Government by MPs for much stronger leadership on road safety, Alan Jones, Roads Policing Lead, Police Federation of England and Wales says;

"The PFEW, which represents all officers up to an including the rank of Chief Inspector in England and Wales, welcomes the publication of the Transport Select Committee Road Safety report and the recommendations contained therein. We share their conclusions that the Government, through the office of the Road Safety Minister, needs to produce a stronger and more focused leadership strategy in relation to road safety and casualty reduction. Since moving from centrally determined targets to locally determined targets for casualty reduction and road safety provision, through DfT guidance, we have for the first time in many years seen a significant rise in killed and seriously injured statistics on our roads. The

Committee report criticises the Minister for being unclear in his strategic goals, which leaves the public and road safety sector confused. The current strategy is not working and as a consequence may put more lives at risk.

National road safety targets have proven very successful, they encourage initiative, good agency networking and comparators to empower Government to measure performance with accountability. Cutting budgets should not be a reason to cut targets and allow Local Authorities and Chief Constables to move resources elsewhere, simply because they are not being measured on casualty reduction. We agree with the conclusions of the report, that those Authorities and we would add, police forces, who are failing to address road safety considerations, should be held to account for what happens on their roads."

Drug-Driving to become a criminal offence

Drug-driving will finally become a specific criminal offence under tough new measures being proposed by the Government.

Offenders could be punished by up to six months in prison and a £5,000 fine, as well as an automatic driving ban of at least 12 months, as part of a new offence to be introduced under the Crime and Courts bill.

At present, motorists under the influence of drugs can only be prosecuted if police can prove their driving has been impaired, by enlisting the help of a doctor or obtaining a blood or urine sample. Under the new measures, police will be issued with handheld drug detection devices, which will take a saliva sample, as well as a breathalyser to test erratic drivers.

The Home Office said it is aiming to approve roadside drug-driving screening devices for police use by the end of 2013.

An expert panel will help to decide which drugs are covered by the offence.

PFEW Roads Policing Lead, Alan Jones said: "The Federation's Roads Policing Group welcomes this positive progress, which we have been pressing for some years and we are pleased that it was featured in the Queen's speech. There are still many hurdles to overcome; this is about awareness of all the issues, public acknowledgement of the risks, as well as simplicity in enforcement, but with sound credentials to meet the demands of the justice system."



Keeping drivers safe from fraudsters



The Insurance Fraud Enforcement Department (IFED) is a dedicated police investigation unit, housed at and run by the City of London Police's Economic Crime Directorate in London.

The unit, which has been operating since January 2012, investigates insurance fraud and targets suspected insurance fraudsters across the UK, from individuals making fraudulent claims on personal injury, vehicles, homes and contents through to organised groups carrying out complex insurance frauds.

In 2010, insurers detected motor insurance claims worth £466 million, both opportunist claims and claims orchestrated by high organised and sophisticated criminal groups.

Typical fraudulent claims include:

- Contrived collisions – claims are received for damage to vehicles and injury to individuals when a collision has never taken place
- Induced road traffic collisions – Deliberately induced collision or 'slam-on', usually consisting of organised criminal targeting innocent motorists by provoking collisions to facilitate compensation payments
- Phantom passenger claims – claims which can arise from both genuine and staged accidents. A vehicle packed with claimants, all of who claim to have been injured
- Staged collisions – Two or more individuals deliberately crashing their vehicles into each other, resulting in claims for damage
- Application Fraud – A policyholder dishonestly misrepresents or fails to disclose material facts in order to lower the insurance premium. Can include non-disclosure of claims history, points on a license or car modification
- Fronting – Application fraud where a policy is purchased using another's details, often a parent or other relative to gain more favourable terms

The IFED made an immediate operational impact with detectives investigating suspected frauds across the country. Within hours of the new unit opening its doors earlier this year, a

man had been detained in Leamington Spa after allegedly claiming £35,000 for a stolen BMW that was still in his possession. Subsequently this man has been charged with fraud by false representation and is due to be committed by City of London Magistrates to the Central Criminal Court on the 12th June 2012.

