



Meeting	Policing Performance Committee
Date	16 September 2025
Location	Video Conference
Title of Paper	Annual Assurance of Operational use of TASER
Presented By	DCC Jane Connors LVO QPM, Operational Policing
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	Appendix A - Police Scotland STO Taser Use 01 January 2024 - 22 August 2025 Appendix B - Specially Trained Officers Divisional Breakdown Appendix C - Location of Taser Hubs

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to update members on the completion of the extended roll out of Taser and uplift in Specially Trained Officers.

Members are invited to discuss the contents of this paper.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In January 2021, Senior Leadership Board approved a new operating model for Specially Trained Officers (STOs) across Scotland which would see the number of STOs be increased from the then current cadre of around 500 to around 2000 over a 3-year period. This model was presented to the SPA Policing Performance Committee on 01 September 2021 and approved. The uplift was completed in March 2024.

2. FURTHER DETAIL ON THE REPORT TOPIC

2.1 Current STO Cadre

Police Scotland currently has 2031 STOs. A full breakdown of STO numbers per division can be found at APPENDIX A.

Due to promotions and post moves etc, 650 STOs have withdrawn from the specialism since June 2018.

STOs now deploy from 147 response hubs across Scotland. The location of these hubs can be found at APPENDIX B. One further hub is due to be installed during the financial year 2025/26 in Oakley, Fife.

2.2 STO Deployment Data

From their introduction in June 2018, STOs have deployed at 13210 incidents. This has resulted in 3832 uses (1363 draws, 1947 aimed/laser dot challenge, 78 Arced and 444 discharges of the device). This is an 11.6% discharge rate per use. For clarity purposes, the term 'use' refers to draw, pointed, laser dot challenge, arced and actual discharge.

In total, 35.6% of overall uses are "passive" uses. This is when the device has been drawn as a precaution but never aimed at a subject.

In terms of injuries, 24 injuries have been sustained by subjects as a direct result from 444 Taser discharges. This is a 5.4% injury rate. These injuries involved superficial cuts, grazing and fractures to areas including a rib and two elbows due to unsupported falls.

There have been no Taser discharges which have caused heart failure or other cardiac issues to any person.

2.3 Officer Safety

Since the introduction of STOs, 12 Officers have sustained an injury during a Taser discharge. This is a 2.7% injury rate. This is significantly lower than when other tactical options such as baton/PAVA or physical restraint are used. Taser has a higher effectiveness rate than baton/PAVA.

2.4 Communications and Engagement

To support the uplift and roll out, a local and national Communications and Engagement plan was implemented. Local Policing Commanders engage with scrutiny committees and provide further detail as required around the impact of this model in their local communities. Nationally, engagement and information sessions were delivered with a number of interested parties and advocacy groups resulting in excellent feedback, which has further informed our EqHRIA. The National Taser Unit are available to deliver similar session upon request.

A number of Advocacy groups agreed to take part in a National Taser Advisory Group (NTAG) where they review, advise and provide valuable oversight and interaction with Police Scotland and our use of Taser.

The key function of the Group is to act as a 'critical friend' providing advice on all aspects of Taser use by Police Scotland with regard to its impact across the wider community wellbeing and how any potential impact may be mitigated.

To date, a number of NTAG meetings have taken place which has proved valuable in informing the STO EqHRIA and provided extremely useful feedback to better inform policies, procedures and training.

The National Taser Unit worked alongside People First (Scotland) and Supporting Offenders with Learning Disabilities (SOLD) who provided an input in relation to communication tips when dealing with people with learning disabilities, this learning was used to inform role player briefings during scenario-based training to ensure

they were based on lived experience as opposed to assumptions and stereotypes.

Feedback from Deaf Scotland, People First (Scotland) and Children and Young People's centre for Justice (CYCJ) was recognised and adopted during the uplift programme communication strategy. On the advice of Deaf Scotland, the video published to Police Scotland's intranet page now includes a BSL interpreter and an easy read document created by Disability Equality Scotland in conjunction with the National Taser Unit was developed to ensure inclusive understanding for age, learning disabilities and autism.

2.5 Taser use on persons under 18.

Since the introduction of Taser into Police Scotland in 2018 the device has been used (drawn or pointed) on 200 occasions and discharged on 15 occasions against those under the age of 18 years. It should be noted that although the device has been used 215 times (200 uses and 15 discharges) on persons under 18, 78 (36%) of these uses were draws only, where the device was not pointed.

All 15 discharges were referred to the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner (PIRC). Of these reports, 12 resulted as 'non-investigation' as the use of the device was deemed by PIRC to be appropriate and proportionate.

The remaining 3 discharge referrals (involving one 11-year-old and two 15-year-olds) were fully investigated and deemed proportionate.

Taser use on under 18's accounts for 5.6% of all uses and 3.4% of all discharges. Taser use on persons aged 18+ years' accounts for 94.4% of all uses and 96.6% of all discharges.

Any use of Taser must meet Police Scotland's criteria for the use of force in that it must be proportionate, legal, accountable, absolutely necessary and ethical. Each use is assessed on the particular circumstances of the incident and threat being faced by the officer or public. It would be impossible during a violent and volatile situation where life could be at risk, for officers to distinguish between someone who is, for example, 16 or 18 years of age. It is vital that the threat and risk posed is the primary consideration.

The Taser X2 has been subject of rigorous independent medical testing. It is acknowledged that there is an increased risk to children and persons with a smaller stature and these increased risks are covered within Taser training.

