



ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS IN SCOTLAND

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **ACPOS PRESIDENT WELCOMES CRIME SURVEY RESULTS**

THE results of the latest Scottish Crime and Justice Survey give a “positive and encouraging picture” of public perception and attitudes, according to Chief Constable Patrick Shearer, President of the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland.

Mr Shearer was speaking after the survey results for 2008/009 were released by the Scottish Government.

Among the findings of the survey of thousands of people across Scotland is that the risk of being a victim of crime in Scotland is lower than in England and Wales and that in most aspects of police work 64% of people said they were very or fairly confident in their local police force’s ability to investigate incidents.

Mr Shearer said: “Having read the results of the survey I find a positive and encouraging picture emerging of people’s attitude towards crime and justice. It is vital in a democracy like ours that the public have trust and confidence in their police service and that they feel comfortable in reporting crime and dealing with the police in the aftermath of that.

“Overall there is satisfaction among those who took part in the survey that the police can do their job although I note that only 46% were very or fairly confident in our ability to prevent crime which presents us with a challenge to improve. There is considerable work going on in our rural and urban communities to advise people how to make themselves and their property safe from criminals. In addition we are working with industry and commerce through our specialised Scottish Business Crime Centre to ensure that there is two-way communication on all aspects of crime awareness and prevention.”

He added: “It is encouraging that the majority think the police in their local area are doing a good job with the most common reason being the perception that the police are a visible presence. The fact that victims of crime are less likely to think the police are doing a good job than non victims is something we will have to address although in the majority of reported crimes victims said they were satisfied how their complains was handled.

“One important statistic is that people are half as likely to be a victim of crime as they might think and we all have a responsibility to reassure people that this is the case.

“The survey is a very helpful document for us to study when we are working on our planning for the future. We work with our partners to ensure that the people of Scotland can live their lives safe from crime, disorder and danger and it is important that we always listen to the voices of the public we serve.”

Mr Shearer also called on the public to report crime, not to consider it too trivial and gave an assurance that their calls will be treated seriously.

Last month it was announced that recorded crime in Scotland has reached its lowest level for more than 25 years, according to official figures. In total, 385,509 crimes were reported, representing an 8% fall in 2007-08, the first time the figure has dropped below 400,000 since the early 1980s.

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