

# Driver Training

Standard Operating Procedure

This SOP provides clear direction and procedural instruction to provide a consistency of response in accordance with force policy, however it is recognised that policing is a dynamic profession and the standard response may not be appropriate in every circumstance. In every situation, your decisions and actions should be supported by the National Decision Model and based on the values and ethics of Police Scotland. You may be expected to provide a clear and reasonable rationale for any decision or action which you take.

## Notice:

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## Purpose / Scope

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) supports the following Police Service of Scotland, hereafter referred to as Police Scotland (PS), Policy for Road Policing (RP).

The SOP aims to record the guidelines and operational procedures that require to be adhered to by Officers and Staff when using vehicles owned, leased or hired by Police Scotland.

## Basic Authorisation – Police Officers and Police / SPA Staff

Officers / Staff must hold a DVLA category B licence or equivalent European Economic Area (EEA) licence. Assessment will be carried out by a Police Scotland Driving Instructor. Officers / Staff are not required to complete a medical prior to undertaking a basic driving assessment.

Successful completion provides Officers / Staff with authorisation to drive intermediate performance vehicles (up to 130 Brake Horse Power (BHP)) for enquiries or other routine purposes.

Where Staff are required to drive a minibus, large van, bus or lorry and do not possess the relevant categories, they must first apply to the DVLA to have the provisional category added to their licence – complete DVLA forms D2 & D4. Where Staff are required to complete this training the Force are responsible for any cost incurred.

This assessment does not permit the driver to undertake any aspect of emergency response driving or any stage of a pursuit management. Drivers must at all times comply with the Highway Code.

Police Officers with basic authorisation are not permitted to use emergency equipment to stop vehicles unless they have completed the E-learning package on Moodle. However, should an Officer be presented with circumstances which necessitate the use of emergency equipment, such as a road traffic collision, health and safety responsibilities would dictate a common-sense approach in order to protect the scene. See Collisions and Incidents on the Roads Network SOP and Policing Scotland’s Roads Divisional Guidance.

Basic, Standard Response and Advanced drivers can drive four wheel drive vehicles, which are designed primarily for on road use. Additional training will be required for those officers who require to go off road,  i.e. climbing rough terrain on a hillside or traversing a slope of wet grass, in the form of a 4x4 Off Road Driving Course. To tackle this type of terrain a specialist 4x4 vehicle with selectable high and low range gear boxes would normally be required.

## Standard Response Driving Course (SRDC): Police Officers

Police Officers will be required to successfully complete a SRDC. Special Constables can be authorised to drive police vehicles – attendance on a SRDC may be considered when justified and operationally necessary.

Officers must hold a DVLA category B licence or equivalent EEA licence.

It is the individual Officer’s responsibility to arrange a driver medical through Occupational Health (OH) which must be successfully completed prior to attendance on the SRDC.

A SRDC authorises officers to:

* Drive vehicles up to but not including high performance vehicles (above 200 BHP);
* Patrol operationally and respond safely to incidents requiring the use of legal exemptions but does not does not extend to specialist driving roles such as escort or pursuit driving;
* Use emergency equipment to stop vehicles, attend incidents and the initial stage of a vehicle pursuit (see Vehicle Pursuit SOP).

Subject to driving licence entitlement, availability of suitable vehicle and completion of further training, Officers may also be authorised to drive a Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) 3500-7500kg and a Public Service Vehicle (PSV) with more than eight and up to 16 passenger seats.

An Officer transferring from another police service, irrespective of previous training will be required to undergo at least a High Speed Driving Reassessment.

When driving under emergency response conditions, Officers must ensure adherence to their level of training and not drive in a manner beyond that level.

## Advanced Driving Course (ADC)

Officers must hold a DVLA category B licence or equivalent EEA licence.

It is the individual Officer’s responsibility to arrange a driver medical through Occupational Health (OH) which must be successfully completed prior to attendance on the ADC.

This course is a requirement for Road Policing and Surveillance Officers and is designed to provide candidates with the knowledge and skills to drive police vehicles with a high degree of efficiency in different road, weather and traffic conditions.

The ADC authorises officers to:

* Drive vehicles including high performance vehicles (above 200 BHP);
* Patrol operationally and respond safely to incidents requiring the use of legal exemptions;
* Includes specialist driving roles such as escort.

Officers who successfully complete the Pursuit Management Driving Course will also be authorised, when driving a suitable vehicle, to participate in all phases of pursuit management. Please refer to Vehicle Pursuit SOP for further information.

When driving under emergency response conditions Officers must ensure adherence to their level of training and not drive in a manner beyond that level.

If an Officer fails to successfully complete an ADC, a decision will be made by Leadership Training and Development, Road Policing Training (RPT) and the Officer’s home division as to whether a second course will be offered. Officers may be offered a maximum of two attempts to successfully complete an ADC.

