BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE

Agenda Item 3

REPORT TO:	**British Transport Police Authority**
DATE:	**11 March 2010**
SUBJECT:	**Chief Constable's Report**
SPONSOR:	**Chief Constable**
AUTHOR:	**DI John McBride**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an overview of activity within British Transport Police (BTP) since the last Police Authority meeting in January.

2. PERFORMANCE AGAINST 2009-10 POLICING PLAN

2.1 I am please to report a continuing fall in reported crime on the railway network while detections have increased. 13 of the 14 national targets were achieved during the policing plan period from 1 April to 23 February.

2.2 Key areas of performance to note include:

- Notifiable crime continues to fall, with 50,195 recorded offences (54,466 for the same period last year) a decrease of 7.8%
- The current detection rate for notifiable crime is 35%
- 34,198 people have been arrested or reported by BTP
- There have been 714 live cable related offences, 31% below the year to date target of 1,039
- 630 offenders have been detected for football related offences against a target of 429

2.3 During the period 1 April to 23 February, 67 of the 75 local policing targets were being achieved. Key areas of performance to note include:

- London North Area has recorded 322 staff assault crimes against a target of 407, and has a detection rate of 63% for this crime category against a target detection rate of 55%. The

Area has analysed peak and seasonal trends. Under Operation Lockstock the Area has targeted final train services on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.

- London South has recorded 887 violent offences. This is 21% below the target of 1,119. The visibility of Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) at key locations dealing with low level incidents is both reassuring to the public and staff and deters this type of behaviour.
- North Western Area is working closely with Network Rail and Train Operators on 14 level crossing management plans against a target of 5. Under BTP's Operation Galley, these management plans focus on enforcing legislation and educating drivers at level crossings identified with Network Rail. Safety advice leaflets are handed to the public warning of the dangers of offending at level crossings.
- The North Eastern Area's NPTs have held 59 surgeries for local staff, tenants and the public in Leeds, on the East Coast Main Line and the Robin Hood Line. This community interaction offers opportunities to raise matters of concern. The surgeries held so far, exceed the target of 30.
- Wales and Western Area is currently detecting 75% of all reported hate crime against a year to date target of 58% and ahead of the 61% detection rate at this time last year.
- London Underground Area is detecting 42% of all reported robbery crime committed on the Underground, ahead of the 36% target. Publicity following the recent conviction of a gang of 9 for a series of robberies (see section 9.9) serves as a firm deterrent to others who may engage in this type of criminality.
- BTP Scotland recorded 518 fewer offences of anti-social behaviour on the network than the target of 2,038.

2.4 From April to February there were 56,775 notifiable crimes (this includes police generated crimes such as possession of knives and drugs) and 31,784 non-notifiable offences. This corresponds to reductions of 7.8% and 9.6% respectively against the same period last year.

2.5 Attached at Appendix A is a table detailing current performance against all targets.

3. VISITS AND MEETINGS

3.1 The Chief Constable hosted a commendation ceremony on 2 February. BTP officers, ambulance officers and members of the public and industry staff were presented with Chief Constable's commendation certificates. Police Long Service and Good Conduct Medals and Royal Humane Society Awards and Family Accolade Medallions were also presented.

3.2 The Chief Constable and Assistant Chief Constable David McCall met with Members of Parliament with constituencies in Scotland and Members of the House of Lords. The briefing event, on the policing of Scotland's railways, was sponsored by Ann McKechin MP. ACC McCall used the session to highlight the work being undertaken by BTP to strengthen its partnership arrangements and adapt the Neighbourhood policing style to the railway environment.

3.3 The Chief Constable met with Norman Baker MP, Liberal Democrat Shadow Secretary of State for Transport. The operational performance of the force, funding and focus on violence and perceptions of safety were discussed.

3.4 The Chief Constable and T/Assistant Chief Constable Smith met with Carolyn Griffiths (Chief Inspector) and Simon French (Principal Inspector) on a visit to the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) in Derby. Items discussed included, the scope of RAIB work and their approach to investigations. The visit was extremely useful and other senior officers will undertake similar visits.

3.5 The Chief Constable met with members of the All Parliamentary Rail Group at the Houses of Parliament on 8 February and delivered a presentation on the work of BTP.

4. 2012 OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES

4.1 The BTP 2008/13 £24.8 million Olympic budget was agreed by the Department for Transport (DfT) Rail Investment Board on 18 November 2009. The Transport Security Project Business

Case and budget (including the BTP budget) was agreed by the Olympic Security Directorate's Protect Programme Board on 1 March, when the budget was accepted as a part of the £600 million Government Olympic Safety and Security Budget.

