



Government fails to recognise the importance of road policing

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The government has today failed to listen to independent policing experts and the advice of its own Transport Select Committee about the importance of effective policing of the roads and adequate numbers of roads policing officers. Following a three month period of considering the recommendations of the 'Roads Policing and Technology: Getting the balance Right' report the government has unashamedly ignored evidence of the damage caused by cutting the number of dedicated road policing officers.

Jan Berry, chairman of the Police Federation of England and Wales, said:

“There is no logic to the government’s approach. Together with other witnesses the Police Federation highlighted the need to have fully trained police officers patrolling our roads, to both deter and detect criminal activity which is not just confined to the pavements. Despite this recommendation and the warnings given the government is choosing to ignore the dangers being highlighted; a habit which has landed them in hot water recently. “

“On the one hand they claim road policing requires specialised knowledge, skills and equipment, then they completely contradict themselves by claiming all police officers can do the job as well as other core policing activities. If police officers are not using their specialist skills on a regular basis then they will become deskilled.

“Traffic on our roads is increasing at an unprecedented rate and criminals will continue to use these roads. The benefit of using fully trained roads police officers with a wealth of expertise and knowledge cannot be counted as easily as speeding drivers caught on cameras, but in recognising the damage caused by cutting officers out of the equation the government must now address the situation. They still can, and must, address the situation before it gets further out of hand.”

Notes to Editor:

The Police Federation of England and Wales is the representative body to which all police officers up to and including the rank of Chief Inspector belong.

The Federation today represents the interests of over 139,000 police officers, bringing together their views on welfare and efficiency to the notice of the government and all opinion formers. The Federation negotiates on all aspects of pay, allowances, hours of duty, annual leave and pensions. It is consulted when police regulations are made, dealing with training, promotion and discipline.

Further Information: Press Office, 020 8335 1071