Before the week was even out IFED had responded to a number of industry reports of policy holders making bogus claims. This included three people suspected of running an internet car insurance company that was pocketing premiums but not providing any cover, leaving individuals unknowingly driving uninsured.

The action continued, with the unit receiving reports from police forces across the country of a major car insurance fraud allegedly based in the Midlands. Detectives have since arrested the main suspects along with three others all of which are currently on bail with further arrests anticipated.

Since its launch, the unit has received over 250 referrals with over 100 people arrested with many more arrests and convictions anticipated.

Head of IFED, DCI Dave Wood said: "In a short space of time IFED has sent out a clear message that insurance fraud in all its forms will not be tolerated, wherever it has been committed.

"There is still a public perception that making bogus claims to insurance companies about stolen property or ill health is somehow acceptable. IFED making an arrest in Bradford is evidence of how committed we are to changing this culture."

If you wish to find out more about IFED or what to do in the event of a suspected fraudulent claim, please contact IFED at IFED@cityoflondon.police.uk or call 020 7601 2222.



DCI Dave Wood

Hybrid vehicle incidents

The number of hybrid vehicles (combination of petrol/diesel and electric power) are on the rise in the UK, but there are also additional safety implications in incidents that need to be considered when dealing with them.

The vehicles have a Nimh battery pack which can discharge 400 volts at 100 amps and can prove fatal if mishandled. The battery electrolyte is extreme alkaline and harmful to human tissue and animals.

The vehicle engine may start without warning if the vehicle is not correctly isolated and the proximity key is within 5 metres of the vehicle.

The engine bay also contains a very powerful magnet that if exposed from its protective shield will emit strong electromagnetic fields that can scramble pacemakers, mobile phones, watches,

credit cards etc. It is also strong enough to make some people feel unwell when in close proximity to the exposed core.

Officers attending incidents such as, collisions, vehicle fires, burnt out vehicles or critical incidents should consider the safety of themselves and the public and should contact a suitably trained officer for advice or attendance if necessary.

The Federation reminds all officers attending road crash incidents involving such type of vehicle to be aware of the potential problems and risks of damaged high voltage electrical vehicle components. We are seeking further manufacturers guidance, but if any doubt exists then seek guidance from fire and rescue personnel or those RPU officers who are specifically aware of handling techniques.

ACC Forsyth - Deputy Vice-Chair, ACPO Roads Policing Group

I joined Northamptonshire Police as a police constable in 1994 and rose to the rank of Chief Inspector. In 2005, I joined Leicestershire Constabulary and was promoted to Chief Superintendent and subsequently seconded to the Metropolitan police service in June 2010, where I worked with the Assistant Commissioner for territorial policing. On the 10 January 2011, I moved to the West Midlands Police Force as ACC with responsibility for Operations and Community Justice.

I am the deputy vice chair of the ACPO Roads Policing Group. Previously I worked as head of operations in Leicestershire and was also the superintendent of operations where I had significant involvement in some challenging road traffic collisions which sparked my intent for roads policing.

My vision for the future of roads policing will be to shift the emphasis away from roads policing and move to policing the roads. Roads policing will move away from a target driven approach to performance, to one that enables officers to use their discretion and professional judgment to deliver safer roads and improved driver behaviour.

Working with our partners and stakeholders our ambition must be to create a shift in public attitude and behaviour to one of habitual compliance with the laws and conventions of the road. We must focus on our relationship with road users in which we work together to fulfill our vision of a "safe and secure environment for all road users".

We will adopt an integrated model of operation where everybody understands the importance of their role in policing the roads. Ensuring that our staff and their focus on roads policing is properly intelligence-led will be crucial to achieving our vision, whether that be through visibility of patrols, enforcement or educative action.

I have now had the pleasure of working with roads policing officers in a number of forces and roles and I very much look forward to further professionalising the work in roads policing and delivering safer roads for all.



ACC Forsyth

Consultation on police guidance for enforcement of 20mph limits

Jerry Moore, Police Liaison Officer, ACPO Roads Policing, DfT Road Safety and Home Office Road Crime, has been tasked with undertaking a review of the 2000 speed guidelines @Speed Enforcement Guidelines – Joining forces for safer roads, as well as pulling the past guidance from ACPO's Traffic Committee in 1997/8 on policing of 20mph limits.