4.2 Assistant Chief Constable Steve Thomas continues his role as the Olympic Security Directorate's Transport Security Project Lead and National Co-ordinator for Cross Modal Olympic Transport Security. In this role ACC Thomas reports to both Nikki Tompkinson Director of TRANSEC and Chris Jones head of the Olympic Security Directorate's Protect Programme, and works closely with DfT, TRANSEC, the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA), the London Organising Committee (LOCOG), Transport for London (TfL) and rail industry colleagues to ensure that all of the necessary transport security arrangements are in place. ACC Thomas recently met with Dorset, Essex, Surrey and Thames Valley Police Forces to take forward this planning work. He will meet with Hertfordshire Police on 22 March, followed by meetings with Kent and Sussex Police.

4.3 The BTP Olympic Project continues to take forward its 111 work packages (57 already completed) that will ensure that all necessary planning and security tasks are completed and robust and proportionate plans in place for 2012. The Project works closely with the Olympic Security Directorate's Transport Security Project, DfT, TRANSEC, TfL, London Underground, DLR, Network Rail and rail operators.

4.4 Discussions continue with Network Rail to identify 'business as usual' accommodation requirements at Stratford Regional Station. Games time accommodation at Stratford for briefing and feeding has been agreed with the ODA as their Transport Office on Platform 11 at Stratford Regional Station.

4.5 A Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Hertfordshire is now being finalised in order to house BTP officers, police staff and mutual aid officers during Games time. A dedicated

BTP Olympic Logistics lead has now been appointed within the BTP Project Team to lead this key work stream.

4.6 On 2 March BTP led a multi agency tabletop exercise at Weymouth which focused on the Olympic Games, but was also useful preparation for the World Sailing Championships in 2010 and 2011 which will use the newly completed sailing infrastructure at Portland.

4.7 The BTP led Olympic Rail Modal Working Group meeting will take place on 19 March, attended by representatives of the ODA, DfT, TRANSEC, TfL, London Underground, DLR, Network Rail and rail operators.

4.8 An event for BTP's Olympic Bronze Commanders will take place 23 March to provide briefing on the latest developments and planning requirements. This event will take forward the BTP Games operational planning.

5. 2014 COMMONWEALTH GAMES

5.1 The 2014 Commonwealth Games will be held in Glasgow between 23 July and 3 August 2014. The games will attract 6,000 athletes, from 71 commonwealth countries, participating in 17 sporting events. A large proportion of the venues, including the athlete's village are served by the rail and or Subway network. Spectator numbers are anticipated to be in excess of 1.4 million.

5.2 In line with Commonwealth Games Federation directives, a multi agency security directorate has been established. A Games Security and Safety Action Plan is being devised which will outline partner responsibilities for planning, resources and operational deployment to ensure the tactical and strategic objectives required to achieve a safe and secure games.

5.3 Planning is at an early stage. BTP is engaged at the appropriate levels.

6. LONDON NORTH CUSTODY INITIATIVE

A BTP review of custody facilities and capacity across London identified a gap between the number of persons arrested in Greater London compared to the custody facilities and cell numbers available in force. London North was identified as the primary candidate for a new custody facility as, unlike the two other London Areas, it had no dedicated custody facility. A new suite in the north London area would provide a good geographical spread of the custody estate in London and increase the available cell numbers from 30 to 50. Suitable accommodation was identified at Brewery Street and a lease has been signed.

- BTP Procurement has provided professional advice and BTP have invited competitive tendering for an initial 18 month contract to provide Civilian Detention Officers to staff the new custody facility. There will be a break clause after 12 months and the contract will operate as a pilot scheme so that both sides can assess the effectiveness of the arrangement after 12 months.
- The two main suppliers in this area, G4S and Reliance are submitting bids and a national contractual framework exists that would allow either bidder to have resources in place by the 29 June which is the date the new custody facility is due to open (having resources in place by that date is one of the tender / bid requirements).
- The initiative encompasses the following: recruitment, equipment, uniform, training, management and sickness, leave cover and general contingencies, with all liabilities lying with the provider at a set cost.
- BTP has been gathering information on other forces' experiences with outsourced custody arrangements. A site visit to South Wales Police is planned for 8 March.
- Finalised bids will be presented on the 24 February.
- A report has been prepared which compares indicative outsourcing costs against like-for-like in-house costs. Initial analysis suggests a potential advantage to the outsourcing option when costs and risk are combined.

BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE

7. TASER

In September, December and January Police Authority Members received updates on BTP's preparation for the piloting of TASER. This included the training for trainers and officers, as well as the scope and duration of the pilot. There are six pilot sites, four of which are in London and one in Cardiff and one in Manchester. There are 113 officers trained in TASER. Table 1, below, shows the officer numbers by Area.

Area	No. of Officers	Location
London South	10	all based within OSU
London North	31	based in OSU and Response
London Underground	20	all based within OSU
FHQ	20	based within CTSU
Wales & Western	10	Cardiff - 24/7 Response
North Western	13	Manchester – 24/7 Response

Table 1

There are a number of other officers trained that do not fall within the pilot sites at this time or have moved from their original posts.

To date there have been 19 deployments of TASER. A deployment includes any of the following actions carried out in an operational setting:

- Drawing a TASER in circumstances where any person perceives it to be a use of force.
- Sparking of the TASER commonly known as "arcing".
- Aiming the TASER or placing the laser sight red dot onto a subject.
- Firing of a TASER so that the barbs are discharged at a subject.
- Application and discharge of a TASER in "drive stun mode" to a subject.

The TASER deployments so far have been to draw the TASER in a front carry position, or by aiming the red dot on the subject and giving clear instructions. There have been no TASERs discharged.

A report is being prepared on the pilot. The case for extending the pilot, to allow for the collection of additional data, will be examined.

8. OPERATIONAL POLICING OVERVIEW

8.1 The following section provides an overview of some of the recent operations and investigations that have taken place across BTP. The aim of this section of the report is to provide Members with an overview of the type of crime that occurs on the rail network and the investigation that subsequently follows.

8.2 GUISELEY ROBBER JAILED

A man who viciously assaulted a passenger at Guiseley railway station has been jailed for three years following a BTP investigation. The male was sentenced at Leeds Crown Court after he was found guilty of robbery following a week long trial. The Court heard that on 4 April 2008, the offender robbed a man while standing on platform 1 at the station. The victim was approached by the offender asking to buy a cigarette. The male then threw the victim to the floor, kicking and hitting him in the face. He then demanded money, threatened the victim and stole £20 in cash. The victim sustained severe bruises and cuts to his head and face, and chipped teeth requiring hospital treatment.

8.3 LIVERPOOL CITYSAFE AWARDS

BTP officers in Liverpool have been highly commended at an awards ceremony held in the city. BTP Initiative Team officers were nominated for the Best Local Initiative award at the CitySafe Awards. The officers were commended by judges for their work in the city which included the detection of more than 400 offences – including those involving weapons, drugs and violence. The initiative was carried out in partnership with Merseyrail Revenue Protection staff and included the use of knife arches, passive drugs dogs and targeted, intelligence-led operations.

8.4 OPERATION NIGHT DRAGON

BTP officers participated in a major incident exercise which took place overnight on 20 February at the Severn Tunnel. The aim of the exercise was to test and validate key elements and arrangements for a multi-agency response to a major incident in the Severn Tunnel using live casualties. The exercise was extremely worthwhile, with learning points for both operations and

communications that will be addressed at the next Severn Tunnel Contingency Planning Group meeting in March.

8.5 HATE CRIME – SERIOUS ASSAULT (FOOTBALL RELATED)

BTP officers were called to investigate an incident where an Italian family visiting London were verbally abused and the father attacked in front of his three young children by Everton football fans travelling through London on a Piccadilly Line train. The offenders repeatedly punched the man in the face causing cuts and bruising, shouting and racially abusing the whole family.

BTP investigators requested the underground train to be taken out of service and a crime scene examination was conducted by a Scenes of Crime Officer. Blood samples, photographs of the scene and a DNA sample from a beer can were obtained. The enquiries, including cooperation from Everton and Arsenal football clubs, led to the identification of the suspects. 3 offenders were arrested and charged with racially aggravated assault and affray. The suspects will appear before City of Westminster Magistrates.

8.6 NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING REASSURANCE OPERATION

The Bakerloo Line NPT conducted a reassurance operation at Harrow and Wealdstone Underground station on 21 January. Working with a specialist dog handler and a drug dog, NPT officers carried out the pro-active operation at the station between 7pm and 9pm in response to community concerns. Drugs and drug-taking at the station has been identified as a concern by local people who use the station. During the two hour operation, six people were issued with police cautions after being found in possession of cannabis and a local man was arrested for possession of drugs with intent to supply.

