

POLICE

Police Magazine Update

27/01/12

Charity calls for cuts to crucial roads policing officers to end

Dramatic cuts to roads policing teams which have seen officer numbers slashed by more than ten percent could lead to drivers thinking they can 'get away' with life-threatening crimes, according to road safety charity Brake.

Figures released by the charity today (fri) follow warnings from Alan Jones, the Federation's lead on roads policing issues, that the 20 percent cuts to police budgets are having a severe impact on roads policing units.

The findings, obtained by Freedom of Information requests to forces show numbers of roads policing officers have been reduced by 11.6 percent in the five years from 2007 to 2011.

Mr Jones said that the 'cost of cutting back far outweighs the benefits in protecting a key frontline service'.

There were 7,525 dedicated traffic police in England and Wales in 1999 but this number fell to 6,511 in 2005.

And Julie Townsend, Brake's deputy chief executive, said: "It is crucial the government acts now to put a stop to these dramatic cuts in life-saving roads policing, by making this a national policing priority. This is crucial in safeguarding the public and preventing needless casualties that lead to terrible suffering, and it also makes economic sense. Road crashes constitute a huge social and economic burden, because of the awful implications for those bereaved and injured, and the strain on health and emergency services. Investing in roads policing, and stepping up critical checks like breath-testing, helps stop crashes before they happen, meaning less families suffering and reduced costs to the taxpayer."