

# Roads Ahead

Police Federation Roads Policing Newsletter

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## Welcome

Alan Jones

A significant national change to policing rarely takes account or even mentions the true value and worth of how important policing the roads are. Not one PCC candidate, to my knowledge, mentioned roads policing and I feel that hardly any of the newly elected crime commissioners will give a second thought to what we do. That's why I am in the process of writing to every one of the 41 PCCs to make sure they know what we're about.

As budgets become even more difficult and long term changes are in the pipeline, it falls to each of us to champion the cause. We must ensure we enlighten the need to invest sufficient and substantial resources and protect front line operational delivery. Policing the roads should be at the very heart of crime fighting, community assurance, anti-social behaviour and casualty reduction. We need to link together the threat, harm and risk, with the public's concerns in order to see what is happening with vehicles and roads. This is a key indicator of how successful policing needs to be.

Whilst budget cuts have played not an insignificant part in reducing our operational capabilities, our resources are not simply about funding. We have a significant dearth of skills arising from a lack of investment in adequate and proportionate training needs. This is compounded as more and more colleagues retire and take their experience and expertise with them. Yes we can learn new ideas and deliver more effectively, but we need people with talent, vision and understanding of the real world in order to sustain the future. Hence why losing vocational competencies at this current rate is something we should be concerned about. The inertia has gone on for too long.

The new College of Policing which began its work on 1 December, after replacing the NPPIA, should offer real opportunities for the roads policing portfolio and address some key issues. Whilst the college represents a fledgling body for now, the Federation roads policing team wants to ensure our contribution is truly reflective of those we represent and the values we hold. It will be our mission to set acceptable standards of accredited training that is consistent and recognised across England and Wales and importantly has real currency to the outside World. Should we not fight for a roads policing academy that sits within the College? There are three clear objectives, that of focused leadership, clear guidance and responsible representation, for the greater interests and benefit of the service.

So in the gloom and despair of how policing is being treated, there is hope that the broad roads policing portfolio, from IPLDP, district or borough provision, to the highest level of expertise, can rise to these challenges. We can deliver positive outcomes and above all grow stronger. Through determination we can address a future that is currently guaranteed to be full of woeful inadequacies.

There are a whole host of issues the Police Federation Roads Policing team are working on and contributing to, so whilst we try and give a flavour of some of the topical issues in this newsletter, please get in touch if you would like more information or if you have any ideas or suggestions you would like to raise.



## Police forces outsourcing driver training

The Police Federation is raising questions over the potential legal implications of police forces outsourcing driver training to private firms.

As budget cuts continue to bite, the Federation is seeking clarification over any ramifications that could face forces if they use the services of third parties.

Alan Jones, Roads Policing Lead, Police Federation of England and Wales, said: "We are not criticising forces who are going down the outsourcing route or the specific companies they

choose but we feel that any potential legal issues should be quickly identified and addressed.

"However, we are increasingly concerned that police forces are being hugely affected by the austerity measures and that cuts to the budget and the use of outsourcing is growing.

"We have asked the ACPO lead DCC Ian Shannon for legal advice about this outsourcing issue and for guidance focusing on this area, as we believe there are many unanswered questions that need to be addressed before this goes any further."

## Drink & drug testing

Alan Jones, Roads Policing Lead, PFEW says "Progress remains lamentably slow, but it is hoped that 2013 will see some changes both to the legislation on drink and drug driving, as well as practical operational improvements. The Federation have been pressing for these changes for some time.

"The service may see its first drug tester being made universally available in the coming months and although this will not replace the FIT test it should improve on police station procedure. We are also keen to see the introduction of the new roadside evidential device, which the Government have promised. We hope that in addition we can see

legislative changes which further improve and make easier the drink/drug drive testing procedures.

"We hope as many officers as possible will engage in this year's Christmas drink drive campaign, and that we can aspire to no road deaths or serious injuries over the festive period. It takes a concerted effort, but it's a goal worth trying to reach."



## Cuts in grants impacting on roads policing

The current cuts in grants from central government to police forces have had an impact on roads policing where enforcement in particular has been made more difficult as a result.

