

Roads Ahead

Police Federation Roads Policing Newsletter

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Welcome

It has been just over four months since I took over as the national roads policing lead for the Police Federation of England and Wales from my good friend and colleague Alan Jones.

Although I am new to the role I know I can bring with me the same level of enthusiasm, commitment and energy that we all appreciated from my predecessor. Alan was very highly regarded by my Federation colleagues and many others in the roads policing world.

It has been a steep learning curve but I am quick to learn and eager to contribute. Alan has given me a very favourable and encouraging picture of the future. He has spoken very highly of the Federation roads policing group, the ACPO roads policing group, the Superintendents' Association lead and others who are all making a difference in the important area of policing the roads.

From the very start it was important that I met and introduced myself to as many key people as possible and I was heartened by the welcome I received from all of them. It was also an opportunity to discuss common issues and concerns in moving forward with the same high standards of professionalism and level of engagement previously enjoyed.

It is clear to me that roads policing is very much a Federation success story with its interaction with ACPO for the benefit of police officers and the public. I will continue to further develop and nurture that relationship.

There are some key issues and priorities within the portfolio specifically surrounding the reduction in roads policing assets, dangerous driving, professionalising roads policing and enforcement that along with other partners the national roads policing group will look to address in the coming months.

It is clear that this is a team effort and we will only realise our full potential if we work closely together valuing and appreciating the experience members of the roads policing group bring in leading key areas of the portfolio.

Roads policing really matters and we will continue making a difference.



John Giblin
National Roads Policing Lead

H&S Annual Inspection campaign to raise officers' awareness of safely stopping vehicles

The Health & Safety sub-committee will be rolling out a national inspection campaign to raise officers' awareness on the safe stopping of vehicles.

Health and safety leaders around the country will be conducting inspections aimed at seeing what training officers have, whether they have the right equipment to deal with collision scenes, road closures and whether officers feel confident in the training they have had.

Speaking about the campaign, Jim Lucas secretary of South Yorkshire Police Federation, said: "We need a snap shot of the level of training that officers receive when stopping

vehicles and the equipment they use at the scene of a collision or any other road closures.

"A stark warning needs to go out to all officers that if the patrolling officers do not use available signalling and an incident occurs as a result, this may be held as liable."

The survey is due to be released in October.



Jim Lucas
Secretary, South Yorkshire
Police Federation

Britain's roads were the safest during 2012

The number of road casualty deaths fell to 1,754 in 2012 – the lowest figure since national records began.

Most categories of non-fatal road casualties also fell relative to the previous year and to the 2005-2009 baseline. The comprehensive annual report from the International Road Safety Forum found that 2012 had the lowest number of fatalities on record for most OECD-IRTAD

countries.

John Giblin, PFEW roads policing lead, said: "The reduction in road deaths and non-fatal road casualties is both heartening and encouraging.

"This is attributable to a number of factors but we must not become complacent in our actions and will continue to develop strategies that drive the numbers down further."

Rural young drivers more likely to crash than urban drivers

Young rural drivers are almost twice as likely to be involved in a collision as young urban drivers, a new study has revealed.

Road Safety Analysis (RSA) produced the survey, funded by Michelin Tyre PLC, which found that where young drivers live and learn to drive can make a worrying difference to their risk factor with young drivers 44% more likely to be involved in an injury collision.

"Needs to be examined and addressed."

John Giblin, PFEW roads policing lead, said: "For many different reasons it is not surprising that young drivers are more likely to be involved in an injury collision.

"I am surprised to learn that it is younger rural drivers who are almost twice more likely to be involved in a collision than young urban drivers, which needs to be examined and addressed."

Speeding in the news

Speeding offences increase by 10% in the UK

One in seven (14%) drivers say they avoid detection by memorising where police patrol in their area, new figures reveal.



The statistic was revealed following an FOI request from LV car insurance which revealed that speeding offences had increased by 10% in the UK.

