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**REPORT TO:** British Transport Police Authority  
**DATE:** 27 January 2011  
**SUBJECT:** Chief Constable's Report  
**SPONSOR:** Chief Constable  
**AUTHOR:** PI Robin Edwards

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## 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 report to the British Transport Police Authority (BTPA) on 9 December 2010.

## 2. PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

- 2.1 For the period 1 April to 16 January 2011, BTP is achieving 9 of the 15 national targets set in the 2010/11 Policing Plan. Appendix A details full performance data for the above period. There has been a 2.1% reduction in Staff Assaults across the force and a 1% increase in detections to 52% compared to last year. Other areas of note are a 6.5% reduction in Serious Public Disorder offences, 4.8% reduction in Violence against the Person offences, 11.8% reduction in Serious Line of Route offences and 12% reduction in Criminal Damage. There has been an increase of 16.3% in Theft of Railway/Commercial Property & Burglary and a 6.5% rise in Serious Fraud offences.
- 2.2 Overall notifiable crime is down 3.3% when compared to the same period last year with 48,181 recorded offences during 2010/11 (1 April 2010 to 16 January 2011) compared to 49,835 over the same period in 2009/10. Total notifiable and non-notifiable crime is down by 2.7%, with a reduction of 2,088 offences. The North Eastern and Wales and Western areas are failing to achieve their targets for notifiable crime and show a slight increase over last year's figures. The increase in cable theft on both areas has contributed to the increase in recorded offences. Both areas have created teams to target cable theft in their key hot spot locations; South Wales and West Midlands for the Wales and Western area and Yorkshire and the North East for the North Eastern area. London South is experiencing large numbers of Theft of Passenger Property in Kent and specific resources have been tasked to tackle the increase in recorded offences. London North has reduced its deficit from 300 offences to 30 through targeted interventions and is on track to achieve its target.
- 2.3 During 2010 levels of metal theft exceeded the levels previously seen in 2008, and is predicted to continue to increase. The level of offending appears to be heavily correlated to global metal prices which are also expected to increase due to the development of the Chinese and Indian economies above its current price of \$9591 per tonne. There were 2769 'Operation Drum' offences linked to metal theft during 2010 with 1220 of these offences classified as 'live' cable offences which have the greatest impact on the network. There was a seasonal reduction in



offences during December which is reflected in previous years. However, the adverse weather conditions across the country resulted in a reduction in crime above the expected seasonal trend.

- 2.4 Around 50% of all live cable offences occurred in the North Eastern Area during 2010, with the most prominent hotspots being around the regions of Castleford, Stockton and Doncaster. The Wales and Western Area had the second largest percentage of metal thefts recorded which accounted for 21% of total offences. All other BTP areas received less than 10% of the crimes with London Underground accounting for around 1% of crimes, the lowest in the force.
- 2.5 Appendix A contains the Policing Plan Executive Summary which details BTP performance against its National and Local targets.

### **3. 7 JULY 2005 LONDON BOMBINGS INQUEST**

- 3.1 Following the Christmas break, the 7/7 Inquest resumed on Wednesday 12 January. Attention moved to the events around the Tavistock Square bombing with four BTP witnesses providing evidence towards the end of January. The officers provided eye witness evidence of the actual bombing. One of the witnesses, Debbie Fenwick a former BTP officer received the award of MBE for her actions during the response. Each witness had the full support of Operation Pendulum welfare staff and meetings were held with the legal team to lend direction and support.
- 3.2 Following this part of the enquiry the inquest will move onto examine command and control and reasonable preventability in February 2011. Operation Pendulum has forwarded further information to the Coroner's legal team, and further witnesses may be summoned.

### **4. COUNTER TERRORISM**

- 4.1 International concerns about Al-Qaeda aspirations to attack in Europe have received widespread media coverage. This was heightened following the charging of nine individuals with serious terrorist offences by officers from the West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit and by attempted attacks in Sweden and Denmark.
- 4.2 In recent weeks a measured increase in police officer visibility has been put in place for the London Rail network. This has been achieved under the umbrella of standing counter terrorism operations and contingency plans. Close contact has been maintained with the City of London and Metropolitan forces as well as with colleagues in Department for Transport (DfT), Home Office and the rail industry.
- 4.3 The current high level of tension around the threat from terrorism reflects the fact that the national assessment is that an attack from Al-Qaeda or an Al-Qaeda inspired group is highly likely and could occur without warning.