Jerry Moore has circulated a paper for review

and comment to Roads Policing Regional Groups; Safety Camera Partnerships and police force leads for NDORS courses. After review by these bodies, Jerry will then compile a final paper and comment list for the next Roads Policing National Strategic Group meeting in order to decide on the way forward and submit it to the Chief Officer Group to sanction as Roads Policing Guidance.

Thousands of speeding drivers let off due to police cuts

The number of speeding motorists escaping punishment is on the rise due to savage police cuts. Last year, 50,000 warning letters were sent to those clocked speeding, up from just 10,000 in 2009.

Drivers can only be prosecuted if they are caught by the police. The cuts to some roads policing units, the switching off of cameras and the increased number of volunteers using speed guns in place of officers means more speeding motorists are escaping penalty with a slap on the wrist.

Devon and Cornwall have seen a 182 per cent increase in road deaths in the first quarter of the year compared to last as they cut their traffic department.

PFEW Roads Policing Secretary, Steve White said: 'We have seen an increase in crime in the last 12 months because of cuts in police numbers. We don't want to see an increase in road casualties.'



CPS to review policy on police facing dangerous driving charges

A roads policing stalwart has welcomed the news that the CPS intends to review its policy guidance in relation to dangerous driving.

Alan Jones described the pledge as a "move in the right direction". It follows the well-publicised case of PC James Holden, who was cleared of dangerous driving at Guildford Crown Court in February.

The officer had been pursuing a stolen vehicle for four minutes which ended when the driver crashed into a level crossing and ran off. The case raised questions about the vulnerability of police drivers being held responsible for the actions of those they pursue – particularly when a jury is not permitted to take into account an officer's special skill and training in determining whether the driving was dangerous.

A statement provided by Keir Starmer QC, director of public prosecutions read: "A number of concerns have been raised with me about the case of PC Holden. I do not propose to comment on the case itself, but I have decided that CPS policy guidance in relation to dangerous driving should be reviewed, including the way in which it is applied to

members of the emergency services. The CPS will consult with the police before finalising the revised policy guidance."

Speaking about the plans at a special roads policing session at the Federation's Bournemouth Conference, Mr Jones said: "This is clear positive progress but the only real solution is a change in law that will enable response drivers to do the job they are trained to do."

ACPO lead on pursuits, Andy Holt agreed: "We've got to have some protection in law. I can't give a cast iron guarantee that until we get the law changed there won't be a similar incident."



HGV driver sentenced to 4 months imprisonment

A 51-year-old goods driver from Glasgow appeared at Carlisle Crown Court on the 10 May 2012 and received a custodial sentence of four months for falsifying tachograph charts.

Mr Richardson was stopped by VOSA officers (Vehicle and Operator Services Agency) after they became suspicious over some charts produced at the time. From information available to the police, it then became known that the charts were false and Mr Richardson was arrested.

Following the investigation, Mr Richardson was charged with 8 counts of making a false instrument (tachograph), to which he pleaded guilty. He surrendered his HGV license and has been jailed for four months.



Roads policing officers question dedication of some MPs to saving lives on roads

A disappointing turnout by MPs to a parliamentary reception highlighting how cuts to roads policing is impacting on saving lives on Britain's roads was blasted by Police Federation leaders.

The event, held in Parliament on 25 April, was organised by the Federation's Roads Policing Group, to raise a number of issues facing depleting roads policing units around the country and was attended by 3rd Viscount Simon of Stackpole Elidor, Lord Prescott, Baroness Harris of Richmond, Lord Bradshaw of Wallingford and MP Steve McCabe but lacked attendance of many of those invited.

Steve White said: "I am extremely disappointed that more MPs were not able to attend the event. Some might draw the conclusion they are not interested in saving lives on Britain's roads. We are glad we were supported by the Lords."

Roads policing units across the country are seeing numbers of dedicated officers slashed with Devon and Cornwall seeing a 182 per cent increase in road deaths in the first quarter of the year compared to last as they cut their traffic department.

