

News in brief

National Police Memorial Day will be held in Belfast to remember police officers who have been killed or died on duty.

A service takes place at the Waterfront Hall in Belfast on Sunday, October 1, for relatives, colleagues and friends. For more information look at:

www.nationalpolicememorialday.org

The Home Office has announced a rise in police officer numbers but the Police Federation expect this to be the last year as forces are recruiting more community support officers.

Tony McNulty, police minister, said that police numbers are continuing to rise, with 141,381 officers currently in service, up by 141 since March 2005.

However, Jan Berry, chairman of the Police Federation, said that although the figures were welcome, there is evidence that many forces are recruiting more CSOs at the expense of police officers.

The figures also show an increase in the numbers of CSOs, up by 500 to 6,769, and the numbers of Special Constables by 1,261 since March 2005 to 13,179.

•Border police

The Police Federation has warned against the introduction of border police becoming an 'isolated and elite' government agency.

John Reid, the Home secretary, spoke about plans for border enforcement last month in order to have a more effective and visible presence and deterrent effect.

Jan Berry, chairman of the Police Federation, said that although they support the need to establish a border police, steps must be taken to ensure it does not become an elitist agency.

She added: "If it is to be truly effective and successful it must fully integrate into the current policing structure, and there must be clear, agreed ways of sharing intelligence and communication. "Unfortunately this is not assisted by our centrally driven target chasing environment whereby agencies often don't share vital information, becoming precious and withholding it as their ace card. Then there's only one winner, and it's not the law abiding citizen."

•Mobile crime

More than three quarters of stolen mobile phone handsets will be blocked on all five UK networks within a 48-hour period.

Mobile phone industry leaders have pledged to block 70 percent of stolen mobiles following work with police, the government and Mobile Industry Crime Action Forum (MICAF).

John Reid, the Home Secretary, welcomed the charter, and pledged £1.35 million funding for a national centre of excellence - the National Mobile Phone Crime Unit (NMPCU) - to bolster local and national action to disrupt stolen phone markets.