4.4 On 13 January the Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable attended the Home Office Weekly Security Meeting chaired by the Home Secretary to discuss counter terrorism. The Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable then attended COBRA on 19 January which was chaired by the Prime Minister.

## 5. 2012 OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES

5.1 BTP 2008/13 Olympic budget has been reduced from its original £24.9 million to £22.1 million as a result of efficiency savings identified for 2010/11 and as a result of actual savings realised in previous years. DfT and the Olympic Security Directorate have been informed of the revised BTP planned Games spend. DfT have confirmed that this budget is still available to BTP.

5.2 The BTP Olympic Project continues to take forward its 131 work packages that will ensure all necessary planning and security requirements are in place for the games. The first 70 packages have been completed and work is continuing towards the completion of the remaining 61.

5.3 During the Olympic period annual leave restrictions will be imposed and all training, other than initial recruits training, will be suspended. The annual leave level has yet to be decided and is the subject of further detailed work and discussion with the Police Federation.

ACC Thomas has led joint BTP and venue police force Transport Security Risk Assessment Workshops for Hertfordshire/Bedfordshire, Essex, Dorset/Hampshire, Thames Valley, Surrey and Kent. These workshops identified the transport security risks and mitigations for these venues, rail services and their gateway rail stations. Further joint workshops will be held during the early part of 2011 with the Metropolitan Police and the six Olympic Football Forces.

5.4 The Chief Constable continues to lead the Olympic control room and Forward Command Post (FCP) projects for the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). The MPS control rooms at Lambeth and Hendon are nearing completion and the budgets have been secured for FCP's for the Olympic venues in Dorset, Surrey, Essex, Hertfordshire and Stratford. The command posts have also been approved for the football venues in England, Wales and Scotland and the Chief Constable will be visiting venues in Hertfordshire, Essex and Surrey in the coming months.

## 6. OPERATIONAL POLICING

### 6.1 Football

So far this season there have been a number of serious incidents, including assaults, serious disturbances, and offences of a sexual nature. To date there have been 326 football impact incidents which include low level disorder or anti-social behaviour (including racist, sectarian, homophobic, abusive or threatening language), fare evasion, misuse of drugs and the disruption of services. However, the main bulk of impact offences consist of public disorder and bye law offences.

6.1.1 Currently top three offending teams are Aston Villa, Wolverhampton and Birmingham City. Each of the respective areas has single points of contact to develop problem profiles of known risk



supporters to enable plans to be developed to tackle offending. In addition the Areas are required to develop these plans with the respective clubs, Home Office forces and the train operating companies in addition to running specific operations around certain fixtures. Of the seven teams currently subject of action plans only Millwall Football Club remains in the current top seven.

## 6.2 English Defence League

6.2.1 Since 1 December 2010 there have been 2 English Defence League (EDL) demonstrations around the country. The first event on 1 December 2010 was a homecoming parade at Blackburn which resulted in a number of arrests for breach of the peace and Public disorder offences. The second event involved a demonstration at Peterborough on 11 December 2010 which resulted in arrests for possession of an offensive weapon, public disorder and racially aggravated public disorder.

6.2.2 There has been little impact on the rail network in terms of clashes between the EDL and their main opposing group, United Against Fascism (UAF) with most of the reported disorder taking place on local forces. BTP resources, including Police Support Units (PSU) supported local force operations at Blackburn and Peterborough.

## 6.3 Student Demonstrations

6.3.1 Since the first demonstrations on 10 November 2010 in Central London there have been 8 additional student protests. These protests have mainly been focused in London although they are often referred to as national days of action. On 17 December 2010 a protest took place in Liverpool. On 8, 13, 14 and 17 December 2010 further protests took place, however, there were no issues reported on the network. On 9 December 2010 in Central London there were arrests for assault and public disorder. At each of the events in Central London BTP PSU were deployed to support MPS and City of London resources dealing with disorder in and around Westminster.

## 7. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

7.1 The Chief Constable continues to meet with key stakeholders and over the past month has met with Michael Roberts, Chief Executive of ATOC, Mike Brown, Managing Director of London Underground, Richard Barnes, Deputy Mayor for the London Assembly and Robin Gisby from NWR. Key areas of discussion during these meetings were security issues on the rail network, BTP priorities, Policing Plan and crime. The Chief Constable has also met with senior members of TRANSEC, and continues to have regular meetings with MPS.