8.7 BIRKENHEAD ROBBER JAILED

A Birkenhead man has been sentenced to 40 months imprisonment after pleading guilty to robbery. Liverpool Crown Court heard that the offender, together with two other men, followed a 16-year-old boy into a lift at Birkenhead's Conway Park rail station. The offender demanded

money from the youth and, when the lift arrived at the platform, threatened to push the victim under an oncoming train if he did not hand over cash. The victim handed over a £10 note. BTP investigating officers used the station's CCTV system to obtain an image of the offender and through enquiry work identified and arrested the man responsible.

8.8 FORTH BRIDGE AND TAY BRIDGE DEATHS

BTP officers were called to investigate industrial fatalities that occurred with hours of one another on 27 and 28 January. Both deaths occurred on rail bridges and both victims were employed by the same contractor.

The first concerned the death of a 52 year-old man following a fall while working on the Forth Rail Bridge at approximately 2045 hours on 27 January. Enquiries reveal that the deceased and two colleagues took a short-cut between two points on the bridge, meaning all three had to climb outside of the main structure. In doing so one of the males fell to his death. The Procurator Fiscal (PF) ordered a joint investigation between BTP and the Office of the Rail Regulator (ORR).

The second incident took place around 10 hours later and concerned the death of a man working on the Tay Bridge as a shot-blaster / painter. There was no obvious cause of death and the subsequent post-mortem proved inconclusive with no anatomical cause of death found. BTP investigating officers await toxicology results which may indicate the cause of death. The PF has directed BTP and ORR to conduct a joint enquiry with clear guidelines given to all parties concerned.

Both incidents presented particular problems due to the logistics of recovering the bodies, with the second victim removed to the shore by boat. Valuable assistance was provided by a variety of services, including fire, paramedics and HM Coastguard.

8.9 ROBBERY – NOTTING HILL CARNIVAL

Following a BTP investigation, nine east London teenagers, who committed a series of robberies on the Tube after the Notting Hill Carnival in 2008, appeared at Snaresbrook Crown Court in December. The youths, aged between 17 and 19, were found guilty of conspiracy to rob. They appeared for sentencing on 8 February and were sentenced to up to 4 years each in prison.

During the offences, on the evening of Sunday 24 August 2008, the youths robbed passengers of phones and cash in vicious attacks which involved violence and threats of violence.

Two of the robbers were arrested the same evening when immediately after the incident police officers took one of the victims out in a patrol car who was able to identify his attackers.

8.10 LEVEL CROSSINGS

In June 2009 BTP initiated Operation Galley in support of Network Rail's 'Don't Run the Risk' campaign. This is an enforcement and education operation aimed at level crossing misuse hotspots across the country. This initiative is aimed at increasing user's awareness of the dangers of misusing level crossings, educating people how to properly use them and to take action against those that misuse them.

Operations are intelligence lead with BTP officers enforcing the Road Traffic Act 1988 at the identified locations. BTP officers and Community Safety officers from Network Rail work together in a joint partnership. Other partners include ORR staff, Ministry of Justice, Railway Safety Standards Board (RSSB) and the Highways Agency.

In March a large internal media campaign highlighting Operation Galley successes is being published in *The Line*. Following each Operation Galley operation BTP media and marketing department highlight successes externally.

London South Area has developed a project in partnership with Network Rail to deploy a marked van equipped with CCTV facilities. The van will be used at hot spot locations and also attend

other locations to reassure communities and highlight level crossing dangers. The van is due for roll out in April.

BTP Justice Directorate is leading work to develop proposals for a temporary Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) process. One proposal is that West Midlands Police will assist with the processing of the FPNs on behalf of BTP until a permanent process is established.

BTP, Network Rail and ACPO (Roads Policing) are exploring options of fixed CCTV Cameras at level crossings. One proposal concerns increased availability of CCTV at level crossings and for a CCTV Camera Partnership between the BTP and Network Rail. This would effectively cover six of BTPs territorial areas.

8.11 METAL THEFT CRIME PREVENTION OPERATION

BTP are working in collaboration with Balfour Beatty Rail (BBR) and Network Rail to set up a system to monitor and respond to any attacks targeting the copper overhead lines currently being installed on the £300 million Airdrie to Bathgate Railway Link Project (know as A2B). The BTP Technical Support Unit devised solution, is in place and provides an alert via a laptop in the event of the cables being tampered with. The laptop is monitored 24 hours a day by Area Intelligence Bureau staff and a response process has been defined.

