

DORSET POLICE & CRIME PANEL – 7 July 2021**ROAD SAFETY UPDATE****REPORT BY THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER****PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

This paper updates members on road safety and casualty reduction activity within Dorset, as well as some of the related opportunities that the PCC will be exploring during his term.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Dorset Road Safe (DRS) is a progressive, innovative and strong partnership organisation, committed to making Dorset's roads safer for all users.
- 1.2 The partners – Dorset Police, Dorset OPCC, BCP Council, Dorset Council, Dorset and Wiltshire Fire Rescue Service, Highways England, Crown Prosecution Service and Public Health Dorset – work together to reduce the number of people injured on Dorset's roads.
- 1.3 DRS is chaired by Assistant Chief Constable, Sam De Reya. The strategic group meets twice a year, and the tactical group meets monthly.
- 1.4 The partnership's work has contributed to a decline in the number of people killed and seriously injured (KSI) on Dorset's roads, from 408 in 2005 to 278 in 2020, a drop of almost 32%. All casualties, i.e. KSIs and slight injuries, have reduced from 3,566 in 2005 to 1,479 in 2020, a drop of 58%.
- 1.5 The continued casualty reduction on Dorset's roads is encouraging, particularly when compared against a lower level of reduction seen nationally, and an increase that is being seen regionally.
- 1.6 In early March 2020, the UK government set out its response to the coronavirus pandemic, including restrictions on travel. With fewer vehicles on the roads, Dorset casualty figures recorded in 2020 were the lowest since records began. In 2021 so far, whilst many government travel restrictions have eased, Dorset's casualty figures are maintaining a level similar to 2020.
- 1.7 Dorset Police and its partners strive to reduce casualties still further. By 2030, DRS aims to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on the county's roads by a further 40% compared to the ten-year 2010-2019 baseline. DRS has a vision of zero KSIs by 2050.

2. STRATEGY

- 2.1 The Dorset Strategic Road Safety Partnership Strategy 2021-2030, can be viewed on their [website](#), and focuses on continuous improvement around tasking, co-ordination and effectiveness of all road safety interventions based on joint analysis of available data and intelligence, using the key themes and principles identified by Government:



Figure 1, DRS key themes and priority user groups

2.2 DRS monitors progress against these six priority focus road user groups through specific annual indicators, compared to the 2010-2019 baselines.

2.3 The DRS Strategy enables it to support its partners and the public, and continue to innovate and initiate road safety interventions, with the aim of further reducing road traffic casualties.

3. **APPROACH**

3.1 The Dorset Road Safe approach to road safety focuses on the four road safety E's: **engagement, education, engineering and enforcement**. These are used together to provide an all-encompassing approach to improve safety, change driver behaviour and in turn aim to reduce the number of road traffic casualties. Initiatives might fall into more than one approach, but an overview is provided below:

3.2 Dorset Road Safe runs a vast range of courses, initiatives and enforcement approaches to deliver the four E's. Some of which are aimed at specific road users which have been identified as particularly vulnerable or show from the trend, to be at high risk of becoming involved in a collision in Dorset. The main courses and initiatives might fall into more than one approach, but are provided below:

Engagement

3.3 **Community Speed Watch (CSW)** – Community Speed Watch is designed to allow volunteers to officially monitor and report to the Police details of speeding vehicles in areas of concern to the Community. The initiative allows members of the community to address speeding issues by becoming actively involved in road safety, using speed detection equipment to monitor speeds from safe locations.

3.4 CSW raises awareness and encourages speed reduction and provides an opportunity for communities to get involved in making the roads safer where they live. Dorset currently has 93 CSW teams working across the county.

- 3.5 **Campaigns** – Dorset Road Safe continue to run campaigns throughout the year, working alongside the NPCC's road safety calendar to highlight road safety and awareness.
- 3.6 Current campaigns include Fatal Four National Seatbelt Operation and the 'Think Bike, Have You Been Seen' which runs from 1 April until 31 October 2021 and uses unique road signs in key locations where many motorcyclists have been injured in Dorset to date. Social media is also utilised by Dorset Road Safe, No Excuse, Op Dragoon and Dorset Police to disseminate road safety awareness and messaging.

