

Roads Ahead

Police Federation Roads Policing Newsletter

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Foreword

Alan Jones

Police Federation Lead on Roads Policing

Welcome to this edition of Roads Ahead. There's a huge amount of on-going activity within the roads policing profile, far too much to cover in this edition, so we've picked out some topical items which I hope you find interesting.

Pressures and demands on the police service have never been so intense or challenging against the imminent 20 percent cuts. There is a future full of unknowns but the reality is the service will lose 16,500 police officers and around 18,000 staff posts in four years, and it is extremely naive and misleading of the government to say that the cuts will not affect frontline policing. We must maintain the pressure to highlight the significant impact of this, whilst simultaneously using every opportunity to promote the tremendous value roads policing delivers against a myriad of other front line operations.

The enormity of the situation means squeezing out every opportunity in the name of efficiency, but there inevitably comes a point when we can only do less with less. There is a particular concern in terms of resilience and capacity to develop, as other supporting agencies also feel the heavy burden of fiscal requirements and cut backs on their front line support and delivery.

Importantly, we have new ACPO leads. Let me offer a very warm welcome to CC Phil Gormley (Norfolk) who leads the portfolio and his Deputy DCC Suzette Davenport (Northamptonshire). The future direction of roads policing is very much in their hands, and we at the Police Federation will continue to do all we can to give them the support and encouragement they need to modernise and shape the way respond to the challenges we face. We have a successful proven track record of working with ACPO and that must continue. May I also introduce Steve White of the JCC, who has become a valued member of the Federation roads policing team and brings with him plenty of experience and initiatives, especially around improved communication between roads policing groups and the Federation, including a new website which will hopefully be up and running next month.

I am really hopeful the new ACPO Roads Policing strategy document will soon be available; we need a refreshing change to the old version, which has run its time. We need to actively and routinely develop initiatives around technology and promote new priorities, values and ways of working around road safety, enforcement, impacting on criminal behaviour and recognising the unique skills and knowledge of our officers. We also must push much harder at getting a nationally recognised qualification which meets the needs of a modern advanced and valued workforce. All of this is at the heart of our future and the positive impact we make.



"there inevitably comes a point when we can only do less with less."

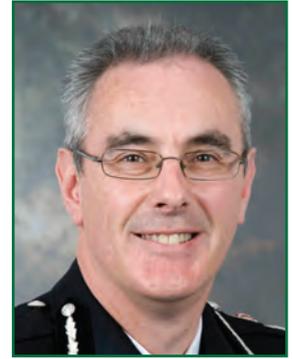
Meet the new ACPO Road Police lead - Phil Gormley

It gives me great pleasure to introduce myself in Roads Ahead. I took on this portfolio as I know the vital importance of the work you do in saving lives, making the roads safer, and your contribution in reducing criminality. Since taking on the portfolio I have spoken with many of you at Conference in Bournemouth.

My appointment has coincided with unprecedented financial constraints on policing. These require impactful decisions by forces on balancing the maintenance of front line policing, with cuts to achieve the savings necessary. These unavoidably affect roads policing, and you voiced your concerns regarding this at conference. Whilst I cannot guarantee that Road Policing will be treated differently in such decisions, I will do my best to highlight the importance of your work to Chief Officer colleagues.

Road Policing impacts on every mission critical area of police business, including reducing road casualties, disrupting criminality, countering terrorism, anti-social driving, and patrolling the roads. We need a clear emphasis on the disruption of criminality in all its forms. Road policing is well positioned to deliver this, as the road network forms the vital arterial routes so essential for the movement of criminals.

Well-ordered roads are central to the social and economic wellbeing of the United Kingdom. The policing of this environment needs to be core business for the Service. The transient road community has a right to access policing services as does any fixed community. Road policing is at the very heart of our policing response in disrupting criminality and supporting the law abiding.



Chief Constable
Phil Gormley

There is a public perception that we have as a service, withdrawn from policing the roads and this has affected public confidence. A more visible road policing presence will lead to increased productivity and voluntary habitual compliance. As a service we need to re-engage with the silent majority of law abiding road users who support our efforts in making the roads safer, by focusing on those high harm offenders who pose the greatest risks to the safety of others.