## Statutory Exemptions

Provided for drivers of emergency service vehicles and do not apply unless the driver has satisfactorily completed a training course in high speed driving.

Section 87(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (speeding) and The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016, provide for a statutory exemption from prosecution for emergency services vehicles under certain circumstances:

* Speeding - Provided they have been trained and complying with the limit would hinder the driver at that time. Officers must not drive beyond the limits of their training.
* Red Light - Provided they have been trained and complying with the red light would hinder the driver at that time. Officers should treat the red light as a stop or give way and not proceed through the junction unless the manoeuvre is obvious to other persons present.
* Keep left/right arrows - Officers must not proceed beyond the sign in a manner or at a time as to be likely to endanger any person.

Officers may find themselves considering contravention of other signs and regulations – any such action must be justified, proportionate and necessary. These actions may result in criminal proceedings.

Officers must ensure that no danger is caused to any other person.

## High Speed Driving Reassessment

Officers in a response role or who undertake duties which may require the Officer to respond utilising blue lights and sirens must undertake a re-assessment every five years. Completion of the SRDC and ADC meets initial requirements.

Training is recorded on SCOPE and it is the Officer’s responsibility to liaise with Driver Training for inclusion in a re-assessment course before the expiry of authorisation – High Speed Driving Re-Assessment (Form 140-035) must be completed.

Expiry of authorisation does not preclude Officers from exceeding the speed limit in appropriate circumstances and in accordance with their level of training.

Statutory Exemptions do not apply unless the driver has satisfactorily completed a training course in high speed driving.

## Driving License

Prior to driving any category of Police / SPA vehicle, evidence of a valid licence to drive that category must be produced – SCOPE driving record must be accurate. All personnel will be required to permit their licence to be viewed at any time as required, this will include an annual licence check.

Line managers must carry out a licence check for all Staff authorised to drive Police / SPA vehicles and ensure SCOPE is accurate – follow guidance on the Government website – View or share your driving licence information.

Line managers must report any issues through line management to Professional Standards Department (PSD) by submitting a memo.

## Fitness to Drive

No one is permitted to drive if they have consumed alcohol or are impaired by drugs – this includes Staff contacted for a potential call out. See Substance Misuse SOP.

Responsibility towards the health and safety of Staff extends to an awareness of factors which may require further training or a withdrawal of authorisation.

## Medical Condition

An authorised driver must report any medical condition that may affect their ability to drive to the DVLA and their line manager. There is no requirement to disclose details of the medical condition but consideration must be given to a temporary suspension from driving. The line manager will submit a referral to Optima Health.

Where a member of Staff has a disability or other specific medical condition, then consideration must be given to any reasonable adjustments which can be made to accommodate the needs of that individual and Police Scotland.

## Safety Camera Activation

If an Officer believes they have activated a:

* Safety Camera (fixed/mobile or average speed);
* Bus Lane Camera;
* Traffic Light Camera;

they must immediately advise the Area Control Room who will update any existing command and control incident or create a new incident.

The command and control incident should include:

* Time and date of activation;
* Location;
* Vehicle call sign;
* PSI no of driver and;
* Reference to the incident to which they were attending.

Where activation cannot be notified immediately it must be done at the earliest opportunity and the reason for the delay recorded.

Where activation is as a result of a speed limit being exceeded, the Safety Camera Unit will forward the relevant correspondence to the appropriate division. This is to ensure the detection was in connection with a justifiable policing purpose.

## Driving Offence

PSD must be informed via a line manager if a member of Staff is charged, convicted or issued with a Conditional Offer of Fixed Penalty Notice (COFPN) for a driving offence.

The report must include – date, time and location of the incident. The report must not interfere with the right not to self-incriminate.

Depending on the nature of the offence, it may impact upon driving authorisation – where necessary a Road Traffic Fines – Report of Circumstances (Form 141-017) should be submitted.

## Officers Seconded to Road Policing

Officers seconded to RP for a period of more than four weeks, may be authorised to drive RP vehicles whilst accompanied by an advanced driver but only if they have successfully completed:

* a SRDC prior to applying for a secondment;
* a driver medical prior to driving RP vehicles;
* a RP Driving Assessment conducted by a PS Driving Instructor;
* Road Policing Driving Authorisation (Form 126-048).