In 2012, 48,000 drivers – almost 1,000 a week – appeared before magistrates for breaking the speed limit – up from 44,000 the previous year.

In total, British motorists were fined £30m for speeding last year.

John Giblin, PFEW roads policing lead, said: “Although various enforcement measures are working the increase in speeding offences is concerning and is a clear indication that members of the public are still prepared to gamble without thinking they will be caught.

“This is the opportunity to raise awareness of the consequences of their actions to reduce the prospect of further re-offending.”

	<h3>Eight speed limits in Nottinghamshire village</h3> <p>Speaking after a village in Nottinghamshire was confusing drivers after having eight different speed limits in just over a mile of road, John Giblin, roads policing lead for PFEW, said: “Introducing this amount of speed limits is extremely confusing for motorists and could result in a collision. I think it would be important for the authority to discuss this with the local police force to discuss whether there is a need for this.”</p>	
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Speed cameras cut injuries by a quarter

Speed cameras cut the number of serious injuries in road accidents in the areas where they are placed by an average of more than a quarter, a study suggests.

The research by the RAC Foundation was based on data from 551 fixed camera sites in nine areas of England.

The findings showed how effective speed cameras were for road safety.

The study found that after cameras were installed the average number of fatal or serious injuries fell by 27%.

Speaking on behalf of the Police Federation of England and Wales, John Giblin, roads policing lead, said: “If speed cameras are located sensibly and for the right reasons, particularly as part of a strategy to

reduce the incidence of serious injuries in road collisions, this is real evidence that they have an effective part to play in protecting the public who use the roads daily.”



Daily Telegraph publishes apology for story on car crash details

The Daily Telegraph published a story on its front page on 31 January relating to police ‘making millions’ from passing on details of car crash victims to claims management companies. The story was very damaging to the reputation of the police and ACPO took the matter to the Press Complaints Commission. The Telegraph published an apology on page two on 4 June 2013.

Speaking on behalf of PFEW, roads policing lead John Giblin, said: “The media has an important role to play in raising the public’s awareness on matters that concern them.

“They also have a duty to report the news in a responsible and factual way. It’s good that in this instance an apology was made which has limited the damage that was caused to the reputation of the police and ACPO.”

Drink driving campaign launched by DfT and ACPO

The Department for Transport (DfT) and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) has launched a new campaign to raise awareness of drink drivers.

The drink-drive campaign will carry out extra checks on motorists over the summer to alert drivers about the consequences of a conviction.

Speaking at the launch of the campaign, road safety minister Stephen Hammond said: “Drink driving is a menace and drivers should be clear that if you get behind the wheel over the limit this summer, you will lose your licence, get a criminal record and face a fine – you could even end up in jail. The findings of this poll are clear: drivers love their cars and a drink driving conviction would not only leave a massive hole in their pockets, it would leave a massive hole in their lives.”

John Giblin, PFEW roads policing lead said: “We fully support this new campaign by the

DfT and ACPO to raise awareness of the dangers and consequences of drink driving for those who are foolishly tempted to get behind the wheel while over the limit.

“If they do then they face a great personal and financial cost as well. It’s just not worth the risk, especially as there are always alternative modes of transport that can be utilised.”

“Drink driving is a menace”



Transport Select Committee to hold enquiry into level crossing safety

The Transport Select Committee have agreed to hold an inquiry into the safety of the UK’s 8,000 level crossings.

Speaking after hearing the news, John Giblin, PFEW roads policing lead said:

“This will primarily be a concern for our colleagues in the British Transport Police (BTP) but any inquiry that potentially leads to greater safety for road users is to be welcomed.”

Police given new powers following consultation

Police will be given the power to issue fixed penalty notices for careless driving under a new government consultation.

The new changes will enable officers greater flexibility when dealing with less serious careless driving offences such as middle lane hogging and tailgating and free them from resource intensive court processes.