Together we can achieve this, and I look forward to working with you.

Correction to Winsor's report

Alan Jones has written to Tom Winsor asking that he considers making an amendment to the job description of a Traffic Officer at paragraph 78 of Appendix 3 of his first report. The role description is seriously outdated and is a misleading and unacceptable statement about the role in modern operational terms. This follows complaints by a number of Roads Policing officers to the Federation. We hope that a suitable description is provided shortly.

Segway pavement ban is a legal first

A man has become the first person in the UK to be prosecuted for riding a Segway scooter on a pavement after losing an appeal against his conviction.

Philip Coates, from South Yorkshire, was fined £75 and ordered to pay £250 costs and a £15 victim surcharge after police spotted him riding his two-wheeled motorised scooter on the pavement.

Whilst they are legally ridden on pavements in more than 30 American states and in Portugal, Sweden, the Czech Republic and Germany, the District Judge ruled that the Segway is a motor

vehicle and therefore it is an offence to ride it on the pavement in the UK under the Highways Act 1835 – a decision that was recently upheld at the High Court.

The case – a first for Segway - has attracted national interest around its wider use.

Alan Jones, Head of Roads Policing, Police Federation said: "Previously, Segway's were not properly defined as anything in law and were effectively in limbo, but this case clarifies that it is in fact a motor vehicle and should take away any future doubts."

Northern Ireland announces drink drive limit reduction

Northern Ireland Environment Minister Alex Attwood recently announced a package of measures to tackle drink driving, including introducing a lower drink drive limit and graduated fixed penalties.

The new legislation would include the following measures:

- Lower blood alcohol limits of 50mg/100ml for most drivers and 20mg/100ml for young or inexperienced drivers and for those who drive for a living.
- A graduated penalty regime including fixed penalties for first offences at lower limits and court prosecution for high level first offences or any second or subsequent offences.
- Random breath testing powers which would enable police to breathalyse drivers without the need to have reasonable suspect that the driver had taken alcohol.
- Automatic referral of offenders to an approved drink drive rehabilitation scheme.

- Removal of the right, in certain circumstances, for a driver to ask for a blood or urine sample to replace a breath test sample.

The announcement comes as the percentage of drivers that were over the legal alcohol limit during this summer's UK drink-drive campaign increased compared to the same period last year.

Figures released by ACPO show there was an increase of eight percent who tested positive for driving under the influence compared to last year, although there were a smaller number of tests.

During the campaign, 88,629 motorists were breathalysed, a drop of 12 percent on 2009. Of those, 6.06 percent tested positive, refused or failed a breath test in comparison to 5.6 percent during the same time last year. The number of under 25 year olds that tested positive continued to climb with an increase of 15 percent compared to 2010, and the over 25 year olds rose by seven percent.

Road casualties continue to fall but will it last?

Figures recently published by the Department for Transport reveal that the number of people killed or seriously injured on Britain's roads continue to fall.

The quarterly estimates, ending in March 2011, show there were 1,870 people killed and 22,900 seriously injured in reported road accidents. These figures represent a fall of 10 and five percent respectively compared to the previous period.

Pedestrian, motorcycle and car user casualties all fell by one, five and seven percent respectively compared with the year ending March 2010. However, the number of pedal cycle casualties increased by 10 percent this year.

These remain to be amongst the lowest figures since national records began in 1926 and are in line with the European Commission statistics which revealed that EU fatalities decreased by 11 percent last year.

The figures are the obvious result of 20 years commitment to improving safety by successive governments and the police service, however in

the current financial strains; many areas are witnessing a decline in officer numbers and resources in traffic policing. In Suffolk the roads policing unit has already been reduced by 50 percent, down to just 24 officers working 24/7 and other forces are looking at ways to 'streamline' their units.

Alan Jones said: "Whilst acknowledging the tremendous efforts that technology, safer vehicles, better medical care and enforcement have brought in reducing the tragic loss of life and personal injury on our roads, our performance and values must not be simply measured around casualty reduction.

