BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE

Agenda Item 3

REPORT TO:	**British Transport Police Authority**
DATE:	**9 December 2010**
SUBJECT:	**Chief Constable's Report**
SPONSOR:	**Chief Constable**
AUTHOR:	**PI Robin Edwards**

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 my last report to the British Transport Police Authority (BTPA) on 1 November 2010.

2. PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

2.1 For the period 1 April to 26 November 2010 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.

2.2 Key areas of performance to note from the national targets include:

- The average time taken to release operational railway lines back to the industry following non suspicious fatalities is currently 79 minutes against a target of 90.
- The target of 80% to respond to all immediate grade incidents within 20 minutes is being exceeded. The current performance is 91% and has remained unchanged since my last report to you.
- The number of detections for staff assaults is 967 against a target of 959. Detections have increased on the same period last year when 947 offences were detected.
- The number of serious violence against the person, sexual and robbery offences is 2,490 compared against a target of 2,508.
- The number of offenders detected for anti-social behaviour between 20:00 and 02:00 is currently 3,420 against a target of 3,341.
- BTP is achieving 86% overall victim satisfaction in Quality of Service for victims of crime against a target of 80%.
- BTP is achieving its performance objective in relation to the level of representation of female officers 16% and BME officers 6.8%, against targets of 16% and 6.6% respectively.
- Average sickness levels are currently at 4.24 days per employee against a target of 4.49 days.

2.3 Areas where national Policing Plan objectives have yet to be achieved include:

- 954 live cable offences have been recorded against a target of 573. The North Eastern Area has recorded the highest level of offences (511) accounting for 53.5% of all BTP crimes in this category.
- Notifiable recorded (excluding police generated) crime is currently 37,906 or 4.2% above the target of 36,353. However, when compared to the same period last year there has been an improvement with 42 fewer offences recorded.
- Offences brought to justice currently stand at 30% against a target of 31%. The comparable figure for last year was 28%.
- The number of offenders detected for football related disorder is 574 against a target of 620 and a 2009/10 year to date performance of 496.

2.4 Twenty five of the 38 local Policing Plan targets are currently being achieved. Key areas of performance to note are:

- London Underground Area is achieving all 10 of its local targets. The most notable being Theft of Passenger Property (TPP) with 4,038 recorded offences against a target of 4,430. Recorded offences last year were 4,303 which highlight a significant improvement in year on year performance. Detections for TPP currently stand at 254 against a target of 227.
- London South Area is achieving 5 of its 7 local targets. Real success has been achieved in the number of neighbourhood policing joint initiatives that have taken place, 447 to date against a target of 190. Detections for anti-social behaviour have also increased, with year to date detections of 2,631 against a target of 1,950.
- London North Area is achieving 4 of its 7 local targets. The hate crime detection rate is 54% against a target of 55% which reflects a 4% improvement since my last report to you.
- North Eastern Area is achieving 2 of its 4 local targets. The violence and sexual offences detection rate is currently 56% against a target of 64%.
- North Western Area is achieving 1 of its 4 local targets with staff assaults at 397 against a target of 386. Violence and sexual offences detection rate is at 39% against a target of 52%.
- Wales and Western Area is achieving 1 of its 3 local targets with anti-social behaviour problem solving profiles at 15 against a target of 14. The aggression towards staff detection rate is 63% against a target of 64% which reflects a 2% improvement since my last report to you.
- The Scottish Area is achieving both of its local targets with 30 sectarian offences detected against a target of 10 and service response agreements running at 90% satisfaction against a target of 80%.

3. 7 JULY 2005 LONDON BOMBINGS INQUEST

3.1 The Inquest continues into its second month and moved on to examine the events at Edgware Road. Two BTP officers gave live evidence on 22 November. The inquest will move onto the events of Russell Square in December where it is expected that 15 BTP officers will give evidence. Russell Square is a key scene for BTP and accounts for our largest proportion of witnesses. Early indications are that there will be intense scrutiny on the response of the emergency services. Operation Pendulum continues to support BTP officers at Court and will supply the Coroner with all requested information and evidence during the course of the inquest.