To date there have been no attempted thefts, however an accidental activation of the alarm system by maintenance teams on 23 January resulted in a successful demonstration of both the technology and response processes.

8.12 SEXUAL ASSAULT

A man who sexually assaulted three women on the Underground was sentenced to three years in prison, after CCTV evidence was led during his trial which placed him at the scene of the crimes.

The offender was sentenced at Southwark Crown Court after being found guilty of three counts of sexual assault on women during incidents in September 2008. In two of the offences, which occurred on trains at Manor House and Belsize Park, the offender approached his victim and made lewd comments before aggressively grabbing at the victim's chest. In the third offence, he repeatedly groped a woman from behind as she stepped off a train at Angel station.

8.13 THEFT PERSONAL PROPERTY

A series of theft of personal property (TPP) offences were reported at Paddington in the week leading up to Christmas. The dedicated London North Area TPP team were assigned the investigation. After viewing many hours of CCTV the officers were able to establish that one offender was responsible for at least nine offences. Despite numerous enquiries to identify the offender, which included circulating his photograph nationally to all police forces, his identity remained unknown.

The offending stopped on Christmas Eve and because much of the stolen property was Christmas presents, the thief was named the 'Christmas present thief'. Advice was sought from the London North media officer and it was decided to try and use the *Evening Standard* to publish the story together with a CCTV still of the offender. They agreed, mainly due to the nickname given to the thief and subsequently published an article. Unfortunately, the offender remained unidentified and this prompted a further identity sought appeal to all police forces.

The offending started again on the weekend of the 20 February. Analysis of the offences showed that the majority of the offences occurred in the evening and on 22 February observations were undertaken by the TPP team. Within three hours the offender was seen on the station and arrested. He is a prolific offender who had been arrested on Christmas Eve for an offence of burglary and was sentenced to a short term of imprisonment. He gave a no comment interview but CPS authorised the 13 TPP charges against him. He appeared at Court on the 23 February and pleaded guilty to all offences and has been remanded in custody to for sentence.

8.14 NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING CYCLE PARTNERSHIP

BTP's Birmingham City Centre NPT and Midland Metro Policing Team have received funding from the Safer Birmingham Partnership and the West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive (CENTRO). This will enable the purchase of a set of high profile marked police specification mountain bikes to facilitate a more effective patrolling capability around the city centre and along the Midland Metro route. The funding, achieved through participation in the Safer Birmingham Partnership, has allowed the purchase of the bikes, provision of clothing and equipment for riders, and a training course.

8.15 DRUGS OPERATION - BRIGHTON

BTP officers based at Brighton conducted a drugs operation in February at Brighton Railway Station in collaboration with Sussex Police and the UK Border Agency. The operation followed an increase in the number of drug related deaths in the City and has support from Health partners. During the operation there were nine arrests for drugs possession and one for being wanted for immigration fraud offences.

8.16 GREVIOUS BODILY HARM - RAILSTAFF

A 16 year old male appeared at Crawley Youth Court and pleaded guilty to causing grievous bodily harm to a Southern Railway revenue protection officer at Ifield, Sussex. The incident occurred on 17 September, when the youth was challenged for a ticket by the member of revenue staff. The youth attempted to barge the inspector out of the way and in doing so pushed him against a spiked fence causing a cut to his arm which required stitches. BTP investigators identified a suspect from CCTV. Following a media appeal the culprit handed himself in. At court the male was given a referral order for six months, and ordered to pay £145 compensation to the member of staff.

8.17 SEXUAL CRIME – WHARFEDALE AND ILKLEY

BTP officers in the North Eastern Area worked jointly with West Yorkshire Police colleagues following a series of sexual exposure and sexual assault crimes the Wharfedale & Ilkley areas between November and January.

The method for the crimes involved the suspect following young females from the train station at Burley in Wharfedale where he proceeded to either expose himself or sexually touch the victims.

Use of CCTV by investigators led to the identification of a suspect. Following his arrest he admitted all the offences in interview. On 19 February he was charged and is currently on remand and will appear before Bradford Crown Court in March.

8.18 ORGANISED CRIME TEAM – METAL THEFT

BTP investigators on the organised crime team are currently involved in ten separate investigations into large scale thefts of rail and other metals used by the industry. These investigations are complex; often involving multiple criminals who are highly organised in terms of their planning, logistics and transportation and disposal outlets of the stolen metal. Some of these investigations are at an early stage; others are more advanced and await charging decisions by the Prosecuting Authorities.