"The roads network is the biggest neighbourhood in the UK and we play a key role in disrupting and dealing with serious criminal activity and behaviour, as well as taking a more human approach to dealing with less serious enforcement issues, through education and learning where appropriate."

There is a concern that funding cuts are also impacting on the Highways Agency and VOSA, such that they are trimming their operational commitments and availability. Policing the roads remains a priority and as cuts begin to bite, we have to emphasise the impact which sees any further reductions of visibility and responses.



Costly road collisions

Another issue we addressed at the last Roads Policing conference was the cost of major road closures and disruption caused by collisions. It is estimated that such incidents cost the UK economy almost £2 billion per annum, and anyone caught in the aftermath well understands the issues.

Work is already being undertaken by the business ACPO lead ACC Sean White to find a suitable solution that satisfies the need to quickly open up the roads, whilst preserving evidence and satisfying the need to investigate the incident professionally and competently.

To help speed things up a 3D laser scanner is the latest technology to be developed for Britain's roads, enabling crime scene and collision investigators to collect vital data in a quicker and safer way.

The data can be collected without any lane closures or traffic interruptions, and a single user can operate the instrument in complete darkness or direct sunlight. The scene capture is extremely fast and collects huge volumes of data, relieving

officer's time who typically revisit a crime scene between eight and 12 times.

The laser is able to construct 3D animations of scenes and 3D physical models that can help to provide further analyses of what happened in the crash and can be even used in court.

It follows the recent announcement by Roads Policing Minister Mike Penning of a £3m government investment in 3D laser scanners to help deal with these problems.



CRASH programme

South Yorkshire, Surrey and Merseyside forces are undertaking a trial project to evaluate the benefits of a hand held recording device to develop road side recording and transmission of collision data.

Jerry Moore the project director stated that the

trials are going through a user acceptance testing phase. If successful the devices will prove to be a significant aid to increase efficiencies and speed up the time spent dealing with collisions and could be rolled out by the end of the year.

The good news is that serious and fatal collisions continue to decline, but what is the cost of dealing with such issues? Interesting thoughts being considered in terms of officer time spent dealing with incidents and casualty consequences. Do you have any suggestions or thoughts of how to improve time spent dealing with collisions? If so we want to hear from you -

email: roadspolicing@polfed.org

BRAKE Road Safety Week 2011

A national charity called BRAKE is calling on all emergency services to register for this year's Road Safety Week 2011, *'Too Young to Die,'* on 21 – 27 November to join a major campaign to stop the needless loss of young lives on UK roads.

With young drivers still featuring disproportionately in our casualty statistics, we encourage every police officer to support road safety week through the running of local initiatives to coincide with the media support provided by

BRAKE. By engaging in this, you can not only save a life, but engage with a positive road safety message and might also bag a few criminals in the process.

Forces should contact BRAKE with details of their proposed activity in advance of the Road Safety Week launch in order to maximise the media opportunities available. For more information regarding Road Safety Week and register at www.roadsafetyweek.org.uk

Drug-driving – criminal or medical?

Medical fitness plays an important role in promoting road safety by establishing whether drivers with medical conditions are able to satisfy the medical standards required. This was a focus of our Roads Policing conference two years ago and still remains an issue. We hope forces are taking positive action with the DVLA in addressing persistent offenders.

The following guidelines will allow police forces to target precious resources at those who should be appropriately investigated in the interests of road safety.

The DVLA consider that in the following situations reasonable grounds to medically investigate the case would not normally exist where the licence holder:

- has been found in possession of drugs in his/her car
- is a drug dealer
- has been in a stop and search situation he/she has been found in possession of drugs
- is known to the police for very occasional or one-off use of drugs.

The DVLA consider that in the following scenarios reasonable grounds to medically investigate the case would normally exist where the licence holder:

- regularly misuses drugs
- smokes cannabis on a daily basis
- is a drug addict
- has been convicted of driving under the influence of drugs
- has been drawn to the police's attention on a number of occasions because he/she was using drugs
- is on a methadone treatment plan.

Relevant information provided by officers upon referral will allow the DVLA to efficiently deal with cases, including witness statements and records of observation.