3.2 The Inquest will be allowed to listen to classified evidence from the Security Service after the Home Secretary lost a legal bid to have it heard in secret. Earlier this month, Lady Justice Hallett rejected pleas to exclude the victims' relatives from hearings relating to MI5's knowledge of the

bombers before the attacks. Two High Court judges have now upheld that ruling. The Government must now decide whether to appeal to the new Supreme Court or to exercise its powers to hold a public enquiry into any intelligence failings. The Coroner has intimated that should a Public Enquiry be commenced then the inquest will be adjourned.

4. COUNTER TERRORISM

4.1 The threat level to the UK remains unchanged. The threat from international terrorism is Severe (an attack is highly likely) and the threat from Irish Republican terrorism is Substantial (an attack is a strong possibility).

4.2 International events reported in the media suggest there is concern throughout Europe and the USA in relation to the possibility of attacks by Al Qaeda inspired groups. The opportunity of the Christmas period sees large numbers of additional passengers in shopping venues and city centres. This period has traditionally seen an increase in activity by Irish terrorists. The holiday period also presents an attractive target to other terrorist groups.

4.3 BTP is engaged with other police forces, Transec and the rail industry in a range of exercises and contingency planning activity.

5. CABLE OFFENCES

5.1 Cable Crime North Eastern Area

One of the key challenges in the North Eastern Area in terms of cable theft is the number of locations that offences are taking place. For example, during a two week period the Area recorded 24 offences at 21 separate locations. The North Eastern Area has identified, in conjunction with Network Rail, five hot spot areas in which they can concentrate resources. These hot spot locations are being targeted through dedicated operations and multi agency work with partner organisations and Home Office forces.

Operations are conducted to target scrap metal dealers and are used to gather intelligence relating to offenders and identify outlets for stolen metal to be disposed of. Covert observations on suspected organised crime groups and the tasking of Covert Human Intelligence Sources are also being employed to reduce the level of offending. One successful tactic used in residential areas is for the Neighbourhood Policing Teams to leaflet drop in the area the day after an offence has been committed.

During November officers from the North Eastern Area have arrested 27 people for cable theft which includes two people responsible for theft of cable on the East Coast Main Line. An illegal scrap metal dealer was arrested for theft and Proceeds of Crime offences following a joint operation between BTP and Cleveland Police. This is an ongoing operation with further arrests anticipated.

5.2 Operation Ablett

On 22 October 110 BTP officers took part in Operation Ablett which targeted cable and metal theft through coordinated arrests and visits to 43 scrap metal dealers. Officers made 8 arrests on the day of the operation relating to investigations in the Reading, North London, Northampton and Essex areas.

Approximately 17 tonnes of stolen metal was recovered from scrap metal dealers visited across London, Essex, Thames Valley, Coventry and Corby. Cable from London Underground, London

Transport, Network Rail, British Telecom and EDF was seized. Nine written warnings were handed out, and two complete sets of dealers' books were seized.

The Deputy Chief Constable conducted a number of live television interviews regarding cable theft on BBC Breakfast on Monday 25 October and BTP received extensive exposure following the successful operation.

6. CUMBRIA AND NORTHUMBRIA DEBRIEF

6.1 The Chief Constable in his capacity as Chair of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Communications Advisory Group held debriefs with Sue Sim, Chief Constable of Northumbria and Craig Mackey, Chief Constable of Cumbria. The first debrief which was attended by representatives from ACPO focused on the media handling of the Raoul Moat and Derrick Bird incidents in June and July 2010. The incidents which were fundamentally different placed significant pressure on both forces and communities in terms of media scrutiny with twenty four hour a day coverage. The debriefing gave an opportunity to talk about lessons learned from the incidents and highlight practices that could be shared with other forces.

6.2 The second debrief was attended by Jon Clements from the Daily Mirror, Adam Fresco, Crime Correspondent from The Times and Ed Campbell, Senior News Editor from ITN News. The meeting allowed both sides to discuss what went well and what could be improved in terms of media at major incidents. Both incidents highlighted the sheer scale of media attendance at major incidents and how this impacted on local communities and the pressures placed on senior officers in the spotlight. The Chief Constable focused on the key issues at both incidents and identified a comprehensive list of observations for forces and the media to adopt at future incidents.

7. FOOTBALL AND ENGLISH DEFENCE LEAGUE

7.1 Football

At the current point of the season there have been 23 serious incidents, including assaults, serious disturbances, and offences of a sexual nature. At this time there have been 240 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 drunk and disorderly, public order offences and bye law offences.