2.6 Ethnicity

The following table demonstrates Taser use by ethnicity.

Ethnicity	Percentage of overall uses	Ethnicity Proportions (Census 2011)
White Scottish / British	90.2%	91.8%
Any other white background	2.5%	4.2%
Asian / Pakistani / Any other Asian background	1.3%	2.7%
African / Any other black background	1.4%	1%
Any other ethnic group	1.2%	0.3%
Not stated / NA	3.4%	N/A

Since its introduction in June 2018, Taser has been shown to be a highly effective tactical option available to officers through data and analytical reports. Allowing officers to deal with dangerous and volatile incidents from a safe distance has reduced the likelihood in both officers and subjects becoming injured. Feedback from Specially Trained Officers highlights increased confidence when dealing with incidents of violence or threats of violence, feeling safer knowing the option is available to them should circumstances allow, in turn ensuring a thriving workforce.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no financial implications with this paper.

4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no personnel implications with this paper.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications.

6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Taser has been successfully deployed across Scotland by STOs since 2018 without reputational implications for Police Scotland.

7. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no social implications.

8. COMMUNITY IMPACT

8.1 The community implications are being addressed through the delivery of communication and engagement plan, engagement sessions and Taser Advisory Group.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EQHRIA) is in place and will be updated on a regular basis to ensure the positions of advocacy groups and the Taser Advisory Group are noted, included and where possible mitigated.

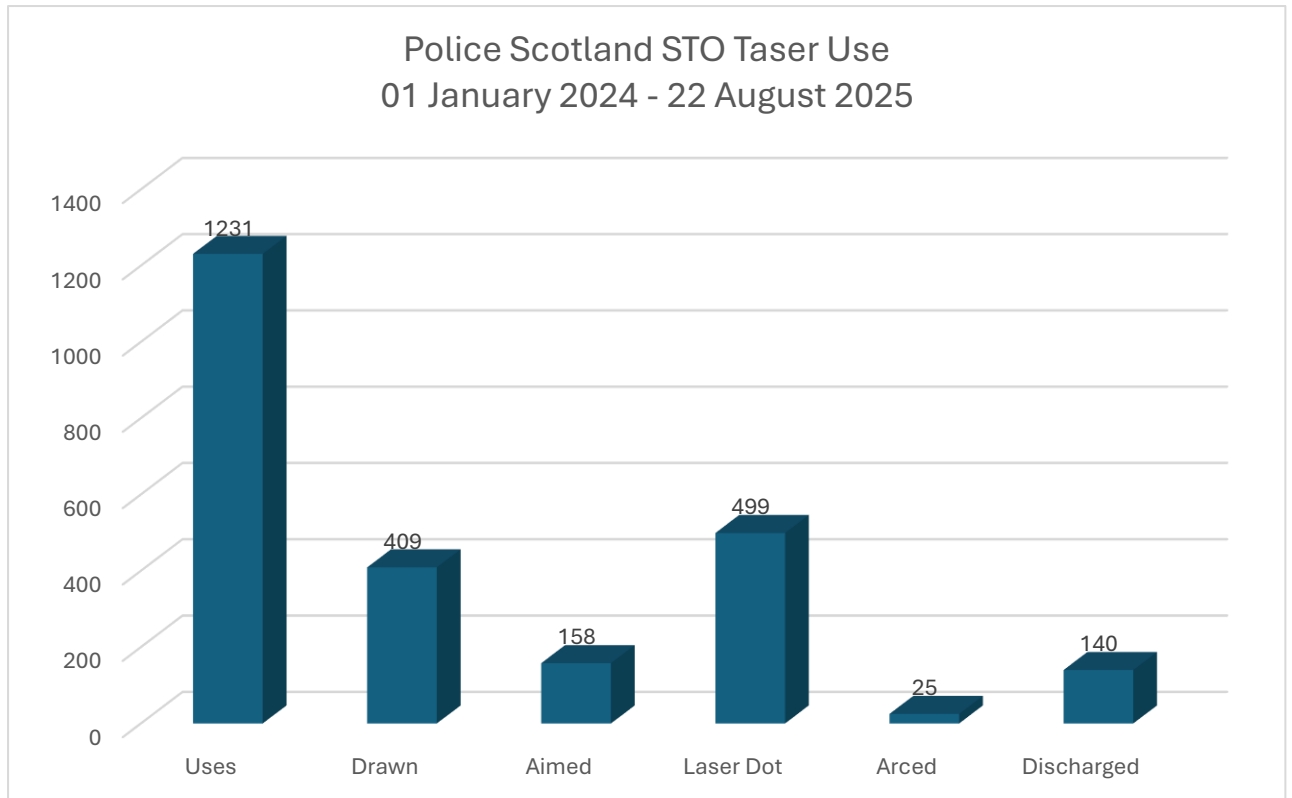
10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no environmental implications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to discuss the contents of this paper.