Drug testing screeners

Six forces including Merseyside, Dorset, South Yorkshire, Hampshire, Durham and Cleveland have been trialling drug screeners which are designed to improve drug-driving detectability and challenge the current procedures that are sometimes time-consuming and ineffective.

Drug driving issues have proven to be problematic for road side enforcement for some time and reliable and legally robust solutions to FIT testing and medical examinations need to be found. The results will be announced shortly.

Safety camera first for North Yorkshire



Officers in North Yorkshire are taking to the roads with a safety camera van in a bid to cut down on speeding and other motoring offences.

The six-month trial is part of the '95 Alive' York and North Yorkshire Road Safety

Partnership to enforce speed limits and prevent

accidents on routes with a history of serious and fatal collisions. It is a first for North Yorkshire, which has been the only area in the country not to have fixed or mobile cameras.

Julie Townsend, Campaigns Director for the road safety charity Brake said: "We welcome the introduction of mobile speed detection in North Yorkshire and the City of York as a vital step in eradicating the damage caused by speeding."

Hit-and-run collisions still a problem in the capital

Last year there were more than 3,400 hit-and-runs in London, the equivalent of 65 people every week. Fifteen of these were fatal and more than 300 people were seriously injured.

Although this has reduced since 2002, when there were more than 5,800 such collisions, the continual problem has been put down to a rise in the number of illegal drivers in London, as well as a £2 million cut in the budget of the Metropolitan

police unit that investigates hit-and-run collisions.

Ms Jones, a member of the Metropolitan Police Authority said: "The traffic police are a small but incredibly efficient part of the Met and they do a fantastic job in very difficult circumstances – but we can't catch all these drivers without good enforcement and that means the traffic police having the funds to do their job."

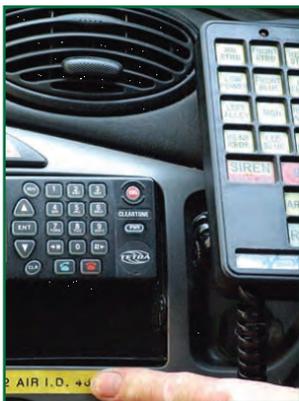
Recognising the aftermath effects of road deaths

Do we always recognise the need to carefully and sensitively deal with colleagues who have recently witnessed or been involved in dealing with a traumatic incident? It's easy to be head strong and macho about incidents involving the death or serious injury of someone, but with almost 2000 fatalities a year, and many more very serious injuries, this means officers have to deal with the aftermath as well as at the scene. This may have either a short term or lasting memory on the

individual officer, and we should support and understand officers and colleagues who are affected by some of the sights witnessed. We would like to use this issue as an area for discussion and it will be addressed at the next Roads Policing conference. Do you have any comments or thoughts about this? - If so please share them with us by emailing roadspolicing@polfed.org

The Federation roads policing group are actively pressing to ensure that national training and accreditation standards for officers remain a priority. Faced with the need to recognise such talent, our mission is to ensure all operational officers are appropriately recognised in a world where qualifications matter.

Single Vehicle Architecture



On the 6th September at the National Association of Police Fleet Managers' Conference, the future police vehicle specification was launched, known as the One Box Single Vehicle Architecture (OBSVA).

The aim for a single standardised vehicle is to ensure commonality of approach across all

forces, together with providing a safe and efficient working environment for officers. Furthermore, it

will deliver cost efficiencies across the police service as well as providing a link to the standardisation of all types of police vehicles currently being undertaken by ACPO.

This marks a successful outcome for the Roads Policing group who have been pressing for vehicle standards and consistency for over seven years. The group welcomes the developments and hopes that colleagues will continue to support the procurement process.

Alan Jones said: "This issue goes back a long time and we are delighted to have played a strong part in getting things to this stage. We hope the loss of the NPIA next year will not in any way undermine the excellent progress made."

DriveSMART campaign in the running for national award

Surrey Police's 'Drive SMART' campaign will go forward to the national finals after winning the anti-social behaviour category of the Home Office's Tilley Awards.

The annual awards recognise innovative crime fighting and problem solving projects where police, partners and the public successfully work together to identify and tackle local crime issues.