Currently the number of football related arrests stands at 256 with the top three offending teams being Aston Villa, Millwall and Leeds United. 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 them. 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.

In the Wales and Western Area, 20 arrests resulted from a post incident investigation after one serious disturbance during a pre season fixture. This highlights the proactive approach to tackling football disorder and the offenders linked to this behaviour.

7.2 **English Defence League**

Since April 2010 there have been 11 English Defence League (EDL) demonstrations around the country. The trend surrounding most of these events is that disorder takes place at the event itself with minor incidents impacting on the rail network taking place post event. In a majority of cases persons attending EDL events are compliant with BTP tactics although Police Support Units have been deployed at the majority of the demonstrations.

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). Although at Bradford disorder took place at the front of Forster Square Station between opposing EDL and local Asian youths.

Officers from BTP have been requested by the local Home Office forces to support their operations at EDL demonstrations and this is likely to continue.

8. MEETINGS AND EVENTS

8.1 **Home Office Force Visits**

On 8 November 2010 the Chief Constable visited Peter Fahy, Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police and discussed the relationship between both forces and how they could enhance future partnership working.

On 23 November 2010 the Chief Constable visited Eton Dorney where he received a presentation from Thames Valley Police (TVP) on the Olympic Rowing events. The Chief Constable attended in his capacity as ACPO lead for the Olympic Control Room Infrastructure project. He then met with TVP Chief Constable Sara Thornton and her ACPO team to discuss partnership working, the Olympics and media relationships.

8.2 **Chief Constable's Seminars**

The Chief Constable conducted eight seminars across the country at Glasgow, Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham and London which were attended by BTP officers, PCSOs and police staff. A senior member of the rail industry gave a presentation at each event, covering the challenges facing their organisation and reiterating their expectations of BTP. The Chief Constable updated attendees on current performance, the challenges ahead, both financial and operational, and his vision for the Force.

8.3 **Stakeholder meetings**

The Chief Constable continues to meet with train operating companies and over the past month has met a number of BTP stakeholders. On 7 November 2010 he had an introductory meeting with Tim Figures the Acting Director of TRANSEC during which they discussed CCTV on the network, the counter terrorism threat and overall security on the railway.

On 15 November 2010 the Chief Constable met Steve Montgomery, Managing Director of First ScotRail in Glasgow who outlined how satisfied he was with the service provided by BTP.

The Chief Constable met with Peter Hendy, Transport Commissioner and Mike Brown, Managing Director of London Underground on 23 November where they discussed security on the underground, financial and operational pressures facing both organisations.

9. OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW

9.1 Pickpocket Jailed For Money Laundering

A pickpocket was jailed for 18 months for sending over £12,000 to Bulgaria following a successful BTP investigation. The suspect was sentenced at Blackfriars Crown Court on 22 October after being found guilty of money laundering. An investigation into the suspect began when BTP received information about her possible involvement in criminal activity. Investigation into documents received from a newsagent that the suspect had been using to transfer money showed that she had sent a total of £12,160 to Bulgaria between May and December 2009. The suspect was unable to provide a legitimate explanation as to how she had been able to send such a large amount of money to Bulgaria over a seven month period. She had a previous conviction for pick pocketing on the London Underground in 2007 and two other similar convictions in the Czech Republic in 2003 and 2004, from where she was deported. She was also known to associate with other pickpockets and this evidence satisfied the jury that the money was criminal property. Summing up, Recorder J. J. Baughan said: "You were part of a highly organised gang of Bulgarian pickpockets and this country will not tolerate your actions."

9.2 New Years Day Attack

On 22 October Isleworth Crown Court heard how three men were travelling home by tube following New Year's celebrations when after pestering a number of passengers they attacked two victims. The attack was described by witnesses as relentless and frenzied and at one point as animalistic. The punching and kicking continued until the train arrived at Ruislip Manor station where the suspects got off. One of the suspects was arrested after being spotted at a petrol station by a police officer who had viewed the CCTV footage following the attack. The Judge said the offences were so serious only a custodial sentence could be justified. One of the offenders was sentenced to a young offender institution for two years and four months and the second was jailed for 19 months. The third offender missed court because he is on a life support machine following a road traffic collision.