PFEW Roads Policing Secretary, Steve White said: "We are supportive of anything which reduces bureaucracy and streamlines processes for dealing with transgressors of road traffic legislation.

"However, there's no point if we don't have the officers to do it. Roads policing units are being slashed across the country and regular patrol officers simply do not have the time to do this work.

"In addition we need to ensure that when people are convicted and get a mandatory disqualification, that we have the resources to enforce it. This is currently against the backdrop of rising road deaths."

*In response to the DPP's consultation in relation to dangerous driving, Alan Jones, Chair of the staff association's Road Policing Group, says:*

"On November 19, representatives from the Federation, ACPO and Superintendents Association held a meeting with Keir Starmer QC. The discussion was in relation to the problems over dangerous driving and the legal interpretation. Whilst the meeting was helpful in establishing the DPP's position, the meeting re-enforced our position that we have to seek an amendment to legislation. The law must recognise that all emergency service personnel who are responding or reacting to a call need protection for doing what is expected of them.

"We must make it clear that we are not seeking this as an exemption to dangerous driving, nor are we defending the outrageous or unacceptable examples which come forward.

"We believe that dangerous driving cannot be viewed by referral to either the Highway Code or what the standard driver in the street might believe to be dangerous.

"Taking into account the facts and reasons why emergency services drive in these circumstances, it has to be a legal consideration in making a judgement or when forming opinions.

"Notwithstanding the long term objectives, I believe there are two strands to resolving the issues. The first is resolving the legal situation and the second is making sure all the internal threads and strands of decision making and understanding are not ignored.

"It would also be helpful if we had a team of expertise on which to set these standards to a consistent and level approach. I will be raising this once again with our ACPO colleagues."

## Highways Agency's proposal to extend all lanes running from the M42

Concern and disquiet is being expressed by police chiefs and operational officers in relation to the Highways Agency's proposal to extend all lanes running from the M42 West Midlands area far wider across England.

Consultation and evidence gathering is still on going as the Government seeks to develop a solution to the huge increases of demand without having the expense of building additional running lanes.

The Federation believes the only viable and cheap solution would be to widen the current motorway infrastructure by opening up the hard shoulder to create another lane although this is not without other obvious problems and concerns.

Alan Jones of the Roads Policing group said: "We understand the mounting pressure from commercial users to create more volume and

space. We also recognise that consistent motorway grid locks due to sheer volume of traffic is an issue."

Mr Jones added: "There are significant problems and risks associated with essentially removing the hard shoulder for much further stretches than the M42.

"Breakdowns and collisions will still occur, as will the need to move emergency service and recovery personnel quickly to a scene. If the motorway is shut and blocked, including the hard shoulder, then there has to be serious concerns raised about emergency services response times and gaining access to the scene.

"There are also likely to be further complications and uncertainties when drivers respond and react to overhead and advance notice signals or instructions when incidents occur."

## Momentum gathering to extend 20mph zones

The growing pressure and proliferation by some local authorities to extend and 'grow' 20mph zones is gathering momentum.

Alan Jones of the Federation RP group says: "It is entirely understandable that speed limits need to be consistently reviewed and set at appropriate and sensible levels. However, the solution to enforcement demands should come from careful and logical planning in how the route looks and feels to motorists.

"Simply creating or changing speed limits from 30mph to 20mph without sufficient information or awareness is not dealing with the complete picture or issues. There needs to be a clear understanding of a residential road description when determining what a 20mph road looks like. Otherwise things are confusing and standards as well as expectations become unclear."



## Police Federation supports conferences for traffic Family Liaison Officers

The Police Federation along with ACPO supported two conferences for traffic Family Liaison Officers (FLO) organised by the UK road safety charity Brake.

The conferences were designed to provide development opportunities for professionals who support victims following a road death or serious injury.

Speaking after the event, PC Jeff Goodright, National Training Co-ordinator at National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA), said: "Brake do a lot of good work with the families and victims of road crashes involving both death and serious injury. It is crucial we work closely with them and other third party organisations in developing and delivering training to Police FLOs. The conferences

organised by BRAKE go some way towards addressing these needs and are a welcome addition to the other training events available such as the annual ACPO FLO conferences.

