

**ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE**

**PAPER NO: AP15/59**

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL -  
4 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**SUBJECT: ROADS POLICING AND FIREARMS OPERATIONS UNIT**

**SUMMARY:**

1. This paper seeks to outline the work of the Roads Policing and Firearms Operations Unit, covering the strategy to which it works, enforcement, investment and fleet details.
2. The Specialist Roads Policing function for Suffolk is undertaken by the collaborated Suffolk and Norfolk Roads Policing and Firearms Operations Unit (RPF OU). The unit has been collaborated since 2012 and comprises a total of 190 officers and police staff.
3. The Unit works from 6 bases across the 2 counties at Bury St Edmunds, Martlesham Heath, Wymondham, Acle and Swaffham with the Serious Collision Investigation Team based at Wymondham and Stowmarket.
4. The Unit works to provide the spontaneous and pre-planned firearms response to both counties alongside the Roads Policing function. Approximately 75% of the officers within the team are firearms trained and these officers crew the Armed Response Vehicles (ARVs) and, unless deployed to Firearms tasks, are undertaking Roads Policing tasks duties.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. The Accountability and Performance Panel is asked to note the contents of this report.

## DETAIL OF THE SUBMISSION

### 1. STRATEGY

1.1 The National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) Policing the Roads Strategy 2011-15 forms the basis around which the Unit undertakes its day to day business.

1.2 As can be seen from the NPCC Vision below, the priorities of the team are varied and reflect the belief that Roads Policing is now about policing the community that uses the road, this takes it beyond the area of what used to be called "Traffic Policing". The community on the roads share similar issues with the more readily identifiable neighbourhood communities. Criminal elements use the road, there are very obvious protection from harm issues for road users, vulnerability is also present as well as a need to be able to respond to the needs of that community, whether that be around intelligence led harm reduction tasking or response to life and death incidents and the subsequent investigation of those incidents.



- 1.3 The first priority is **Reducing Road Casualties**; this area involves Education, Enforcement, Partnership working and other initiatives aimed at preventing death and injury on the road.
- 1.4 In Suffolk there were 38 collisions involving death or serious injury from 1 April 2015 to 30 June 2015 as compared to 55 for the same time frame last year. Collisions where a fatality has occurred in Suffolk are currently at 15 from 1 April 2015 to 10 August 2015 at the time of writing this report, with 18 deaths resulting from those collisions. This compares to 12 deaths from 12 collisions for the same period as last year. It is never possible to measure the personal impact of each casualty but in financial terms, each fatal collision is estimated to cost the economy £1.7m and each serious injury collision £191,500 (Department for Transport, 2012 Annual Report). Killed and Serious Injury (KSI) collisions in Norfolk and Suffolk have impacted the economy to a total of £366m in the last 3 years.
- 1.5 The four major contributory factors of KSI collisions are excess speed, drink/drug driving, seat-belt usage and using a mobile device; these are known as 'The Fatal Four'.
- 1.6 The RPF OU concentrates on the Fatal Four in an effort to make the biggest reductions in KSIs as these are the academically recognised major contributors to KSI collisions. The RPF OU participates in all National and Europe wide campaigns involving these themes.
- 1.7 Below is a table showing interventions involving the Fatal Four made by RPF OU officers over a 12 month period across Norfolk and Suffolk.

<b>Fatal Four Interventions</b>			
<b>1 June 2014 – 31 May 2015</b>			
<b>Speed</b>	<b>Mobile Phones</b>	<b>Seatbelts</b>	<b>Drink/Drug Driving</b>
9283	2415	1526	23112

**Total Interventions 36336**

(prosecutions, verbal warnings and roadside tests)

- 1.8 The above is not the only RPF OU interventions with road users that occur. All aspects of Road Traffic legislation are dealt with including more complex areas involving commercial vehicle use with the Operation Mermaid road checks working alongside our partners from Vehicle and Driver Standards Agency, UK Border Agency, Trading Standards and other bodies. These are national days of action where Roads Policing officers work alongside the partners mentioned to address a wide variety of issues on the roads not just road traffic offences but also including illegal use of rebated fuel, rogue traders, persons working while claiming benefit and immigration offences.
- 1.9 RPF OU interventions provide candidates for Driver Improvement courses such as Speed Awareness and RIDE through their daily interactions.
- 1.10 RPF OU officers also undertake vulnerable road user group initiatives alongside Suffolk County Council in support of the Safe Rider motorcycle scheme as well as other engagement events such as the Suffolk Show.
- 1.11 The next priority is **Disrupting Criminality**; the community using the roads is a reflection of the communities within which we live, as a result criminal use of the road network is an ever present fact. In rural counties criminals often travel long distances to carry out their activities. The RPF OU is ideally structured to address this issue.

