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Mail Online

Pictured on her first day at work: WPC who tripped on 999 call is now suing her own force for a prang in her Panda car

- **WPC Kelly Jones's police car skidded off the road as it pursued another vehicle and she is now suing her police force**
- **Panda car ended up on its side and was written off following the accident**
- **She faced an extraordinary backlash after it emerged she was suing a petrol station owner who called 999**
- **Divorced mother-of-two has been off work on full basic pay while she recovers from that accident and tripping on a kerb**

By [Arthur Martin](#)

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She caused outrage for suing a burglary victim after falling over a kerb during a 999 call.

Now PC Kelly Jones has done it again by demanding compensation from her own force over a car crash.

The constable was in a police car which skidded off the road and ended on its side during a chase in January last year.



Proud: WPC Jones with her father Danny Harle on her first day as a police officer

PC Jones put in a compensation claim to Norfolk Constabulary, which would not discuss details. Her lawyers said she injured her knee and her employers accepted liability.

Seven months after this claim she instructed the firm to sue Norfolk petrol station owner Steve Jones.

The divorced mother of two fell on a kerb while helping him look for burglars at the garage in August last year, hurting her left leg and right wrist.

After her astonishing claim became public, her own Chief Constable, Phil Gormley, criticised it as 'surprising and disappointing'.

PC Jones is pursuing both claims. Her lawyers, Pattinson Brewer, said: 'Kelly believes she has the right to go to work and not be harmed by someone else's negligence.'



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Crash: A Norfolk Police patrol car like the one which was involved in a crash while WPC Kelly Jones, 33, was inside



© Keith Waldegrave

Accident scene: The petrol station in Thetford, Norfolk, where WPC Kelly Jones tripped on the kerb while responding to a 999 call and is now suing the owner



How the MoS broke the story: The Mail on Sunday led the way on this issue a week ago with its front-page exclusive on WPC Jones, pictured right, which provoked a

huge amount of controversy and intense public debate. More than 1,500 readers posted comments on the MailOnline, nearly all of them scathing about her decision to sue the garage owner.

The news comes two days after the Mail revealed that PC Richard Seymour is suing a Surrey burglary victim for £10,000 after allegedly tearing his Achilles tendon falling into a drain.

The Police Federation is backing PC Jones's action against Mr Jones, who is not related to the officer. It says she wants to claw back 'lost earnings'.

But it is understood she has lost only overtime and night shift pay as she was on a full salary while recovering from both incidents.

PC Jones is on sick leave but is due back on active duty soon.

More than 8,000 police officers have claimed £67million compensation in the past four years, figures show.

The Police Federation data led to calls for a review of the system.

÷ Further examples of the out of control compensation culture emerged yesterday - this time in the fire service.

In East Sussex, a fireman who hurt his hand on a locker won £250,000.

Another won a payout after he was injured avoiding a runaway cow, and a third was compensated after catching his fingers in a vacuum cleaner.

WPC'S £400,000 FOR HURTING HER BACK

Police have sought huge sums for controversial claims. Among them are:

- PC Fiona Clark sued for £400,000. She hurt her back lifting boxes of stationery.
- Detective Inspector Brian Baker won a £7,000 payout after he claimed exposure to cannabis fumes made him snore and caused problems in his marriage.
- PC Louise McGarva sued for £500,000 after claiming she developed a fear of sirens following a riot-training exercise.
- PC John Franklin won £108,000. He was injured by handcuffs on a safety course.
- PC George Smillie was awarded an estimated £10,000 after he hurt his knee playing football on a training course.
- PC Lesley O'Shea sued for £200,000 after slipping on a banana skin.

Pain and a damaged ego are part of the job - if you can't take a joke, you shouldn't have joined

COMMENT by **BRIAN PADDICK** *Former Deputy Met Assistant Commissioner*



Analysis: Brian Paddick, Former Deputy Met Assistant Commissioner

The news that a police officer is suing someone who called for help will be met with astonishment among members of the public and incredulity among many of her fellow officers, particularly those of my vintage.

An increasing number of people are reluctant to call for assistance because they do not believe the police will be able to do anything. Now they could also be concerned that the officers might end up suing them. How did we get to this desperate state of affairs?

In the mid-Seventies when I started out on my police career, if you stumbled over a step or uneven paving slab, colleagues would say, 'Enjoy your trip? Send us a postcard next time!' There was no question of suing anyone, even if sometimes there may have been good reason.

After the 1976 Notting Hill Carnival riot, we began public order training. Our riot helmets were reinforced cork and plastic and we used real bricks in training.