"Understanding the importance of social media and the use of digital devices is just one example of an area to update training needed by FLOs. They are featuring more and more in road death investigations, whether it is the driver using them at the time of the crash or the family being exposed to trolls on social network memorial sites following a death. The FLO needs to have a good depth of knowledge of the many ways in which new technology and habits can present themselves during the investigation."

## Assisting the police in the disruption of crime

Neil Drane, Head of Motor Insurance Database Services at MIB



We know there are proven links between driving without insurance and crime and recognise that dealing with uninsured vehicles can have a positive impact on disrupting criminality.

At the Motor Insurers' Bureau (MIB) we are grateful for the close working relationship we have with the police to help reduce the level and impact of uninsured driving in the UK. With uninsured drivers being more likely to be involved in collisions, our work in clamping down on this type of lawbreaker is not only an effective way of making our roads safer but also in catching criminals.

MIB continues to be actively involved with police forces, particularly in areas we know to be uninsured vehicle "hotspots".

Across the country, police are supported with a range of free materials and resources that are available from MIB, including wallet-cards and dashboard stickers to large seized for no insurance stickers, for forces to publicise seized vehicles. Police officers can contact the police helpline number on 0845 165 2999.

MIB is once again a proud sponsor of the Police Federation and ACPO Roads Policing Conference on 17 and 18 January 2013. On the first day Dean Smith will present 'Supporting Crime Fighters' on the main stage from 2.35pm and will broach the topical issue of

'Trade Policies and Crime'.

Following widespread concern from the police and the initial publication of 'Dealing with Open Policies of Insurance (Motor Trade): Good Practice Guide for the Police' (MIB: 2012), these workshops will take an important look at some of the next steps in tackling issues around the abuse of open certificates. Mr Smith will provide an insight into recent activities and operations with various police forces to clamp down on the open trade policies issue.

A range of support materials will be available from the MIB exhibition stand throughout the conference. The MIB Police website is available via police force intranet at <https://www.mibpolice.org.uk> offering all the latest news and information from the Bureau. Information is also delivered directly to teams from our police liaison manager, Dean Smith, through dedicated on-site workshop briefings and presentations around the industry's hot topics. Mr Smith will also provide roadside assistance when notified of road checks and can lead into MIB systems.

For more information or to request MIB police support materials, please visit <https://www.mibpolice.org.uk> (via your force intranet) or email [police@mib.org.uk](mailto:police@mib.org.uk)

## Roads Policing Conference 2013

The PFEW and ACPO Roads Policing portfolios are jointly hosting the Roads Policing Conference on 17 and 18 January 2013 at the Barceló Hinckley Island Hotel in Leicestershire. The conference, sponsored by Motor Insurers Bureau (MIB) will present three awards for the outstanding contribution to roads policing. This year's awards are very kindly provided by Irwin Mitchell Solicitors.

For more information on the conference and to book a place to attend please visit the Police Federation website here: [http://www.polfed.org/mediacenter/roads\\_policing\\_conference\\_2013.asp](http://www.polfed.org/mediacenter/roads_policing_conference_2013.asp)



On improving road safety, Alan Jones, PFEW Roads Policing Lead, says: "Priority or funding can often go unnoticed but it is crucial to the road safety agenda to maintain and set the highest standards for signing and lining as well as keeping reflective studs in a satisfactory state of repair.

Unfortunately for the more observant traveller and road user, the winter months highlight the real problems that long dark nights can bring.

"The problem is likely to become more serious as local authorities begin turning off street lighting to save money. The dark and wet roads together with weather conditions of limited visibility require a good delineation of road space and junctions. The maintenance of high quality reflective material to enable motorists to steer to a safe passage are important parts of the road safety agenda, yet the lack of care or investment in maintaining such helpful aids is woefully inadequate. We suggest that next time you're out on patrol, check the standards on lining and signing on your 'patch' and make sure deficiencies or problems are reported and recorded with the local Authority Highways section or the Highways Agency. Together we can make a difference and improve road safety."

## Federation supporting Cassie's law

The Federation roads policing group welcomes and supports the initiative known as 'Cassie's law' which is seeking to amend the law in order for police officers to have additional powers when dealing with motorists who are unable to pass a simple road side eyesight test.