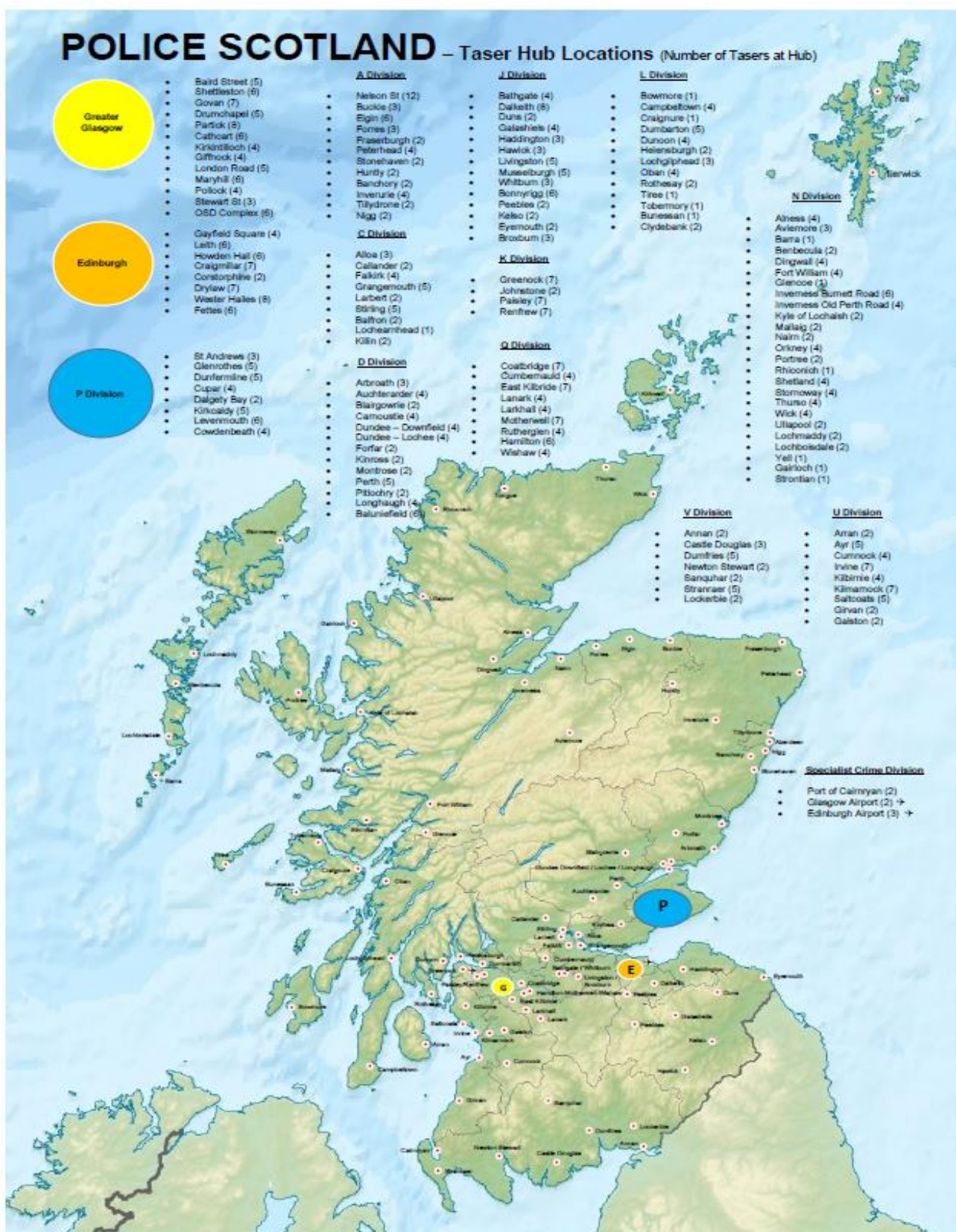
Appendix A - Police Scotland STO Taser Use 01 January 2024 - 22 August 2025



Appendix B – Specially Trained Officers Divisional Breakdown

Division	Number of STOs
A – North East	136
C – Forth Valley	69
Contact Command Control	6
Corporate Services	24
Criminal Justice Services	13
D - Tayside	94
E – Edinburgh City	170
G – Greater Glasgow	307
J – The Lothians and Scottish Borders	173
K – Renfrewshire and Inverclyde	99
L – Argyll and West Dunbartonshire	73
N – Highland and Islands	144
Operational Support	195
P - Fife	85
Q - Lanarkshire	170
Specialist Crime	57
U - Ayrshire	137
V – Dumfries and Galloway	79
Total	2031

Appendix C - Location of Taser Hubs





SCOTTISH POLICE
AUTHORITY
ÙGH DARRAS POILIS NA H-ALBA

Meeting	Policing Performance Committee
Date	16 September 2025
Location	Video Conference
Title of Paper	Annual Assurance of RPAS
Presented By	DCC Jane Connors LVO QPM, Operational Policing
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

This report provides an update on Police Scotland's Air Support Unit use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS).

The paper is presented in line with:

Scottish Police Authority Committee Terms of Reference in relation to Police Scotland use of RPAS (drones).

Members are invited to discuss the contents of this paper.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Police Scotland is committed to keeping our communities safe and having an accessible and agile air support service is an important asset in this endeavour. We are focussed on delivery and developing a sustainable model to support the future operations of our Air Support Unit.
- 1.2 Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) use allows us to be more flexible in our deployment of air support assets, offering a cost effective, low emission, and highly adaptable asset.
- 1.3 RPAS are authorised for use in both urban and rural environments, including areas near large gatherings such as football matches, music festivals, parades, and similar events. They are also capable of operating in the dark. They provide commanders with broader situational approaches and informed decision making. They are also an important tool in supporting others to trace vulnerable people.

All RPAS flights are conducted by two trained officers. The RPAS will always remain within the visual line of sight of the officers and will never be intentionally flown over uninvolved persons. Their capabilities are therefore less than a helicopter, including in terms of possible flying time.