7.2 On 11 January 2011 the Chief Constable went out on patrol with Chris Burchell, Managing Director of Southern Trains. They visited a number of locations including Brighton, Worthing and Haywards Heath where they met with train operating staff and BTP officers. Areas of discussion covered during the visit included disruption management, station and on train crime and broader CT issues.



7.3 On 23 December 2010 the Chief Constable went out on patrol on the London Underground network as part of the Area's Christmas crime operation which focused on theft of passenger property and anti-social behaviour.

## 8. OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW

8.1 **The incidents below highlight a snapshot of operational incidents across the force.**

### **Off-duty Officer foils Cash in Transit Robbery**

8.2.1 On 29 December, and whilst off duty, Constable Kimberley Dight a BTP officer from Hammersmith assisted in foiling a cash in transit robbery near Kingston town centre. The officer was walking to the gym when she heard some shouting and saw a security guard walking around the middle of the road looking dazed. She saw a red crash helmet in the middle of a crowd and saw members of the public struggling with the suspect who was responsible for the robbery.

8.2.2 The officer intervened and took control of the situation by restraining the suspect until assistance arrived from the Metropolitan police. She was assisted by members of the public and between them they were able to safely restrain the suspect and prevent his escape. She was able to search the suspect and ensure that he was not in possession of any items that could injure the public or her.

8.2.3 The officer acted with little regard for her own safety and without any personal protection equipment restrained and prevented the escape of the suspect and took control of a difficult and dangerous situation. The suspect was charged and remanded in custody and is currently waiting trial at Crown Court.

### **Pick Pocket Sentenced**

8.3.1 Between 29 April 2009 and 15 November 2009 a team of pickpockets targeted old and vulnerable passengers at Birmingham New Street and Sheffield Railway Stations. The gang would observe the victims using bank cards to purchase tickets so they could obtain the PIN numbers as they entered them during the transaction. The gang would then follow their intended target around the stations until they boarded their trains, at which point the gang would surround the victim and steal their purse or wallet. Once in possession of the bank cards, one of the gang would go to the nearest ATM and withdraw the maximum amount of cash. The average age of the victims was 69 and many were left feeling very distressed and in some cases it affected their confidence to travel on the railway alone.

8.3.2 CCTV evidence was recovered which clearly showed the gang following their victims and resulted in two of the offenders being arrested. Although they denied any involvement a series of Identification procedures were conducted around the country resulting in one of the suspects being charged with Conspiracy to Steal from Persons. He appeared before Sheffield Crown Court on 22 December 2010 where he pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 3 years and 6 months Imprisonment. A total of 23 theft offences were detected as a result of the investigation.



8.3.3 It was mentioned by the sentencing judge that one of the victims was 89 years of age, and another was registered as Blind. Prosecuting Counsel Mr Jeremy HILL- BAKER told the judge that the successful conclusion to these offences was due to an "excellent piece of police investigation".

#### 8.4 Robbery offenders Jailed

8.4.1 During March 2009 a passenger on a train between Guildford and Surbiton was approached by two males who each produced a knife and robbed him of his mobile phone. They also demanded cash and he handed over £5 when they threatened to search him. His family later received threatening messages from the offenders as their numbers were in the directory of the stolen mobile.

A further offence was perpetrated in April 2009 when three males threatened a passenger on a train between Stoneleigh and Wimbledon and demanded his money and mobile phone. The victim refused but the suspects were able to obtain his bank card and PIN number, before making their escape.

8.4.2 CCTV was recovered from both trains and stills of the two main suspects were obtained and circulated which resulted in two suspects being identified and arrested for robbery. During interview one of the suspects admitted being present during the robberies but implicated the other suspect as being responsible. The suspects were charged with both robberies and were found guilty in December 2010 at Kingston Crown Court. They were sentenced to 4 years and 3 years 4 months imprisonment respectively for their roles in the robberies.

#### 8.5 Cable thieves remanded

8.5.1 During October 2010 officers attended an address in Newark to execute search warrants and arrest 3 males for a cable theft. The offenders were suspected of being responsible for a cable theft earlier that day at Crankley Point near Newark.