At the roads policing conference last year the Federation made comments that new powers were needed to support police officers in dealing with matters such as these.

The tragic case is being highlighted after a police officer was left powerless to take immediate action due to a motorist failing a road side eyesight test.

The officer recognised the medical problems,

but was unable to lawfully impose an immediate temporary driving restriction on that driver. Sadly he continued to drive, knowing the risks, and two days later he lost control of his car and mounted the footpath knocking down and killing 16 year old Cassie McCord.

Steve White, Secretary of the Federation Roads Policing group, said: "This is a serious issue and we have to take things with due proportionality. If a police officer has good reason and evidence which suggests a major eyesight defect, then being unable to deal with the problem immediately leaves others at risk.

"This is not acceptable and we have to consider a way to resolve this."

## "The Honest Truth"

Following a fatal collision in South Devon when, during 2009, three youngsters aged nine, 17 and 19 years old were tragically killed, a partnership was formed to look at ways in which collisions like these could be avoided in the future.

The aim was to sign up 25 Approved Driving Instructors (ADIs) across the South Devon area and provide them with resources to enable them to deliver a consistent message around a number of key safety themes.

By the middle of 2011 the partnership had signed up over 300 ADIs from across Devon and Cornwall and was receiving interest from other areas around the country.

Using the strapline 'Small Changes Saves Lives' the partnership hopes that through educating new drivers it will encourage them to make one small change and to then pass this on

to others in the vehicles they are driving or travelling in.

Sergeant Olly Tayler of Devon and Cornwall Police, the current chair of the Partnership, said;

"This is a unique partnership that brings together statutory agencies and private business to reduce the number of young people killed and seriously injured on our roads.

"By using ADIs we can access many thousands of young and new drivers at the very beginning of their driving career when they are most at risk".

The project now has over 460 ADIs signed up across Devon, Cornwall and Hertfordshire with other areas wanting to take on the project.

For more information on ADIs, young drivers and parents please visit the website:

[www.thehonesttruth.co.uk](http://www.thehonesttruth.co.uk)

## Drink-drive limit lowered in Scotland

Moves to bring down the drink-drive limit to help police officers deal better with the scourge of drink-driving in Scotland have been welcomed by policing professionals.

The move came ahead of a Scottish Parliament debate on proposals to reduce the drink-drive limit scheduled for 1 November. This would involve cutting the limit from 80mg of alcohol in 100ml of blood to 50mg.

The release of the Road Casualties Scotland 2011 report revealed that 750 casualties

throughout 2010 were estimated to be as a result of drink-driving.

Mr McCaskill, Scottish Justice Secretary said "We wanted a package to be devolved to consider whether the police should be able to carry out breath testing of drivers anytime as well as powers to consider changing the penalties for drink-driving."

Brian Docherty, chairman of the Scottish Police Federation, said: "Anything that contributes to road safety has to be a good thing."

## LGV driver pleads guilty after death of PC Mark Goodlad

At Leeds Crown Court on 22 November Andrew Abernethy, an LGV driver from Oldham pleaded guilty to causing death by dangerous driving in relation to an incident which claimed the life of West Yorkshire Constable Mark Goodlad. The roads policing officer had stopped on the hard shoulder of the M1 motorway to assist a broken down female driver. Abernethy, aged 45, received a two year, nine-month custodial sentence. He had been driving barely an hour when his lorry, en route from Manchester to Chesterfield, drifted from lane one onto the hard shoulder and struck the rear of PC Goodlads police vehicle.

Alan Jones said: "This is a tragic reminder of how dangerous police work can be and is another example of the significant risks and exposures police officers face when working on the hard shoulder."



## Six police officers hospitalised

A woman died and eight others including six police officers were taken to hospital after a car careered off a bridge into a river in Bristol on 20 October.

Six police officers dived into the River Avon to help rescue those trapped in the water and were then taken to hospital to receive treatment before being released.

Inspector Paul Winship, from Avon and Somerset Police, said: "At least six police officers dived into the river and rescued one male and one female. They were treated in hospital as a precaution."

Two people have been arrested on suspicion of causing death by dangerous driving.



## Three people killed in coach crash

Three people were killed in a coach crash that was believed to be carrying too many passengers.