### Authorisation

If successful a Standard Response Driver:

* Will be authorised to use emergency equipment to stop vehicles, attend incidents and the initial stage of vehicle pursuits in accordance with the Vehicle Pursuit SOP.
* Will be able to make use of exemptions provided in law in relation to speed limits, red traffic lights and keep left / right arrows. Any Officer making use of legal exemptions must be able to justify their use of such exemptions and must not create a danger to any person.
* Will be accompanied, wherever possible, by a qualified Advanced Driver. However, an authorised Standard Response Driver will be permitted to drive RP vehicles unaccompanied and under response conditions, when this is operationally necessary.
* Must drive in a manner commensurate with their current level of training unless they are accompanied by a Police Driving Instructor.
* Whether accompanied or not, will not undertake pursuit driving beyond the Initial Phase (as per the Vehicle Pursuit SOP).
* Subject to approval by a RP Inspector, may undertake ambulance escorts only after having gained sufficient driving experience and when accompanied by an Advanced Driver.
* Subject to approval by a RP Inspector, may undertake abnormal load escorts unaccompanied only after having gained sufficient experience of escorting abnormal loads.
* Will be provided with a detailed briefing and a Road Policing Driving Authorisation (Form 126-048) by the assessing instructor, which they will be required to sign to acknowledge the content.

This Authorisation will be reviewed after a period of six months.

If unsuccessful, Officers will not be permitted to drive RP vehicles.

The decision to grant authorisation to an Officer will be taken by the RP Inspector and be based on operational needs.

Officers seconded to RP for four weeks or less will not be granted authorisation to drive RP vehicles.

## Officers Transferring to Road Policing

Prospective candidates to Road Policing must successfully complete:

* a SRDC prior to applying for a post;
* a driver medical prior to driving RP vehicles;
* a competency based interview;
* an intermediate driving course;
* an ADC and
* Complete the Diploma in RP.

Officers must sign and adhere to Road Policing Driving Authorisation (Form 126-048).

Authorisation - If successful a Standard Response Driver has the same authorisations as an officer seconded to RP. The authorisation is granted on the understanding that the officer concerned attends an ADC at the earliest opportunity and will be reviewed after a period of six months.

## Motorcycles

### Basic Motorcycle Authorisation

This is the minimum standard required to ride police motorcycles as part of their duties e.g. garage mechanic. The rider must hold a DVLA licence category A or equivalent EEA licence.

This does not allow the rider to patrol and respond to incidents, nor does it allow the use of emergency equipment.

Authorisation is designed to provide the knowledge and skills to ride with a degree of efficiency in different road weather and traffic conditions.

There is no requirement to complete a medical prior to undertaking basic authorisation assessment.

### Standard Motorcycle Course (SMC)

The minimum training for Police Officers. The rider must hold a DVLA licence category A or equivalent EEA licence and as a minimum, must have competed a SRDC and riders medical prior to attending the SMC.

A SMC allows the rider to patrol and respond to incidents, including emergency response but does not allow their use for specialist roles such as security escort or anything other than the initial phase of a pursuit.

Section 87 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 provides – no speed limit shall apply to a vehicle being used for police purposes if it would hinder the use to which that vehicle is being put; and, the driver has passed a course in high speed driving. Any Officer riding out with limits must ensure their actions are justifiable and proportionate in the circumstance.

### Advanced Motorcycle Course (AMC)

This course is only open to Officers only who hold a DVLA licence category A or equivalent EEA licence and have completed a SMC.

Successful completion allows the use of riders in specialist roles such as escorting or to participate in the initial phase of pursuit management.

If an Officer fails the AMC the RP Area Commander will liaise with the Head of Driver Training to review the Officer’s suitability to retain standard motorcycle authorisation – unless there are exceptional circumstances the Officer’s advanced driving authorisation will not be affected.

Officers are permitted a maximum of three attempts to successfully complete an AMC.

## Suspension of Driving Authorisation

If an Officer or Staff member have been involved in an incident which:

* Results in a complaint against the Police;
* Results in a report to a prosecuting authority;
* Results in a collision or;
* Otherwise gives rise to consider that driver’s suitability to drive Police / SPA vehicles;

their line manager must consider limiting, suspending or withdrawing that driver’s authorisation by submitting Request to Suspend Authorisations to Drive Police / Scottish Police Authority Vehicles (Form 126-073).

The Divisional Commander / Head of department will review a suspension at an early stage and may approve, amend or reinstate the driver’s authorisation:

* Suspension of Authority to Drive Police / Scottish Police Authority Vehicles (Form 126-074);
* Reinstatement of Authority to Drive Police / Scottish Police Authority Vehicles (no additional training) (Form 126-075(A));
* Reinstatement of Authority to Drive Police / Scottish Police Authority Vehicles (additional training) (Form 126-075(B)).

Any suspension / re-instatement of driving authorisation must be confirmed in writing to the driver and their SCOPE record updated.

## Key Contacts

For further information please contact Road Policing.

## Compliance record

EqHIRA completion/review date: 01/02/2022

Information Management Compliant: Yes

Health and Safety Compliant: Yes

## Version control table

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| --- | --- | --- |
| 1.00 | Initial Approved Version | 22/04/2013 |
| 2.00 | Section 8.3 added to outline requirements in relation to medical examination | 17/09/2018 |
| 3.00 | Reviewed and reformatted as part of the SOP Review. Due to scale of review and revised content there are no amendments highlighted within the SOP. | 18/02/2022 |