



ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS IN SCOTLAND

NEWS RELEASE

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New road policing chief stresses need for greater awareness of risks on country roads

Scotland's new road policing chief is pleased that motorists' driving habits have steadily improved during the past three decades but has expressed concern about motorists continuing to drive inappropriately on country roads.

During the past three decades, records show a trend that fewer people are being killed or injured on Scottish roads.

Since 1970, the number of people killed annually on Scotland's roads has decreased by two-thirds. Furthermore, seriously injured numbers have dropped three-quarters, and the number of slightly injured people has been lowered by one-quarter during that time.

"But still too many Scottish drivers feel overly safe on country roads without realizing the risks that they face when they drive at inappropriate speeds," said Chief Constable Kevin Smith (Central Scotland), chair of the Road Policing Business Area for the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS).

To underscore that risk, the Chief Constable pointed out that in Scotland:

- 75 percent of road crash fatalities happen on country roads;
- 58 percent of serious injuries happen on country roads.

"Driving too fast for the road, traffic or weather conditions, otherwise called 'inappropriate' speeding, is a major cause of crashes, fatalities and serious injuries," Mr. Smith explained.

This concern about Scottish country road users has provided the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland with the focus for their '*Country Roads Weekend*' running from 07:00 hours on Friday, November 21 to 07:00 hours on Monday, November 24 – the fourth such weekend of the programme being carried out this year in co-operation with Road Safety Scotland and the country's eight police forces.

The weekend's focus is designed to give higher visibility to regular, on-going road policing activity throughout the country to target inappropriate road user

behaviour to reduce the number of motorists killed or seriously injured on country roads.

“Weather and visibility conditions, traffic and pedestrian conditions, road surfaces and works are all factors that have a bearing on what the most appropriate speed should be for motorists on any road, particularly country roads,” he emphasised.

“Poor driving habits can affect your chances of causing an accident,” Chief Constable Smith concluded. “Your safety margin is lessened and you can turn near misses into crashes when you drive at an inappropriate speed. Don’t risk it!”

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For further information, please contact:
Graham MacDonell, Communications Officer
0141 435 1241 (office)
07771 842 881 (mobile)

Notes to Editors:

Central Scotland Police Chief Constable Kevin Smith, formerly with Strathclyde Police, has recently assumed the role of chair of the ACPOS Road Policing Business Area – a role which had been carried out by Tayside Chief Constable John Vine, now Chief Inspector of the UK Border Agency.

Assistant Chief Constable Gordon Mackenzie, Central Scotland Police, a member of the ACPOS Road Policing Business Area, will be available for interviews on both Thursday (for pre-records by telephone) and Friday.

For interviews, please contact the ACPOS Communications office at: 0141 435 1240 or 1241 during business hours or 07771 842 881 out-of-hours.

Statistical information, which has been extracted from the Scottish Government report, “*Statistical Bulletin – Transport Series*”, published in June 2008, includes reporting that half the 18,335 casualties which have occurred on average each year between 2002 and 2006 happened with vehicles doing 30 miles per hour; and, that forty percent of the average annual casualties for that period involved vehicles doing over 60 or 70 mph.