Drive SMART was launched by Surrey County Council and Surrey Police in September 2009 after county residents rated anti-social driving as a major concern. Over the course of the campaign, public confidence that police officers are dealing with speeding motorists and anti-social driving has risen from 66.7% when the campaign launched to

70.6% to date. In addition, as well as the fall in road deaths last year statistics show that the number of people seriously injured on Surrey's roads fell from 530 in 2009 to 488 in 2010.

Supt Rachel Tills, the Surrey Police project lead for Drive SMART, said: "Drive SMART was launched after residents consistently told us anti-social driving was a top concern they wanted to see addressed in Surrey.

"Being selected as a finalist for this award recognises all the work across the county by police, council colleagues, partner agencies and members of the public which has gone into making Drive SMART a success."

Proposed annual MOT changes

The Government are considering plans to reduce the frequency of the current annual MOT for UK registered cars.

The current system, where all new cars require an MOT after three years and then every year, plays an important role by minimising the number of un-roadworthy cars in circulation.

The latest figures show that more than 40 percent for vehicles fail their MOT under the existing scheme.

The Government is expected to make an

announcement in the autumn.

Alan Jones said: "We fully support the idea of vehicles being fit for the road and believe that a regular fitness check, such as an MOT, is a reasonable quality insurance process. It's not a high cost in the scheme of things, and with a twelve month 'ticket' it gives some indication of the state of the vehicle. It doesn't take a genius to understand that reducing the frequency of MOTs, which check the safety of cars, could endanger the lives of road users."

NEWS BITES

Drink Driving - Removal of option

We are still awaiting a legislative opportunity to remove the blood and urine option from the drink drive procedure. The Government has accepted this recommendation but sadly change to legislation may not be top of the agendas. We urge the Government to press this forward as soon as possible through an appropriate legislative spot.

Driver blames horse for riding through red light

A trap driver who blamed his horse for being colour-blind after police stopped him for going through a red light has been prosecuted.

Mr John Mulvenna, who was drunk at the time, went through a red traffic light with his horse and trap when a police officer stopped him. He then blamed it on his horse, claiming it was colour-blind. Mr Mulvenna failed to fool officers and he has now been prosecuted for being drunk in charge of his horse and carriage.

Tackling mobile phone drivers once and for all

It's about time we had a blitz on the use of mobile phones. Far too many drivers are now flouting the law and driving irresponsibly and illegally.

In one case, Norwich Magistrates heard how David Secker, 34, was seen talking on the phone while holding the other as if texting and did not appear to be holding the steering wheel down at 70mph road. He also had no insurance. It's time to have a concerted effort to deal with this every growing problem, which is a proven killer.

National Driver Offender retraining courses



Almost all forces have signed up to a National Driver Offender retraining course to maintain public confidence and assurance that comes with alternatives to prosecution.

The Federation supports a package and scheme which addresses communication and behavioural issues ahead of enforcement where possible and where suitable. Hopefully further announcements will be made at the next Roads Policing conference.

What are your thoughts and views?
email: roadspolicing@polfed.org

Roads Policing Conference 2012

Both the Federation Roads Policing Group and ACPO traffic are pleased to announce that next year's annual roads policing conference will take place on 19 and 20 January 2012 at the Hinckley Island Hotel, Leicestershire.

The conference, 'Challenge of Change,' will see the launch of the well-overdue latest roads policing strategy focusing on appropriate discretion and careful targeting, and other important initiatives in education, engineering and enforcement such as the National Driver Offender Retraining courses. There will also be the launch of the first awards for recognising excellence in the world of roads policing. Keep your eyes and ears open for some outstanding examples worthy of recognition.

This conference, the only one of its kind in the UK, is a must for all practitioners, supervisors and



managers from all parts of the roads policing and roads crime portfolio to influence decision makers, share thoughts and ideas and meet key suppliers.

Make sure you save the date. Further details and information will be circulated in due course.

Best wishes to Melanie Davies who has given birth to a baby girl named Jessica. Melanie is the editor of the Roads Policing newsletter and we are pleased to say they are both doing well. We would also like to welcome Hanna Hales who is covering for Melanie until she returns.

Regional Traffic Representatives

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