- 1.4 RPAS complements our Police Helicopter and is essential component of Police Scotland's blended air support models.
- 1.5 As aviation technology and legislation continue to evolve, we recognise the importance of keeping pace and developing our service. This is vital to ensuring that we continue to meet the needs of all local policing divisions and the communities we serve.

2 FURTHER INFORMATION

- 2.1 Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPAS) hubs are now fully operational in Dundee, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, providing coverage across all three command areas. Development is being prioritised in the West Hub to provide a more responsive service to local policing. This includes moving primarily from pre-planned operations to responsive model, supported by increased capacity through the training of air observers as RPAS pilots.
- 2.2 In March 2025 a further three officers qualified as RPAS operators bringing total to fourteen.

Police Scotland RPAS Operators		
	Fulltime	Relief
Dundee	2	1
Edinburgh	2	2
Glasgow	2	5
Sub-Total	6	8
TOTAL	14	

3 PROCUREMENT

- 3.1 RPAS have continued to be highly visible in our communities, deploying in support of Local Policing and Specialist officers. RPAS have supported missing person searches, events, image requests, days of action and operations.
- 3.2 This visibility has contributed significantly to local confidence in Police Scotland's use of RPAS technology.
- 3.3 As the figures below show there is a demand for RPAS support across Scotland. Dundee and Edinburgh Hubs are fully operational, providing a reactive and proactive response model for local policing. These hubs have enhanced Air Support availability and responsiveness in East and North Command.
- 3.4 The lower level of deployments in the West reflects that the Glasgow hub, also has responsibility for training and planning.

In Autumn 2025 it is planned that Glasgow will transition to the same model as Dundee and Edinburgh and it is anticipated deployments will increase in West Command.

Operational Flights January – July 2025	
North	218
East	166
West	130
TOTAL	514

4 DEPLOYMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- 4.1 Dedicated RPAS officers have impacted positively on both reactive and proactive policing. Policing Commanders have provided positive feedback and recognise RPAS are versatile tactic that can be utilised in support of incidents and operations. Some examples are provided to demonstrate the real time human impact that RPAS has:

- A Division – Teams deployed to the Aberdeen area to assist in the extensive search for high risk missing persons. They were able to access large search areas using RPAS, mitigating the need to put Officers at risk in difficult areas on the ground.
- D Division - Search for missing 6-year-old child, who was autistic and non-verbal. Child located by RPAS and returned home by local officers.
- N Division – Deployed to Wick to support N Division and Armed Policing following a prolonged incident at a farm property. Police Scotland helicopter was unable to attend due to poor weather, however, RPAS attended and were able to offer a tactical option.
- J Division – Deployed at the Pentland Hills following the discovery of suspected body in a river. RPAS quickly confirmed deceased person and were able to capture images provided to CID, on call Procurator Fiscal and pathologist. The following day at the request of the on-call Procurator Fiscal, RPAS deployed to capture the recovery and subsequent imagery of the locus.
- Q Division – Deployed at the Motherwell v Celtic fixture. Following a report of an assault pre-match, RPAS were able to quickly identify the suspects and monitor their movements, whilst providing updates to officers, resulting in three apprehensions.

5 BENEFITS

- 5.1 RPAS has contributed towards Police Scotland 2030 vision–
- Supporting reductions in overall crime.
 - Responding effectively to threats to public safety.
 - Delivering the best possible service for the public and communities of Scotland.
 - Creating a thriving workforce by investing in training in new technologies to improve policing capability and employee experience.

- Supporting the wellbeing of our Officers.

5.2 Since January 2025 East, North and West Hubs have completed 514 operational flights and flown 149 hours and 05 minutes. This has impacted positively on three different areas: environment, financial and organisational learning.

Combined Flight Hours – Dundee, Edinburgh & Glasgow	
January	15 hours 50 mins
February	11 hours 27 mins
March	22 hours 45 mins
April	21 hours 25 mins
May	23 hours 01 mins
June	20 hours 36 mins
July	34 hours 01 mins
TOTAL	149 hours 05 mins

6 OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY

- 6.1 RPAS improve our ability to search large areas using less resources, decrease the risk faced by officers in difficult environments, provide an overview for crowd safety at events and aerial imagery for evidential use at court.
- 6.2 They are low cost, effective and highly visible asset that can support our existing helicopter capability.
- 6.3 As previously referenced, RPAS are deployed to a variety of policing operations and have been used to support other emergency services and police partners.
- 6.4 RPAS utilise technology which allows live images from the drone to be streamed to Police Scotland mobile devices and control rooms, and police partners.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL

- 7.1 The Air Support Unit blended operating model enables tasking to be assessed utilising THRIVE principles (Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability, Engagement) while also considering other factors such as urgency of request, type of incident, location, and prevailing weather conditions. This structured assessment

ensures the most appropriate aerial asset is deployed to each incident.

- 7.2 The integration of RPAS into operations has significantly reduced demand on the helicopter, contributing to lower carbon footprint associated with rotary operations.

8 ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING

- 8.1 At the May 2025 Road Policing Pursuit Group meeting it was recognised that utilising RPAS as part of pre-planned operations targeting electric bikes (e bikes) represented a significant advancement in reducing operational risk. This capability eliminates the need for high-risk pursuit tactics by road policing vehicles, reducing the risk to the public, officers and rider.

RPAS can observe offenders from a safe distance, enabling a controlled, safe intervention.