Incidents such as using a mobile phone while at the wheel and driving without insurance will result in an increase of fixed penalties.

The new penalty levels will be brought in during July 2013 once legislative changes have been made.

John Giblin, PFEW roads policing lead said: "I'm sure that responsible and considerate drivers will welcome this news but I wonder how the success or failure of these new proposals will be measured.

"Will it be in terms of outcomes, such as smoother traffic flows or reduced casualty rates or will it be in outputs, such as fixed penalty tickets or undertaking awareness courses?"

"With an increase in the volume of traffic and a decrease in the number of police patrols on our roads, who is going to enforce it?"

Cyclist road deaths up by 10%

The number of cyclists killed on Great Britain's roads rose by 10% in 2012, as the overall number of road deaths fell to its lowest since records began in 1926, according to official figures.

The number of deaths among cyclists rose from 107 in 2011 to 118 in 2012, the Department for Transport (DfT) announced.

It also added that there were a total of 1,754 deaths on British roads in accidents reported to the police in 2012.

This was lower than the equivalent figure for 2011.

John Giblin, PFEW roads policing lead, said: "It's great news that the number of

overall fatalities on our roads is decreasing, however it is worrying that the number of fatalities involving cyclists has risen to this level. It is important that the cause for this increase is established and measures to reduce them are put in place as soon as possible."



Police Federation responds to Daily Mail story on police officers caught speeding

Police need to speed when responding to emergency calls, says PFEW roads policing lead following a story on officers not being prosecuted for speeding.

Following an FOI request the mail online found that only one per cent of police officers who were caught speeding or going through red lights were being prosecuted.

This led to accusations that officers were routinely let off without proper checks while ordinary drivers automatically face three penalty points and a £60 fine.

"It is no surprise that far more emergency

services will be captured on enforcement devices for exceeding the speed limit when responding to an emergency or call by the public for urgent assistance," Mr Giblin said.

"Police officers are highly skilled and professionally trained to a very high driving standard and the law allows them to break the rules only when there is necessity to do so in order to carry out their duties."

He added: "In doing so, an officer is expected to provide justification with necessity for any violations and are accountable for their actions."

New PFEW national roads policing pursuits lead

The Police Federation of England and Wales has welcomed a new addition to its roads policing team.

John Apter, chairman of Hampshire Police Federation, is the national lead for all issues involving police pursuits.

Having been a traffic officer for over 12 years John was an advanced car driver trained in pursuit and response driving. He was also one of the first traffic family liaison officers to be introduced in his force, a role he found emotionally challenging but immensely rewarding.

He then joined the road death investigation team before becoming a Federation representative for all traffic constables within Hampshire Constabulary.

Over the past two years John has been heavily involved in the case of PC James Holden. This was a case which saw PC Holden charged and subsequently stand trial for dangerous driving after being involved in a pursuit. The officer was supported by

Hampshire Police Federation throughout his trial which later cleared him of all charges.

Speaking about his new role, he said: "I am extremely honoured to have been asked to work as part of the national Police Federation on pursuits.

"The majority of my policing career has involved working within roads policing, I therefore

have extensive understanding of what officers up and down the country face on a daily basis."

He added: "Following on from the PC Holden case my main focus will be to fight for a change in legislation to ensure all police officers who are either responding to emergency calls or on pursuit are offered legal protection."



John Apter
roads policing pursuits lead

*"Fight for
a change in
legislation"*

Police Federation to fight for legislative change for police emergency drivers

The Police Federation of England and Wales will seek to change the law for all officers who respond to emergency calls.

Representatives of the Police Federation's roads policing group will look to lobby the government for legislation to provide clarity for all emergency drivers when responding to their duties.

Over the past two years concerns have been raised on the prosecution of police drivers and alleged offences involving in particular dangerous driving.