8.5.2 During the execution of the warrants officers were notified about another cable offence that had occurred at Crankley Point. The attending Network Rail member of staff provided a detailed description of the suspects who had fled the scene on his arrival. BTP officers quickly responded, supported by Nottinghamshire police officers. During an area search two suspects were detained and arrested close to the track but some distance from the scene of the crime.

8.5.3 A police dog unit was tasked to conduct a search of the location which led from the scene to the location where they were detained by officers. During the search by the police dog unit it located cable, tools and a packet of hack saw blades near to the scene of the theft. Searches were conducted at the suspects addresses which uncovered receipts from scrap metal dealers implicating them in the theft of cable from the railway. Both of the suspects were remanded in custody for committal to Nottingham Crown Court.

8.5.4 Although the Criminal Damage and Reckless Endangerment charge was vigorously pursued by the officer in the case, the residing Judge decided that the sentencing powers for theft would be sufficient and the charge of Criminal Damage Reckless Endangerment was dropped. Both of the



offenders pleaded guilty to 2 counts of theft of live cable and were remanded in custody until 3 February for sentencing.

**8.6 Rail staff ordered to pay £4k in compensation in fraud investigation**

8.6.1 An employee of East Coast who worked in their ticket office at Kings Cross Travel Centre was initially investigated through an internal review after an irregularity was identified on one of his shifts. Officers from London North's ticket fraud squad were requested and undertook a detailed investigation into the alleged fraud. They were able to prove that the suspect made fraudulent refunds and took money from his till and had also refunded money to his own bank accounts. The loss to East Coast was approximately £1600.

8.6.2 In a separate act of dishonesty it was alleged that he issued an annual season ticket valued at £1,904 to a friend on a free of charge basis, again causing a loss to his employer.

8.6.3 Officers from the area ticket fraud squad arrested the suspect in connection with the allegations of theft, false accounting and fraud. He was later charged with two fraud offences and bailed to City of Westminster Magistrates Court in December 2010. He was ordered to complete 300 hours unpaid work and pay £3,495.50 in compensation to East Coast as well as being dismissed from the company.

**8.7 Plymouth Railway Station**

8.7.1 On 5 December 2010, two plainclothes BTP officers were conducting observations at Plymouth railway station when their attention was drawn to a drunken female in company with two other males. The female was heard swearing loudly but failed to desist when spoken to by the officers. Having not heeded the warnings, they moved to arrest the female at which point the two males then became involved in a violent attempt to obstruct the officers. Although Captor spray was used one of the offenders was able to take an officer to the floor and subject him to a prolonged and vicious assault. An urgent assistance call was made to the local police and upon their arrival and due to the level of violence being offered they had cause to deploy and use TASER on both of the male suspects.

8.7.2 All three offenders were arrested and taken into custody on suspicion of Affray. Shortly after the incident, the assaulted officer started struggling for breath and was immediately rushed to the local Accident and Emergency Department. The officer sustained very heavy bruising to his ribs, cuts to his face and upper torso and on medical advice, the officer remained off work for a two week period whilst his injuries healed. The three offenders were interviewed, after which the female was issued with a fixed penalty notice for a public order offence.

8.7.3 During the trial on 6 January 2011 one of the offenders received an electronic monitoring regime as part of a community sentence – a curfew requirement for four months from 2000 to 0600 hours daily and ordered to pay compensation and costs of £335. The second offender had one charge withdrawn at court, and was discharged conditionally for 18 months. Both offenders' guilty pleas were taken into account when imposing sentence.



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**8.8 Five-year ASBO and imprisonment for man who assaulted rail staff**

8.8.1 On 18 August 2010 an offender who has a history of anti-social behaviour at stations on the Euston Road racially abused and assaulted a member of staff from Network Rail. The victim was assisted by an off-duty police officer, who witnessed the attack and prevented the situation escalating. The suspect was arrested for Common Assault and was eventually charged to Blackfriars Crown Court on 20 December 2010. During the hearing he was sentenced to 10 month's imprisonment for Racially Aggravated Assault and issued with a 5 year Anti-Social Behaviour Order.

8.8.2 The offender was banned from entering any mainline railway station or premises on the national rail system or Transport for London or any train service provider while under the influence of any intoxicants. He is also precluded from entering, or loitering directly outside, any railway station premises except to immediately purchase a valid ticket to travel and then to travel on the next available service. He is also banned from travelling on any train whilst under the influence of intoxicants.

**9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That Members note the contents of this paper.