9 KEY ISSUES

- 9.1 RPAS continues to report to the Air Support Monitoring Group providing governance and oversight.
- 9.2 Evolving Technology -
RPAS technology is evolving rapidly, often rendering current systems obsolete shortly after purchase. To maintain operational effectiveness Police Scotland must stay at the forefront of these advancements. A review of our technical capabilities has been included in a paper outlining options, it has been recently submitted and is under consideration.
- 9.3 Police Scotland maintain strong partnerships with National police Chiefs Council (NPCC), Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and key partners ensuring access to the latest developments, regulations and best practices.
- 9.4 Equity of Access –

The existing RPAS Hubs provide direct, immediate support to local policing across the central belt and North-East of Scotland. These Hubs have proven effective in enhancing situational awareness, supporting frontline policing, and contributing to officer safety. To ensure access to the North and South of Scotland. This expansion

will ensure all regions benefit from RPAS support, regardless of geography.

10 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no financial implications in this report.

11 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no personnel implications in this report.

12 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no legal implications in this report.

13 REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no reputational implications in this report.

14 SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1 There are no social implications in this report.

15 COMMUNITY IMPACT

15.1 There are no community implications in this report.

16 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

16.1 There are no equality implications in this report.

17 ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

17.1 There are no environmental implications in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to discuss the contents of this paper.



SCOTTISH POLICE
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Meeting	Policing Performance Committee
Date	16 September 2025
Location	Video Conference
Title of Paper	Annual Assurance of Stop & Search
Presented By	DCC Jane Connors LVO QPM, Operational Policing
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to provide a general update on stop and search activity over the period 2024–25.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Stop and search remains a valuable policing tactic that supports the prevention, investigation, and detection of crime, helping to keep people safe. It is one of several tactical options available to officers in carrying out their duties.
- 1.2 Police Scotland recognises that stopping and searching members of the public is a significant intrusion into personal liberty and privacy. As such, the organisation is committed to ensuring that all stop and search activity is carried out lawfully, proportionately, and with full accountability.
- 1.3 As a rights-based organisation, Police Scotland is dedicated to maintaining robust governance and transparency around the use of stop and search. This ensures compliance with the Code of Practice and supports the protection and promotion of human rights.
- 1.4 Officers continue to conduct stop and search in line with Police Scotland's core values of fairness, integrity, respect, and human rights. Officers are fully accountable for their actions, and any decision to conduct a search must be based on reasonable grounds. These grounds may be informed by various factors, including intelligence, information, personal observations, and interactions with members of the public.

2 GOVERNANCE AND ASSURANCE

- 2.1 Since the introduction of the Code of Practice in 2017 and as previously reported to the Scottish Police Authority Policing Performance Committee, the following operating model of governance still applies:
 - **Local Supervision**
Supervisors carry out 100% review of all stop and search records submitted by officers and provide that first tier of assurance, guidance and review to support officers.
 - **Database Quality Checks**
Database Quality Checks of records are carried out by the National Stop Search Unit (NSSU). This process tests the local assurance model and provides confidence levels for the organisation on compliance with business rules and overall compliance with the Code of Practice.

- **Dip Sampling of Records**

Dip sampling of a calculated number of records, combined with the Database Quality Checks (QC) confirm that processes are proportionate and support the view that supervisors understand the application of recording criteria and the QC helps identify records that require amendment.

- **Quality Assurance Processes**

Quality Assurance is undertaken at a local level as part of a wider self-assessment conducted by divisions or at a national level by NSSU if required. (See 4.4)

- 2.2 Stop and search activity is overseen through a range of governance structures led by ACC Sutherland, ensuring transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement. This includes the biannual Stop Search Mainstreaming Group, which provides external scrutiny from stakeholders such as the Scottish Government, the Scottish Institute for Policing Research, and the Scottish Police Authority. A newly formed monthly tactical meeting focuses on reviewing current policies, examining trends, assessing the impact of Body Worn Video, and supporting youth violence prevention initiatives. Additionally, stop and search is reported through the Violence, Disorder and Anti-Social Behaviour (VDASB) meeting structure, including monthly tactical and quarterly Gold Group meetings, aligning the tactic with emerging trends.
- 2.3 The close monitoring of the use of the stop and search tactic through this governance allows for trends or outlying data to be identified early and the underlying reasons explored.
- 2.4 Monthly Assurance Reports are provided to Local Policing Commanders and include detailed age and ethnicity data, enabling further scrutiny of stop and search practices within a localised context. These reports present statistical comparisons across Sub-Division, Divisional, and Force-wide levels, offering a comprehensive view of activity and emerging trends. Additionally interactive Power BI dashboards are available to enhance accessibility and support instant data exploration. These dashboards allow users to filter and analyse search data by various categories, including protected characteristics, search type, location, and outcomes. This interactive approach allows Divisions to closely monitor performance, identify disproportionalities or anomalies, and take informed, data-driven action to address any issues or concerns that arise. Furthermore, the public facing dashboard provides external users with access to

data in a user-friendly format supporting Police Scotland's ongoing commitment to transparency in the use of this tactic.

- 2.5 This governance also considers stop and search compliance with the Code of Practice. Compliance rates measure adherence to the Code of Practice and for the period April 2024 to March 2025, the compliance rate was 88.1% and once amended for administrative errors was 99% (the remaining 1% accounts for duplicate records or where records have been submitted when not required by the Code of Practice, e.g. custody searches). This measure continues to provide confidence that officers and supervisors are conversant with the Code of Practice and understand the recording requirements.