Federation representatives who work in roads policing turned out to draw attention to a whole host of issues – including gaining more recognition that they are at the forefront of fighting crime armed with specialist skills and knowledge

and the threat to maintaining standards with decreasing budgets.

Tim Rogers, Road Death Investigation Officer for West Midlands Police, said they have seen the number of dedicated roads policing officers in the force cut by around 200 over the last three years, from around 300 to just over 100.

Viscount Simon, who regularly goes out on patrol with roads policing officers, did not mince his words when he said he was 'peed off' that MPs had not turned out in bigger numbers as he said they did not know what officers on the ground know about the issues facing roads policing.

Officers at the event also discussed who would enforce speed limits – increases to 80mph and decreases to 20mph as well as lobbying for a change in the law on how police officers can pursue criminals after the PC James Holden case in Hampshire where he was cleared of dangerous driving after pursuing a criminal at speed.



A man has been charged in relation to the road traffic collision on the M1 near Wakefield on October 24 last year in which PC Mark Goodlad died.

A 45-year-old man from the Oldham area was arrested on 30 May in connection with the incident and has been charged with causing death by dangerous driving. He has been bailed to appear at Wakefield Magistrates at a later date.

Well-planned parking vital for neighbourhood peace

Poorly planned parking can lead to neighbourhood disputes, increased crime and danger to pedestrians, particularly children, as outlined in a report produced by the Institute of Highway Engineers (IHE) and the Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation (CIHT.)

Parking problems include pavement parking, blocked driveways, difficult access for delivery and collections, damage to greenery and cluttered streets. They often cause tension between neighbours which can lead to violence and can even prevent access for emergency vehicles.

In January 2011, the coalition government announced to 'end the war on motorists' and one

recommendation was the removal of national limits on residential parking. In preparing new policies, local authorities are being urged to make the right decisions for the benefit of their communities whether it is to build more parking spaces, encourage people to use their garages, or promote more cycle use.



Plans to cut the drink drive limit in Scotland should be followed south of the border

The Scottish Government has announced it is bringing forward plans to cut the drink drive limit from 80 to 50 milligrams of alcohol in every 100 millilitres of blood.

The Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland (ACPOS) has endorsed the plans, which will put Scotland's drink drive limit in line with other European countries.

Alan Jones said "England and Wales should follow."

But he said "There is a confusing message about drink driving by virtue of the number of people

caught by their own misjudgement, thinking they can beat the legal limit. If the limit was lowered, then perhaps these people might adjust their drinking habit and think more carefully before driving."

He pointed out a lower drink drive limit was recommended in the North Report on drink and drug driving, which was placed before Parliament in 2010. In its response, the government said it needed to help police focus on the most dangerous, repeat drink drive and drug drive offenders and lowering the limit was "not consistent with this approach."

Nearly 10,000 police officers cut from communities across the country

Yvette Cooper MP, Labour's Shadow Home Secretary, responding to the news that police officer numbers in England and Wales have fallen to their lowest level in nine years, said:

"The Tory-led Government has cut nearly 10,000 police officers from communities across the country. And we know that substantially more than half are from 999, neighbourhood and traffic response - the officers we rely on in an emergency.

"These figures show the cuts to the police are deeper and faster even than experts predicted. David Cameron's promise to protect the front line has been ripped apart by these appalling figures. In just two years the Government has taken police numbers back by nearly a decade, weakened police powers, undermined morale and reduced crime prevention. Theresa May has no strategy to cut crime, only to cut police."

The Federation is being contacted more frequently of late regarding Officers' personal vehicle insurance and declaration regarding on duty road incidents/collisions. Of course every incident has its own unique set of circumstances, and outcomes, but insurance declarations require information which could be detrimental to the premium. We are unclear what the scale of issues are or whether there is a real problem which we might be able to address. If officers can evidence a recent significant disadvantage through vehicle insurance premium payments as a consequence of this then we'd like to hear from you, with brief details. Contact roadspolicing@polfed.org

European seatbelt campaign

A week-long police enforcement campaign against drivers and passengers not using seatbelts has resulted in the issue of more than 125,000 penalties.