"Despite successfully engaging with the director of public prosecutions, who has

revised guidance to prosecutors, we feel our members are still at an increased risk," said John Giblin, PFEW roads policing lead.

"A recent case further highlighted to us the need for clarity within the law so that our members are clear as to what is expected of them.

"At the moment it fails to fully recognise the position police drivers are put in when responding to an emergency call."

Over the next few months the roads policing group will work alongside other stakeholders and speak to a number of senior MPs before considering embarking upon a petition to take to the government.



New roads policing training being commissioned

A review into key aspects of training for roads policing officers is being commissioned by ACPO who are working closely with the College of Policing.

The ACPO roads policing training project will establish what training is currently being delivered, who is delivering the training and the level it is at.

The project, also being supported by the Police Federation's roads policing group, will look at a fresh approach to service training needs and expectations. It will deal with changing needs, priorities in policing the roads and many other areas of police work.

Leading on this project will be Chief Inspector Flynn of West Midlands Police and the previous Police Federation lead for roads policing, Alan Jones.

"All police officers with a responsibility or operational obligation for policing the roads are under greater scrutiny and being tested against demanding professional standards than previously experienced," Mr Jones said.

"Training to be developed to the highest standard"

Having already contacted individual forces and roads policing trainers at least 60% have enthusiastic support and encouragement for the projects aims and objectives.

Mr Jones added: "There is so much commonality and expression of interest of how to address some of the more pressing issues, which is already proving the value and worth of this piece of work for the greater good.

"It is especially important to listen to those who can make a contribution from their experience and understanding. I would like to encourage people to contact us with their views in order for the training to be developed to the highest standard."

To make a contribution, comment or to find out more about the project please contact either Chief Inspector Flynn on 07773 427727 or email carl.flynn@rptrainingproject.org.uk or Alan Jones on 07773 426348 or email alan.jones@rptraining.org.uk.

The team is also in the process of setting up a POLKA roads policing training communication site, which should be running within the next couple of weeks.

Cuts to traffic police could result in the public being put at risk

Budget cuts could leave some parts of the country dangerously short on frontline roads policing, says a road safety charity.

Brake says traffic police numbers across Britain have been cut by 12% in the past five years with a number of forces having suffered 30-40% reductions.

While traffic police in Scotland has increased by 4% the number of officers has reduced by 31% in Wales and 13% in England.

Brake and webuyanycar.com are warning the cuts could result in some parts of the country becoming dangerously short on vital frontline policing, potentially putting the public at risk from dangerous and law breaking drivers.

John Giblin, PFEW roads policing lead, said: "High visibility roads policing assets with properly equipped, trained and skilled road policing officers are a critically important part of operational frontline policing helping to prevent and detect crime on our roads.

"The fact that budget cuts have left some parts of the country dangerously short of such resources is as worrying as it is disturbing.

"This geographical postcode lottery is a false economy as roads policing should be a

national policing priority throughout every police force in England and Wales as it does act as an effective and strong deterrent."

South Wales and Dyfed Powys have seen the largest of cuts with 40% overall while West Mercia and Hampshire have seen reductions of more than a third.

Brake and webuyanycar.com are now calling on the government to act to stem these severe cuts to traffic policing.

"Roads policing should be a national policing priority"

Julie Townsend, deputy chief executive at Brake, said: "It is desperately worrying such large cuts continue to be made to traffic policing, just as progress is being made to improve the law on deadly drug driving.

"Cutting traffic police is a false economy, because the crashes and casualties they help to prevent inflict such devastation and are such a huge drain on public services.

"We urge the government to make roads policing a national policing priority, to make sure we have a strong deterrent against the risk-taking on roads that can easily cost lives."



Roads Policing Conference 2014

The Police Federation of England and Wales and the Association of Chief Police Officers will be holding their joint annual roads policing conference on Thursday 16 January until Friday 17 January 2014 at Hinckley Island in Leicester.

Further details will be given closer to the time.

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