9.3 Sexual Assault

On 12 August 2010 a female was sexually assaulted on a service between Shrewsbury and Aberystwyth. The female passenger was traveling on her own when she was approached by the suspect who engaged her in conversation during the journey. He continually pestered the victim with his behaviour becoming more sexually motivated and disturbing as the journey progressed. The offender attempted to touch the victim throughout the journey. The victim was eventually able to escape and make her way to the guard who alerted BTP. Unfortunately the suspect left the train prior to police arrival. The offender of no fixed abode was identified from CCTV on the Arriva Wales service. Following a media appeal he was located and arrested for sexual assault. On 9 November 2010 at Welshpool Magistrates Court, he was sentenced to five weeks imprisonment and ordered to sign on the sexual offenders register for seven years.

9.4 Operation Demolition

On 13 February 2010 two groups of men travelled on a Transpennine Express service from Manchester bound for Sheffield. One of the groups consisted of two brothers from Manchester while the other was made up of nine men from Sheffield. As the conductor was checking tickets the two men from Manchester became abusive and threatened him which resulted in a female passenger challenging their behaviour. The female and her friend were also subject to threats from the two men and the situation escalated as other passengers became involved in an attempt to calm the situation down. A large scale fight broke out which resulted in passengers being punched, kicked, head butted and stamped on. The disorder was captured on CCTV and clearly showed the nine men from Sheffield enter the carriage and join in the fight. One of the men from Sheffield was so seriously attacked he was left unconscious for eight minutes on the

floor of the carriage. All the offenders were arrested following a BTP investigation resulting in seven being charged with Affray. The men from Sheffield were fined £500 and £200 costs each. The two brothers were given a six month and eight month suspended prison sentence, suspended for 18 months. They were also ordered to carry out 180 hours community service as they were in breach of a suspended sentence

9.5 **Croydon Tram Accident**

On 15 November 2010 a seven year old boy was seriously injured on his way to school after being struck by a tram at Fieldway Tram station in New Addington, Croydon. At just after 8.00am the boy broke free from his mother's grasp to recover his lunch box which he had dropped on the tracks. Unfortunately he ran into the path of an oncoming tram was dragged underneath the tram for approximately 25 feet and received significant trauma injuries to both of his lower legs.

9.6 **Oxshott Train Crash**

On 10 November 2010 a 25 tonne cement lorry left the road on a railway bridge and landed on top of a train near to Oxshott station, Surrey. BTP led a multi agency response with Surrey emergency services. The driver of the cement lorry was trapped in the wreckage of his vehicle and there were several serious injuries on the train.

Six casualties were taken to hospital, including the driver of the vehicle. Three had superficial injuries and were released that night. One male had glass injuries to his face and was transferred to St George's Hospital before being released the next day. A male, who was in the carriage that the mixer initially landed upon, was seriously injured suffering vertebrae injuries.

A joint criminal investigation was put in place which ultimately fell to Surrey Police supported by BTP as road traffic was the principle offence under investigation. By 12.30pm on 22 November BTP had completed their work at the scene and handed back the railway to Network Rail to recover the line and service. The investigation by Surrey Police into driving offences potentially committed by the cement lorry driver is continuing with BTP continuing to investigate any railway related offending.

9.7 **Protests at Ravenstruther Coal Depot**

On 10 November 2010 at the Scottish Coal Depot in Ravenstruther, Lanarkshire, a group who aligned themselves to Climate Change illegally entered the depot. The protestors chained themselves to the gate at the entrance to the depot and some protestors made their way onto the Coal Hoppers and roof of the main building. BTP officers were dispatched to the scene and with the support of officers from Strathclyde Police the protesters were removed and arrested. There was no disruption to running services and CCTV was seized from the site to support the investigation. BTP officers obtained statements and four persons were charged with Breach of the Peace and Section 68 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. The offenders were remanded in custody and held overnight for court. It is anticipated the case will be heard in Procurator Fiscal in the New Year. This is the third time that protestors have targeted this depot resulting in disruption with an estimated cost of over £225k. BTP, Strathclyde Police, Scottish Ambulance Service and Scottish Coal all worked together to bring the protest to a speedy and safe conclusion.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That Members note the contents of this paper.