9. COUNTER TERRORISM AND DOMESTIC EXTREMISM

9.1 As a result of detailed assessment, including information on the plot against the Delta Airlines jet on Christmas day, the UK threat level was raised in January from SUBSTANTIAL to SEVERE.

9.2 There has been one international terrorist attack on railway infrastructure in 2010. This happened in Russia on the 2 February. There was minimal damage to the train but severe disruption to rail travel as a result. This attack had similarities to a previous attack which led to the derailment on an express train in November 2009. As with the previous attack, it is

assessed that there are no direct implications for UK railways, but it highlights the ease with which those intent on carrying out attacks can access railway infrastructure.

9.3 There has been no change to the UK threat level from Irish related terrorism. The car bomb outside Newry Courthouse on 22 January is evidence of continued activity in Northern Ireland from Dissident Republican paramilitaries. BTP continues to work with colleagues to assess the situation. There is no intelligence at this time to suggest planned attacks against the railway infrastructure.

10. INQUESTS

10.1 BTP continues its preparation for the Coroner's Inquest into the London bombings on 7 July 2005. A small team of officers, working under the direction of Detective Superintendent Croft, is working to assembled and prepare the BTP evidence for the Coroner.

10.2 It is expected that a large number of BTP officers will be required to give evidence at the Inquest. BTP will be working closely with Metropolitan Police colleagues who have a similar team preparing their evidence. BTP is preparing a support process in conjunction with Occupational Health and the BTP Federation for officers required to give evidence at the Inquest.

10.3 Coroners work within a legal framework established by Act of Parliament. A Coroner's Inquest is a process for investigating the circumstances of a death. It is a fact-finding inquiry to establish the answers to:

- Who the deceased was
- When and where the death occurred
- How the deceased came by his or her death

The proceedings and evidence are aimed solely at ascertaining the answers to these questions.

10.4 The locations of the bombings on the 7 July fell in three Coroners' jurisdictions. It has been decided to bring the inquests together, rather than have three separate hearings, under Lady Justice Hallett who is a Judge in the Court of Appeal.

10.5 The Inquest will initially look into the deaths of 56 persons. The Coroner will decide if the deaths of the bombers will be heard alongside the 52 victims. It is expected that a single inquest into 56 deaths will be held.

10.6 A short directions hearing was held on 25 February. The Coroner heard submissions and gave directions relating to the progress and scope of the Inquest. A further pre-inquest hearing will take place on 26 April when issues such as whether the Inquest should be resumed and whether there should be a jury, will be considered. BTP will be represented at these directions hearings.

10.7 BTP is preparing for the Potters Bar Rail Accident Inquest which is due to be held in June 2010 before His Honour Judge Baker QC.

On the 11 February at FHQ, a meeting was held with HH Judge Baker and the Inquest Team to present video evidence and to view a presentation from Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL). A site visit was arranged to Potters Bar station. A second pre-inquest hearing will be held on the 1 April at St Albans Crown Court.

BTP has a small team of officers and staff engaged in preparing for the Inquest.

11. PUBLIC ORDER AND EVENTS

11.1 Demonstrations by English, Welsh and Scottish defence league groups in cities across the country continue to require a significant operational response from BTP. The 'Defence Leagues' emerged from the angry scenes in Luton in March 2009 when a group of Muslims protested as the Royal Anglian Regiment paraded through the town on its return from Afghanistan. The Defence Leagues have an association, although not exclusively, with previously known football

hooligans. Muslim groups consider the Defence Leagues to be Islamaphobic and racist. Planned protests by either Defence League groups or by Anti Fascist groups are now normally met with counter protests.

In Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent on 23 January over 2,000 English Defence League members gathered for a demonstration against extremism. In excess of 400 travelled by rail and a section 60 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (power to search – anticipated violence) was in place around the railway station. BTP officers worked closely with colleagues from Staffordshire Police. 17 arrests were made for public order offences.

In Edinburgh on 20 February 2,000 anti-racism campaigners staged a demonstration and march through the centre of Edinburgh. It was arranged in response to a threatened protest by the Scottish Defence League. BTP officers worked closely with colleagues from Lothian and Borders Police and Northumbria Police to keep the opposing groups apart.

There are a number of Defence League events planned for 2010. The direct threat to the UK railway infrastructure from these groups is minimal, however the indirect threat they pose through public order and public safety is high.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 That members note the contents of this paper.