3 STOP AND SEARCH ACTIVITY 2024/25

- 3.1 A total of 40,162 stop and searches were carried out between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, which is 21.6% more when compared to the previous year. The overall positive rate was 24.6% which means a prohibited item was taken off Scotland's streets from one in every four stop and searches. The rise in stop and search figures is, in part, likely driven by improved recording and governance. It may also reflect increased officer awareness – supported by training and development– as well as greater confidence in use of the tactic and legislation. This has led to more consistent use and improved reporting.
- 3.2 The NSSU actively engages with local policing divisions to support accurate and compliant recording of stop and search activity in line with the Code of Practice. This includes delivering inputs to probationer officers to instil good understanding on the use of the tactic and recording practices from the outset, providing briefings and guidance to supervisors to ensure consistent oversight, and attending local Senior Management Team (SMT) meetings to offer support.
- 3.3 An additional element of the internal scrutiny of stop and search is the monitoring of Complaints about the Police (CAPs) related to the use of the tactic. Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 a total of 133 allegations were made which included stop and search as part of the complaint. This comprised of 52 allegations concerning officer behaviour, 80 relating to procedure or the Code of Practice, and 1 unspecified. From the Complaints which have been concluded by the Professional Standards Department, 47 were abandoned/withdrawn, 37 were resolved by Front Line Resolution and 19 were not upheld. Whilst no new learning notes or emerging trends were identified from complaints closed between April 2024

and March 2025, we continue to review and scrutinise complaints as part of our commitment to continuous improvement.

4 LOOKING FORWARD

As we move through 2025/26, the internal governance and scrutiny measures previously outlined for the use of stop and search will remain firmly in place.

4.1 Body Worn Video

Police Scotland has begun its roll out of Body Worn Video (BWV) to operational officers which will continue through 2025/26. As part of the implementation of BWV, clear directions and procedural instructions are provided to officers at all levels, from constables to inspectors. These instructions outline how BWV should be used to ensure full transparency in stop and search encounters.

From September 2025 NSSU will integrate BWV dip sampling processes into their daily governance procedures. This process will involve the random selection of samples which will be evaluated to ensure that stop and search procedures are conducted lawfully, proportionately, and with respect to individual rights. Any instances of non-compliance will be flagged for appropriate further action, while good practices will be acknowledged to encourage continuous improvement for stop and search interactions and commitment to upholding public trust.

4.2 Code of Practice Review

The Scottish Government owns Code of Practice, including Annex B, 'Establishing the Gender of Persons for the Purpose of Searching'. The NSSU is actively engaging the Scottish Government as they conduct a full review of the Code, which has been in place since 2017, to ensure alignment with refreshed practices and updated language. The review is already underway, with a series of workshops covering key topics and a Short Life Working Group involving various stakeholders. A draft is expected in early 2026 which will then undergo a public consultation prior to a final publication. Consideration will also be given to refresh guidance and training for officers to support any changes.

On 25 June 2025, following the UK Supreme Court's judgement from 16 April 2025, which clarified the definitions of woman and sex under the Equality Act 2010 refer to biological sex, Police Scotland published interim guidance relevant to searching of transgender

persons and searching by transgender officers and staff. Work continues to support colleagues in the application of the guidance, including scenario-based examples and a frequently asked questions section.

4.3 **Business Assurance Review**

A Business Assurance review of NSSU is ongoing through Audit and Assurance and provides an independent assessment of existing policies and procedures. Phase 1 of the review focused on auditing and quality assurance processes related to stop and search records. This resulted in the Professional Advice Note (PAN), which outlined several opportunities to further strengthen processes.

In August 2025, Phase 2 of the Business Assurance review was completed. This phase concentrated on two key areas, the recording of ethnicity data and the response to Automated Multiple Interaction Reports (AMIR). The identified recommendations and opportunities for improvement are now being reviewed by NSSU for factual accuracy prior to progression within agreed timeline.

The NSSU continually seeks to review and strengthen its approach to recording and reporting of ethnicity data in relation to stop and search. This is critical to upholding transparency, accountability and fairness, and plays a key role in maintaining public trust and confidence.

4.4 **PRONTO Integration**

All operational officers carry a mobile device which provides a range of administrative benefits and replaces the traditional handwritten notebook. NSSU are currently in dialogue with Digital Division to embed this improved IT technology into the recording of stop and search to streamline the process. This development would allow officers to submit a stop and search form directly from their mobile devices whilst deployed within the community and provide the member of the public subject to a search with an electronic printed receipt, which would replace the current handwritten process. The service provider has agreed to develop and provide an interface application to allow both systems to communicate and Digital Division are continuing to progress this.

NSSU continue to explore opportunities for continuous learning and development to promote good practice and consistency across the country. Feedback, guidance and learning will continue to be delivered to both front line officers and management, as required. It

is important to continuously look to improve our application of this valuable tactic.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications in this report.

6 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no personnel implications in this report.

7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no legal implications in this report.

8 REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The use of stop and search powers necessitates robust governance and scrutiny to maintain public trust. Without this, the reputation of Police Scotland could be called into question. Transparent data publication, alongside strong oversight, helps ensure that our practices are both necessary and effective, reinforcing public confidence.

9 SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no social implications in this report.

10 COMMUNITY IMPACT

10.1 There are no community implications in this report.

11 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Police Scotland recognises the sensitivity around the use of the stop and search tactic and closely monitors proportionality amongst age, gender and ethnicity through robust governance measures.

12 ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no environmental implications in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to discuss the contents of this paper.