The campaign in March was co-ordinated by TISPOL, the European traffic police network. Officers in 24 countries across Europe stopped drivers of all ages who were flouting seatbelt laws.

Of the 125,422 penalties, 9,234 related to children not wearing seatbelts or other appropriate safety restraints.

TISPOL President Pasi Kemppainen said: "We carry out these enforcement campaigns because too many people are dying unnecessarily through not wearing a seatbelt. We therefore want to make it clear how important it is for all occupants to wear seatbelts. This means everybody is better protected and has less chance of sustaining fatal injuries in a road collision.

"Wearing a seatbelt is the single most effective

way of saving lives and reducing injuries in road crashes. That's why wearing a seatbelt is not a matter of choice and we will continue to use vigorous enforcement strategies which back up the continuing education campaigns."

Stopping drivers for seatbelt offences also provides police officers with the opportunity to make other appropriate safety and security checks. For example, during the week of this seatbelt operation, officers also detected and dealt with offences connected with illegal immigration and human trafficking (41), possession of drugs (192), firearms (22) and stolen goods (35).



Much stronger leadership on road safety required from Government says MPs

Recent increases in road fatalities should be a wake-up call for Government to step up and provide stronger leadership on road safety, say MPs in a report examining the Government's Strategic Framework for Road Safety.

Launching the report Louise Ellman, Chair of the Transport Committee said; "We are very concerned that 2011 saw the first increase in road fatalities since 2003, with 1901 people killed on the roads. It is shocking that road accidents are the main cause of death amongst young adults aged 16-24 and that so many cyclists continue to be killed or injured. In 2010 there were 283 fatalities amongst car occupants aged 16-25. 27% of young men aged 17-19 are involved in a road collision within the first year of passing their test. If the government is not willing to set targets, it should show more leadership. Action is required to improve road safety for young drivers, including an independent review of driver training. We welcome the attention cycling has received but there is much more to do."

The Committee also highlights the variability in

road safety performance between local authorities. "The evidence we gathered suggests the principal factor in improving road safety is robust political leadership. The Government's strategy sets out to devolve decision making on road safety to local authorities but many authorities face a shortage of funding and the loss of many skilled road safety personnel. We welcome innovative working between local authorities and, for example, health authorities. The Minister should also do more to flag up and disseminate best practice" adds Louise Ellman.

The Committee urges the Government to utilize the opportunity presented by a planned update for the Strategic Framework for Road Safety in September 2012 to reassess its road safety strategy. More attention should be given to engineering improvements in road design and technology and the Government should account for recent increases in the number of road fatalities. Any proposal to increase the motorway speed limit should follow approval from MPs in the House of Commons.

The Federation's Roads Policing Group wishes to place on record our thanks to Paul Monk, Secretary for the Met's Roads Policing Officers - for his tremendous contribution to all things roads policing over his long and valued 35 year career. We wish him well in retirement and welcome his replacement PC Simon Hill (Simon.j.hill@met.police.uk). We also say cheerio to Sgt Guy Young from number two region who has recently retired, and Hanna Hales who has also moved on and who played a key part in putting these newsletters together.

Regional Traffic Representatives

Alan Jones, Roads Policing Lead, JCC: alan.jones@polfed.org
Steve White, Roads Policing Secretary, JCC: stephen.white@polfed.org

Region 1

Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside
 Rep Vacancy

Region 2

Cleveland, Durham, Humberside, Northumbria, North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire
 Rep Vacancy

Region 3

Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Mercia, West Midlands
 Tim Rogers:
tim.rogers@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

Region 4

Cambridgeshire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Suffolk
 John Goodman:
john.goodman@nottinghamshire.pnn.police.uk

Region 5

Bedfordshire, Essex, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Thames Valley
 Chris Powling:
chris.powling@hampshire.pnn.police.uk

Region 6

Avon & Somerset, Devon & Cornwall, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire
 Neil Chadburn:
neil.chadburn@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

Region 7

Dyfed Powys, Gwent, North Wales, South Wales
 Steve Oaten:
steveoaten@southwalespolicefederation.co.uk

Region 8

City of London, Metropolitan
 Simon Hill:
Simon.j.hill@met.police.uk