- 1.12 The RPF OU boasts borderless capability across the two counties allowing seamless targeting of travelling criminality, employing Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) equipment in most of its vehicles along with the availability of unmarked cars and motorcycles to assist in crime related operations. The RPF OU has been involved in several high profile operations where the requirement was for suspects to be stopped in possession of stolen property or drugs whilst travelling on our roads. The level of driver training coupled with appropriate vehicles means that RPF OU officers are vital in the resolution of pursuits and other high risk operations involving potential violence. Most RPF OU officers carry TASER and, with three quarters of them firearms trained, the team is a valuable resource in support of the higher risk areas of policing.
- 1.13 RPF OU are fully engaged with intelligence led policing tasks around crime with county policing crime patterns fed through to RPF OU officers for patrols in crime hotspot areas as well as representation on both Eastern Region and National Roads Policing Intelligence Forums allowing the picture from outside the two counties to be effectively acted upon.
- 1.14 RPF OU officers also deliver proactive disruption to criminality by carrying out routine stops on the roads with frequent positive results in relation to criminal offences. It is widely recognised that disruption to criminals is achieved more effectively by removing a vehicle or licence than is often possible with detection of other crime.
- 1.15 The figures below illustrate the number of arrests and vehicle seizures for No Insurance and similar offences over the 12 month period:

<b>Disrupting Criminality 1 June 2014 – 31 May 2015</b>	
Arrests	1065
S165 Vehicle Seizures	986
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2051</b>

- 1.16 The next priority revolves around **Counter Terrorism**; The RPF OU would be the first responder to a terrorist incident in our counties and the team is well trained in the requirements for this. The second is the employment of ANPR and other tactics to pick up intelligence on vehicles or persons suspected of terrorist activity as they travel the counties.
- 1.17 **Patrolling the Roads**; The RPF OU undertakes proactive patrols on the roads of Suffolk and Norfolk. The patrols are deployed under a plan to cover the Strategic Routes e.g. A11, A14 and A12 as well as areas where collision history has identified a need for more concentrated efforts to prevent KSI. Every A and B road in Suffolk and Norfolk is divided into a 10 mile stretch and coded. Analysis is undertaken of KSI locations and as a result target routes are produced for patrol allocation.
- 1.18 RPF OU also undertake county policing related crime tasking which allows for high profile patrols in crime hotspot areas, with capability to undertake the KSI reduction work in the same area at the same time.
- 1.19 The final priority is **Combatting Anti-Social Road Use**; RPF OU officers linked to neighbourhood policing teams are able to target this issue through engagement with young drivers/riders. The unit operate a Lotus Driver simulator and a Ducati Police motorcycle which are deployed to events in an effort to engage. The Unit also employ specialist equipment aimed at dealing with “boy-racers”. Operation Clarion is the banner under which the RPF OU address the “cruise” problem in Great Yarmouth.

## **2. INVESTIGATION**

- 2.1 The Serious Collision Investigation Team (SCIT) undertake investigation into all fatal road collisions as well as those where life threatening or significant life changing injuries have occurred. They can also support the Professional Standards Department (PSD)/Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) where appropriate when inquiries involve the requirement for investigation into police driving. The SCIT also supports the Major Investigation Team with scene surveys and plan preparation for major crime scenes. The SCIT in Suffolk currently has an active caseload of 31 collisions at various stages between case build to awaiting inquest.

## **3. INVESTMENT**

- 3.1 The RPF OU is currently appropriately staffed. It is a constant challenge to balance the operational requirements of day to day policing with keeping firearms officers trained and operationally effective. RPF OU has recently trained 9 officers to a high level of Traffic Law knowledge.
- 3.2 Approval for Safety Camera revenue spend has just been obtained in Norfolk for the setup of a Road Casualty Reduction Team of 4 motorcycle officers as part of the RPF OU to provide a much enhanced ability to target specific areas of Casualty Reduction. A similar proposal has just been agreed for Suffolk.
- 3.3 The RPF OU is currently operating with 45 dedicated vehicles. In Suffolk, 10 vehicles are based at Martlesham Heath and 9 vehicles at Bury St Edmunds. Five of these vehicles at Martlesham Heath and Bury St Edmunds are scheduled for normal replacement in this financial year.

## **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

- 5.1 There are no other implications and risks associated with this report.

<b>ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)</b>	<b>PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'</b>
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	N/A
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	No
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	Yes
Have human resource implications been considered?	N/A
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	Yes
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	No
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	No
Have all relevant ethical factors been taken into consideration in developing this submission?	N/A