Inevitably a colleague got a brick square on the badge on the front of his helmet and the pin holding it in place went straight into his forehead, blood streaming down his face. To complain would have been seen as being a sissy, to sue unthinkable. But the officer was allowed as much time to recuperate, on full pay, as he wanted. The helmets were soon replaced with proper Nato-style crash helmets and wooden blocks replaced the lumps of brick.

A sign that things were changing came a decade later, when I responded to an ambulance crew's call for assistance. I ended up rolling around on the pavement with the drunken man who had attacked them. When he had sobered up, he made a formal complaint and an investigation was launched. In interview, I was asked whether I had suffered any injury during the fight, to which I replied: 'Not really, just a few scratches and grazes to my hands.' The final report found I had not acted unreasonably, but I received a formal disciplinary finding against me for not recording the scrapes as an injury on duty.

In those days, police officers who performed acts of bravery were praised by their bosses without hesitation.

But in 2003 a serving and former Met Commissioner faced trial under the Health And Safety At Work Act after two officers in separate incidents fell through roofs while chasing suspects; one officer sadly died and the other was seriously injured. While the Commissioners were not convicted, the police attitude to

acts of bravery changed. Among other things, officers were told that they must not climb over a certain height, even if chasing a criminal or trying to save a life.

I remember in 2005 attending a Commissioner's Commendation ceremony at New Scotland Yard. As a video shot from a police helicopter showed officers chasing suspects across steeply sloping rooftops, the senior officers in the audience sat ashen-faced, petrified that someone would report them to the Health and Safety Executive.

Police officers have got to realise that policing is a potentially dangerous business. Part of the thrill of being an operational officer is never knowing what is around the next corner or what challenge is going to face you.

Officers are protected by the courts, often being awarded damages against those who assault them as part of the criminal sanction passed by the judge.

The bottom line is, police officers are protected financially from the kind of injury that the officer who tripped up the step at the filling station claims to be suffering from. Nothing should get in the way of victims calling the police. Pain and a damaged ego are part of the job and, as we used to say: 'If you can't take a joke, you shouldn't have joined.'

Officer with a fear of sirens – and £20m bill for 'injury' payouts

POLICE officers are receiving about £20million a year in personal injury claims.

Much of the money is taxpayer-funded and covers slips, trips and animal attacks.

Officers are encouraged to make claims by a hotline run by the Police Federation, and in some cases sue private individuals.

Despite the vast size of the compensation bill footed by the taxpayer, no Whitehall department appears to keep track of the cost. What little information that has emerged has come mainly as a result of Freedom of Information requests to individual forces.

Figures obtained last year under FOI laws showed that the highest single payout was made by Hertfordshire Police, who paid £550,000 to a civilian employee who slipped on ice in a car park and broke an elbow.

West Midlands Police gave more than £120,000 to an individual who suffered a 'bruise', but the force refused to disclose any more details.

High-profile cases in recent years include:

£500,000

Because riot-training exercise scared me



WPC Louise McGarva sued for £500,000 – after claiming she developed a fear of sirens following a riot-training exercise.



She was awarded an undisclosed sum in compensation.

Miss McGarva, an officer for 11 years, retired on health grounds in 2009.

She claimed she suffered post-traumatic stress disorder after the simulated disturbance got out of control.

The two sides reached an out-of-court settlement with no admission of liability by Lothian and Borders Police.

£200,000

Because I slipped on a banana skin



WPC Leslie O'Shea claimed £200,000 after slipping on a banana skin at a police station in Kensington, West London. She fell down ten steps, injuring her back, and had to retire two years later. Ms O'Shea sued the then Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir John Stevens, for negligence and loss of earnings. She was offered £59,000 by Scotland Yard but is believed to have turned it down. It is not known how much she eventually received.

£108,000

Because my handcuffs hurt me in training



PC John Franklin was awarded damages of £108,000 after being hurt by handcuffs on a safety training course.

He sued Grampian Police for compensation for physical injury and subsequent depression. Mr Franklin, right, said the handcuffs caused extreme pain and left red weals on his wrists. He retired because of ill health after 23 years' service.



£10,000

Because I hurt my knee in a police football match



PC George Smillie was awarded an estimated £10,000 after he hurt his knee while playing football on a police training course.

Mr Smillie took legal action against the Lothian and Borders force, maintaining that the game had been a compulsory part of the course and the injury had therefore been sustained in the line of duty. He claimed the injury eventually forced him to retire early.