Meeting	Policing Performance Committee
Date	16 September 2025
Location	Video Conference
Title of Paper	Annual Assurance of Road Policing
Presented By	DCC Jane Connors LVO QPM, Operational Policing
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

To provide an update on the Road Policing Annual Delivery Plan as part of the Annual Assurance of Operational Policing Matters.

Members are invited to discuss the contents of this paper.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The SPA Policing and Performance Committee raised an action for Road Policing to produce an Annual Assurance Report that should be presented to the next meeting on 16 September 2025.

2 FURTHER INFORMATION

- 2.1. The Road Policing Annual Delivery Plan has been developed to align with Police Scotland's strategic priorities and Transport Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030.

The National Road Policing Delivery Board drives performance in this respect and uses analytical information to ensure actions are coordinated and effective.

Road Safety	24/25 PYTD	25/26 YTD	% Change	Rolling 12 mth PYTD	Rolling 12 mth YTD	% Change
Number of people killed on our roads	41	43	↑ 4.9%	158	154	↓ -2.5%
Number of people seriously injured on our roads	526	340	↓ -35.4%	1,986	1,701	↓ -14.4%
Number of children killed on our roads	1	0	↓ -100.0%	5	1	↓ -80.0%
Number of children seriously injured on our roads	42	26	↓ -38.1%	182	134	↓ -26.4%

It should be noted that at the time of writing some of the fatalities included in the current figures are being investigated for medical or other causational factors and may be removed from total figures.

Currently, 3 of the 4 Road Safety Framework to 2030 targets are not currently on course to be met. The remainder of this report describes Road Policing's prevention and intervention initiatives to further enhance our contribution to the reductions sought.

Whilst the priority of reducing deaths on Scotland's roads remains the focus for road policing, and partners engaged in road safety interventions, the marked reductions in serious and minor injury road traffic collisions provides a positive out-look and trend.

Recent reviews of how engagement with partners can be more effective has delivered new thematic groups, led by Scottish Government Road Safety personnel and supported by key experts from Police Scotland, RoSPA, Cycling Scotland, Institute of Advanced Motoring (IAM) and Road Safety Scotland. The improved approach to capturing analytical profile recommendations and

empowering agencies to focus on these to implement strategies to deliver improvements.

Current YTD reductions for serious injury RTC's, compared to the previous year is -35% and for reductions for those slightly injured is currently showing at -33%. A welcome reduction in children being seriously injured is also in positive territory with a reduction of 27% (14 fewer children injured)

The reduction of speed limits in most towns and cities to 20mph, effective use of new mobile speed detection units and dedicated national fatal 5 campaigns all provide influence in this arena.

2.2. **Drink/Drug Driving Priority**

Road Policing are responsible for the creation of an annual calendar of road safety activity. This campaign calendar aligns with the National Police Chiefs' Council UK-wide calendar, with additional Scotland-only campaigns. It has been necessary to focus national attention on the increasing number of persons failing roadside drug-wipes through dedicated campaigns.

The Summer Drink & Drug Drive Campaign ran between 30 June and 13 July. It saw an increase in recorded drink and drug driving offences over the equivalent initiative last year, up from 357 to 421.

Overall results from the Summer Drink/Drug Drive Campaign were as follows:

- RP Breath-Tests – 574 with 50 positive tests – 9% positivity
- Local Policing – 201 with 31 positive tests – 15% positivity rate
- Overall: 775 Breath-Tests with 81 positives, which equates to an 11% positivity rate.
- RP Drug-Wipes – 257 with 157 positives – 58% positivity rate.

The increase in detections is in line with national year-to-date growth for drug driving and can be attributed to officers enhancing focus on the priority to reduce killed or seriously injured persons on the roads alongside targeted responses to intelligence packages, ANPR operations and links to road crime through SCD Organised Crime Intelligence contacts.

In line with analysis on increasing detections determined from the summer campaign, a dedicated Police Scotland drug driving operation was carried out from 14 – 18 August 2025.

Media messaging from both internal corporate communications and external partners continue to support the priority with enforcement and educational messaging. This includes increased awareness through lived experience forms part of impact statements from family members who have lost loved ones. This included a recent testimonial from Mr Ian Dominick who lost his son Ross in a motorcycle collision near to Glencoe on 23 July 2023.

Powerful messaging such as this plays a key role in educating road users during dedicated campaigns as to the critical importance of driving safely and always being aware of others on the roads.

The annual Festive Drink and Drug Drive Campaign will commence on 01 December 2025 and be supported by additional officers trained in drug wipes in Orkney, East Ayrshire and the Banff and Buchan region of A Division as part of an incremental expansion of drug-wipes.

2.3. **Drug Wipe Incremental Roll-Out – Operation Seltern**

Since the section 5A Road Traffic Act 1988 legislation was adopted in Scotland in October 2019, Police Scotland has recorded higher than anticipated drug driving detection levels with year-on-year increases in detections and an increasing detection rate amongst road users.

Consequently, the Force Executive has supported a plan to incrementally expand drug wipe training and provision into Local Policing areas, building on a successful model created during a pilot scheme in the Shetland Islands from 01 December 2024.

Operation Seltern has been created to capture the development required across various disciplines to deliver the drug-wipe specialism in an incremental and carefully controlled manner.

The initial incremental expansion has been funded through the provision of **£90,000.00 from the OSD Road Policing budget.**

This funding is intended to cover the training costs, purchasing of drug-wipes and the costs associated with toxicology testing from an out-sourced partner of SPA Forensic Services.