The accident took place in September after the coach left the A3 in Surrey. The driver and two passengers were declared dead at the scene whilst other passengers suffered life changing injuries.

The coach hit a tree and overturned whilst on its way back from the Bestival music festival on the Isle of Wight.

## Man charged after M5 crash

A 50 year old man who organised a fireworks display near the M5 has been charged with manslaughter after a crash on the motorway killed seven people.

Geoffrey Counsell, from Somerset, provided a fireworks display at Taunton Rugby Club close to the M5 on 4 November last year which led to extremely poor visibility and resulted in 34 vehicles crashing.

Mr Counsell recently appeared before magistrates in Bristol.

## Government review of road finance and ownership

Crashes and casualties cost the economy an estimated £34.8 billion in 2011 due to the burden on health and emergency services, criminal justice costs, insurance pay-outs and human costs. This has risen by £2.8 billion from the previous year's assessment. \*

Alan Jones says: "It really is important for the

government to seriously consider setting national road safety targets. They must also review their decision to cut road safety grants as this alongside education cuts and pressures on limited resources make it more likely that there will be increases to the road casualty statistics."

\*(Source DFT 2012 reported road crashes)



### Key facts in relation to incidents taking place on British roads:

- 70 people are killed or seriously injured on Britain's roads every day
- Four in 10 fatal and serious crashes occur on rural roads
- The risk of death and serious injury on Britain's motorways and A roads is highest in Scotland and lowest in West Midlands
- Motorcyclists account for just 1% of traffic but 18% of all fatal crashes
- £1.5 billion is the economic cost annually from crashes which cause disruption and close roads
- 75% of all people killed on roads in Great Britain during 2011 were male
- 412 people were killed in crashes involving a young driver aged 12-24 accounting for 22% of all road death in 2011

## Improving vehicle technology discussed at world conference

The fast moving and significantly changing world of improved vehicle technology was discussed at a recent world conference in Vienna under the theme 'smarter on the way'. Bringing all aspects of industry and technology together the conference was visionary in terms of multi modal transport developments and cooperation using electronic systems into the future. Topics included advanced driver assistance and safety systems working to a

world with zero accidents, up to date traffic information systems, environmental considerations and greater occupant protection.

Alan Jones, Roads Policing Lead, Police Federation of England and Wales, said: "The police service needs to be fully engaged with these developments which can provide substantial benefits for operational deployment and minimising risk and improving road safety and public confidence."

## College of Policing replaces NPIA

The College of Policing (CoP) replaced the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) on 1 December. The college sets out to deliver higher standards on police leadership and training. The Federation recognises the benefits that can be contributed to the evolving body. The Federation also has its concerns and an uncertainty around the lack of clarification on the CoP's future contribution, costs and structure.

Alan Jones of the PFEW RP group said: "The woeful inadequacies and systematic failure of the NPIA and of chief officers to deliver on these expectations represents a poor investment to the development needs for all operational officers and the service. There is no excuse for failures of this magnitude across all Federated ranks and roles. A nationally consistent approach to training investment is desperately needed, not investment in another monumentally disconnected bureaucratic organisation."

The Federation roads policing group believes that despite pressure from the Federation to address concerns the ACPO RP leadership has shown little regard over the last few years to listen to the needs of the service and tackle the huge deficit of skills and standards required to ensure the preservation of key RP competencies.

Alan Jones added: "This is totally unacceptable. If chief officers continually fail in their obligations and leadership or ignore their responsibilities then we can only hope the College of Policing, through the Federation's influence, be a force that can be used to command essential training provision for operational roads policing officers. It is our mission to make sure all officers have the competence, skills and knowledge, which underpins confidence to deliver operational expectations to the highest standard from basic to complex investigations and enquiries."

We would like to wish everyone a very happy Christmas and best wishes for 2013. Thank you for providing a brilliant contribution to operational policing and we hope the New Year will bring a strengthened resolve to fighting crime on the roads and tackling the scourge of death and injury, whilst prosecuting those who deserve to face tough justice.

## Regional Traffic Representatives

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**Steve White, Roads Policing Secretary, JCC: [stephen.white@polfed.org](mailto:stephen.white@polfed.org)**

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### Region 2

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