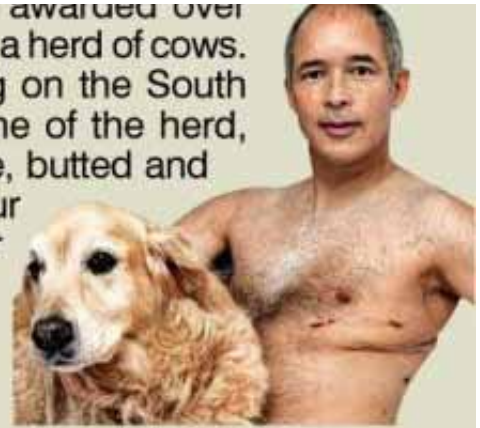
£10,000

Because I was butted by a herd of cows

INSPECTOR Chris Poole was awarded over



INSPECTOR CHRIS POOLE was awarded over £10,000 after being attacked by a herd of cows. Mr Poole was walking his dog on the South Downs near Lewes when some of the herd, agitated by the dog's presence, butted and trampled the officer, breaking four ribs and puncturing his lung. Mr Poole, who was unable to work for five months, sued the landowner, saying not enough had been done to protect walkers.



£7,000

Because exposure to cannabis made me snore



DETECTIVE Inspector Brian Baker won a £7,000 payout after exposure to cannabis fumes made him snore, causing problems in his marriage.

Mr Baker breathed in dust from skunk cannabis during an investigation into theft at a police storeroom. He spent four days in a walk-in safe in the basement of a police station in Byker, Newcastle. Nasal problems resulted, bringing with them 'marital disharmony'. Mr Baker said there should have been an assessment of the risks to his health.

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I'm being sued for £40,000 because I left my wheelie bin in the alleyway! So did the neighbour but I think he didn't disclose that information to his insurer (yet)! I will once I find out who his insurer is! This compensation culture is getting crazy. Lets keep US claims culture on the other side of the pond please.

- [Lee Adams](#) , London, United Kingdom, 08/4/2013 12:01

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Claims like Chris Poole's are needed to teach farmers/cattle owners that their animals are dangerous and the owners do not universal land rights. As for WPC Jones, it would be impossible for any damage to parts of her body inside the buffer zone round her hips.

- [jelyfish](#) , Plymouth, 08/4/2013 11:56

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Mwe thinks she has earned her P45 Cheers

- [Fatbaldi](#) , Market Harborough, 08/4/2013 11:49

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what a joke the police force is becoming... backed all the way by the union!

- [The Cad](#) , Birmingham UK, United Kingdom, 08/4/2013 11:12

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I HAVE JUST ASKED MY LOCAL POLICE FARCE TO SUPPLY ME WITH A RISK ASSESSMENT FORM. THEY HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED MY ENQUIRY & INFORMED ME I WILL HEAR BACK FROM THEM IN THE NEXT 20 DAYS?? Lets hope I don't need to call them out while waiting for form??

- [Rugrat the fitter](#) , Stowmarket, 08/4/2013 10:52

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How about some figures of Firefighters, Paramedics, NHS and other public sector workers' claims for compensation DM? What's that? Thought not, just keep picking on the easy target that is the police.

- [Madrykat](#) , Sunderland, 08/4/2013 10:44

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at the end of the day we have to blame the greedy lawyers and judges, they have warped and twisted the law and commonsense to fill their bottom;less pockets

- [brian_r](#) , great bookham, 08/4/2013 10:33

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I'm a nurse - on my feet 13 hours a shift, and lifting and turning obese patients all the time. Does this mean I get to sue my employer or the patients for my wrecked feet, knees and back? Nope. And nurses everywhere know exactly what I mean. Complain about these things for even a second and you find yourself floated to hospital-Siberia until you quit.

- [FetchSnoopy](#) , Atlanta GA, United States, 08/4/2013 10:24

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Can't understand why this DM comment site is so badly run. Some comments are shown three or four times, and others not shown at all! It is very rude to ask us to post a comment and then ignore us! Thousands of us are fed up with being treated in this way, and won't bother to waste our time on posting comments in future. We have better things to do with our time. All we ask is that you treat us with a little bit of respect. I have brought this matter up with the DM management, but they haven't even had the common courtesy to even acknowledge my emails. Rudeness rule OK, me thinks.

- [Catrin](#) , Cardiff, United Kingdom, 08/4/2013 10:23

Click to rate .. Rating 6

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Can we now assume that aptitude tests for police recruits will include the ability to step up onto a kerb?

- [percyrugrat](#) , sayville, 08/4/2013 10:19

Click to rate .. Rating 15

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Find this story at www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2305077/WPC-Kelly-Jones-tripped-999-collect-sues-force-prang-panda-car.html

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