On 07 August 2025, a briefing was delivered to the Forensic Services Committee that presented the incremental expansion plan for all Local Policing areas and the projected forensic toxicology demand and associated cost. Further detailed conversations are ongoing between Police Scotland and SPA to jointly develop these plans

At this stage, the commitment of £90,000.00 from Police Scotland for the initial stage of the plan is the only funding provision in place to support the expansion. Any further developments in this area will require to be delivered as part of a sustainable financial model, and partnership discussions are ongoing in this regard.

The SPA Forensic Services, Long-Term Sustainable Model (LTSM) for Criminal Toxicology business case is the programme for laboratory expansion authorised under the option of “Invest to automate” and is underway to meet the demand which will be presented in future years.

The focus on drug-wipe roll-out was captured on one of the recommendations made in the HMIC(S) review of road policing.

2.4. **Safety Camera Units (SCUs)**

Safety Camera Units (SCUs) are an important part of our efforts to influence driver behaviour across Scotland. To maximise effectiveness, the Programme Office and Police Scotland are working with external agency Agilysis to review the SCUs, to ensure that we have the right staff in the right places to optimise their road safety contribution.

In the interim, strong progress in performance has been achieved since June in deploying the new fleet of electric enforcement vehicles and operational plans for 2025/26 have been approved.

2.5. **HMICS Recommendations and Areas for Development - Governance**

On 04 February 2025 the Force Change Board decided that the 13 recommendations and 13 areas for development should be progressed as part of a holistic review of Police Scotland’s approach to keeping people safe on the roads. Work is ongoing to implement the recommendations, and this is a key focus for road policing and Police Scotland.

A Governance Board for Road Policing, overseeing the response to the recommendations has been established and meets monthly to assess progress towards each recommendation and area for development. The Governance Board incorporates an improvement plan for which actions are delegated to appropriate departmental leads. This entire process is led by the ACC Operational Support and is monitored by observers from the Scottish Police Authority and HMIC(S) are invited to attend.

On 25 August 2025, the Governance Board met and discussed the draft Road Policing Improvement Plan 2025 and reviewed the progress of all 13 recommendations which are being recorded and tracked on a master action log. For reference an overview of role of the HMICS Governance and Assurance board alongside the status of each recommendation is included at Appendix 1.

A further progress update will be provided to the board in 6 months' time.

The work being progressed in relation to the recommendations is a fundamental and focus of informing and addressing the broader but complementary commitment, within our 3-year business plan, to identify and implement a sustainable model of policing Scotland's roads.

2.6. Road Policing – National Good Work

Operation Portaledge - Criminal Network Disruption & Seizures

Road policing officers have played an active and critical role in the success of Operation Portaledge, and intelligence led vehicle stops. Working closely with OCCTU officers, road policing has been involved in significant disruption of OCG assets, seizing hundreds of thousand pounds worth of cash through POCA, controlled drugs in supply quantities and counterfeit items. Using specialist pursuit training, tactics and equipment, road policing officers have been involved in numerous vehicle stops and subsequent arrests of nominals and during which time they have recovered:

- £540,000 drug recoveries (Cocaine, Cannabis and various other drugs)
- £23,000 Cash
- 9 x stolen vehicles (Value in excess of £250K)

Operation Scaldis

Close and effective collaboration with the Motor Insurance Bureau (MIB) has created an enforcement model of national joint operations with RP in relation to pursuing action against uninsured drivers. Local Policing officers have also contributed to scaling up operations in communities where MIB and Operation Tutelage in intelligence and information has highlighted increased rates of uninsured drivers. Significant detections have been acquired across the country.

NPCC – Operation Spotlight – 01 to 31 July 2025

This RP campaign aligned with an NPCC UK-wide campaign over these dates, intended to educate and protect drivers against the Fatal 5 risk taking driving behaviours of speeding, drink & drug driving, using a handheld mobile phone, careless driving and not wearing a seatbelt. During the campaign, Police Scotland officers detected a total of 3609 Fatal 5 offences, with the Safety Camera Unit detecting an additional 8864 speeding offences.

Operation Roll 2 & Operation Oclate

Road Policing committed significant resources to both Operation Roll 2 and Operation Oclate and the performance of all those engaged in management, coordination and operational deployment in patrol areas was referenced in a highly positively way. US Government and Secret Service personnel were impressed by both priority and ancillary escorting arrangements with the National Motorcycle Unit excelling in providing effective “Vipex” escorts to several VIPs.

Abnormal Load – Onshore Renewable Demands

The VRS and Abnormal Load team continue to deliver exceptional work to satisfy abnormal load escort demand. Increased requests for support from national infrastructure Windfarm Projects have led to significant additional flexibility and innovation to ensure customers are satisfied with the provision of policing services. Bespoke Windfarm and Heavy Industry Projects are now being delivered on a regular basis with highly efficient logistical arrangements.

Operation Mitroform

Road Policing Officers have supported Local Policing Operations in relation to large scale theft of cooking oil by Bulgarian nationals throughout the West Command area. Effective targeting and disruption of subjects and vehicles using intelligence packages, has led to the apprehension of key nominals following successful pre-emptive vehicle stops.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. These are included in point 2.3.

4 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. Personnel implications will be monitored and reviewed as the incremental roll out and recommendations are progressed.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1. There are no legal implications in this report.

6 REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1. There are no reputational implications in this report.

7 SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1. There are no social implications in this report.

8 COMMUNITY IMPACT

8.1. There are no community implications in this report.

9 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1. There are no equality implications in this report.

10 ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1. There are no environmental implications in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to discuss the contents of this paper.