



ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS IN SCOTLAND

## NEWS RELEASE

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 22 AUGUST 2008 AT 00:01 A.M.**

### **Age, speed and country roads are a deadly mix, says police chief**

Scotland's eight police forces are continuously working to reduce deaths and injury on our roads. One particular focus of concern is the number of serious crashes that happen on country roads, where seven out of ten fatal accidents occur, according to Scottish Government figures.

Another is reducing the number of fatal and serious motorcycle casualties, which was 15 per cent higher in 2006 than the average during the mid-1990s.

And, a third is that accident involvement by car drivers is highest for males aged 17 to 22 years.

Those facts about Scottish road users have provided the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS) with the focus for their '*Country Roads Weekend*' running from August 22 to 24 – the third such weekend of a four-part programme being carried out this year in co-operation with Road Safety Scotland and the country's eight police forces.

"This ACPOS-led campaign will focus on motorcyclists and young drivers," said Chief Superintendent Michael McCormick, (Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary) portfolio lead for Casualty Reduction for ACPOS. "These are the two groups of road users who tend to drive too fast for the road conditions."

The weekend's focus is designed to highlight regular, on-going road policing activity throughout the country to reduce the number of motorists killed or seriously injured on country roads.

"We have had success in reducing the number of children killed, seriously injured or injured on our country roads during the past number of years, and overall road casualty numbers are falling" Chief Superintendent McCormick added. "But when you look closely at the statistics for young drivers and motorcyclists in their 30's and 40's, the numbers killed and injured are going up."

"We want all road users to enjoy their travelling experience and for it to be safe," Mr. McCormick concluded. "This weekend like any other day of the year, we will be carrying out our duty to ensure that all road users are complying with our country's laws and thus reducing the risk of fatalities and injuries."

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## **RESEARCH FINDINGS ON ROAD SAFETY ISSUES IN SCOTLAND**

Research carried out by a number of agencies for the Scottish Government has revealed the following statistics and findings:

1. Seven out of ten fatal accidents occur on non built-up roads.
2. The number of fatal and serious motorcyclist casualties was 15 per cent higher in 2006 than the average for 1994-98, although fatal and serious accident rates have fallen.
3. Accident involvement as a car driver is highest for males aged 17-22 years and lowest for females over 60 years.
4. Young male drivers are most likely to drive at excessive speed.
5. The main types of accidents on rural roads are head-on crashes, running off the road and accidents at junctions.
6. Speeding, drink and drug driving, fatigue and distraction are the main driver behaviour factors involved in crashes.
7. It is estimated that up to 11 per cent of drivers aged 17 to 39 years may have driven after using illicit drugs and up to 6 per cent may have done so within the last 12 months.
8. Among pre-drivers aged 14 to 17 years, speeding is regarded as acceptable, especially on rural roads, and males from lower socio-economic groups are more accepting of drink-driving than other groups.
9. Many motorcyclists are aware of but not deterred by the risks associated with motorcycling.
10. Young drivers, particularly male, are disproportionately represented in road crashes.