Education

- 3.7 **Close Pass (Cycle and Horse)** – Close Pass is a campaign originally from West Midlands Force and adopted by Dorset. Due to the positive educational approach of Close Pass Cycle in Dorset, Close Pass Horse was introduced in reaction to road safety issues being reported by horse riders. The purpose of Close Pass is to educate drivers who drive too close to cyclists and horses. Drivers are also given words of advice around behaviour change. If the offender is driving dangerously, then officers are in place to issue a ticket or report for court.
- 3.8 **BikeSafe** – this is a national, police run motorcycle initiative, aimed at working with motorcycle riders in a relaxed environment to raise awareness of the importance and value of progressing on to accredited post-test training. BikeSafe workshops in Dorset involve an observed ride with a police advanced motorcyclist or approved BikeSafe observer.
- 3.9 **DocBike** – this was initially developed in Dorset and has been rolled out across the country. DocBike is now a registered charity putting a highly trained trauma doctor or critical care paramedic on a motorcycle to engage with drivers and motorcyclists. Working alongside local emergency services across the UK, life-saving critical care is provided whilst helping to prevent crashes from happening in the first place. DocBike gives bikers the ability to avoid being in a crash by sharing research, evidence, tips and tricks, from the most highly trained motorcycling professionals available in the UK. Taught only by emergency services professionals, DocBike teaches bikers how to keep an injured motorcyclist alive until the emergency services arrive, through free BikerDown courses.
- 3.10 **Road Safety Education in Schools** – courses were put on hold in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions, however a webinar was introduced to enable the education to continue. Between February 2020 and June 2021, the DAS Tutors delivered webinars to 24 schools in Dorset providing road safety education to 1,154 students.
- 3.11 **Other courses and initiatives** – this includes, but is not limited to: STEPs (Safe Training Education for Pedestrians) which teaches primary school children how to cross the road safely; LifeDrive aimed at recently qualified young drivers; Bike Maintenance courses; the Older Drivers' Forum; and Bikeability, which focuses on cycling proficiency.

Engineering

- 3.12 Engineering (managed by the local authorities) has an important role to play in providing a 'safer' infrastructure for all road users. There are two complementary approaches to this work – accident reduction and accident prevention:
- 3.13 Accident reduction involves measures designed to reduce the number and severity of accidents based on an existing known pattern. This includes accident analysis and remedial engineering measures, and an effective road safety strategy and reduction plan.
- 3.14 Accident prevention relates to the application of measures to prevent accidents taking place in the future. This includes Road Safety and User Audits on all new infrastructure or alterations, and training engineers in up to date accident investigation and prevention.

- 3.15 Local safety schemes can provide excellent value for money in places with existing accident problems. By focusing on sites and areas with poor accident records, road safety engineers concentrate their efforts on places where it is known that people are actually being killed or injured, rather than on perceived risks. Safety engineers usually have an even greater impact on accident reduction by undertaking area-wide safety schemes rather than focusing only on selected individual sites. Research has shown that such schemes are relatively low-cost and can result in a significant reduction in collisions.

Enforcement

- 3.16 **Speed and Red-Light Violation Enforcement** – Speed enforcement is carried out by a combination of static cameras and mobile camera van enforcement. Dorset currently has six operational vans covering in the region of 800 locations, focusing on casualty reduction and community concern (speed complaints). Between January and December 2020, 35,548 drivers were caught speeding and there were 91 red light offences.
- 3.17 **No Excuse** – The No Excuse Team consists of police officers and operate at: areas where the public have expressed concerns; areas of high collision numbers; and areas identified through analysis as being of particular risk. No Excuse education and enforcement efforts are directed at tackling the 'fatal five': drink and drug driving; not wearing a seatbelt; speeding; driver distractions; and careless driving. Between January and December 2020, 197 mobile phone offences were detected; 910 vehicles were seized; 11 ASB vehicles were seized, 669 vehicle defect tickets issued; 642 drink related arrests were made; 63 people were arrested for failing to provide a breath test; and 315 people were arrested for drug related matters.
- 3.18 **Op Dragoon** – It is recognised that some individuals refuse to modify their driving behaviour and fail to foresee the potential consequences of their actions. Op Dragoon targets high risk road users who are most likely to kill on our roads, such as prolific offenders who pose a risk on the road through offences such as drink/drug driving and speeding. Between January and December 2020: 244 were vehicles stopped; 90 vehicles were seized; and 144 targets were arrested for offences.
- 3.19 **Op Snap (Dash Cams)** – this is the police response to submissions of video and photographic dash cam evidence from members of the public in relation to witnessed driving offences. Op Snap investigates road traffic offences such as: dangerous driving; driving without due care and attention; careless driving; using a mobile phone handheld; not wearing a seat belt; contravening a red traffic light; and contravening solid white lines. However, this is not an exhaustive list. Between January and December 2020, Dorset Police received 590 dash cam submissions, 220 were progressed to education/prosecution.
- 3.20 **Driver Awareness Course** – Dorset has been delivering the DAS course since 2005 and is now the only force in the country which has been able to design a bespoke driver education webinar to provide an alternative way to attend a DAS classroom-based course. The online DAS webinar course started in June 2020 and enables people from anywhere in the country to take part in a course from a remote location. Between June 2020 and May 2021, 19,259 attendees have utilised the DAS Webinar option.

4. PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY

- 4.1 As outlined above, Dorset's road safety continues to improve. The two key performance indicators are mapped over time – the number of KSIs (those killed or seriously injured) and the number of those receiving minor or slight injuries as the result of a road accident. The long-term trends for both are shown below:

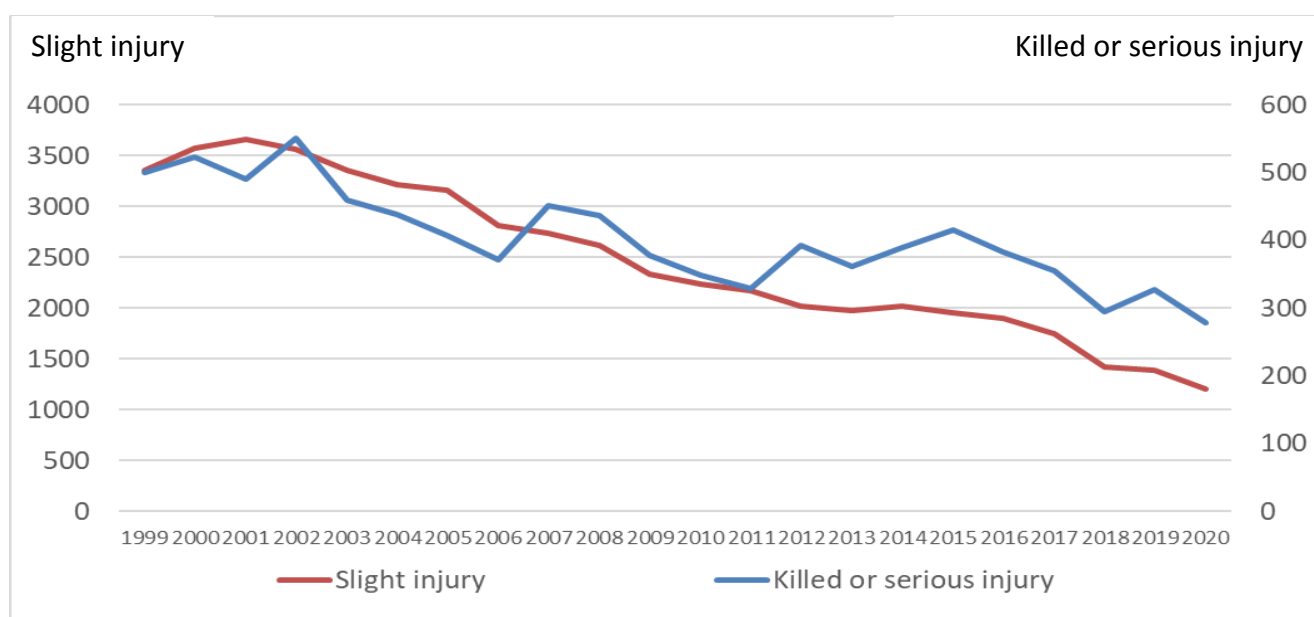


Figure 2, DRS long-term key performance indicators

4.2 The PCC is a member of Dorset Road Safe and is committed to reducing the number of people killed or injured on the roads of Dorset. The PCC and partners meet bi-annually, at the strategic group, to:

- proactively work together in partnership as responsible agencies and key contributors to road safety;
- reduce harm on Dorset's roads;
- seek best practice in education, engagement, engineering and enforcement solutions;
- share and review available intelligence and data to identify issues and inform tasking accordingly;
- prioritise and co-ordinate resources when addressing identified issues;
- continually monitor, assess and evaluate results from tasks and campaigns;
- develop group strategies in response to local requirements and needs to ensure long term goals on road safety can be achieved; and
- use effective communication methods to inform the public of 'road safe' activity.

4.3 The OPCC contributed to the revision of the Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 and supports Dorset Road Safe to maintain a high profile on road safety and develop measures which reduce road traffic casualties at a quick pace. This was done in a way which reflects local and nationally stated priorities, taking into account increasing traffic levels, improved standards for highway design and ever improving vehicle safety and autonomous technology developments.

5. OPPORTUNITIES

5.1 Dorset remains very proactive and innovative within the arena of road safety and continues to adapt and improve existing initiatives and courses to re-educate drivers and make Dorset's roads safer. Continuous analysis of road traffic casualty data is key to understand the changing trends, driver behaviour and changes in driving patterns.

5.2 Dorset currently has the strongest Community Speed Watch group in the South of England. CSW raises awareness of speeding and encourages a change in driver behaviour by speed reduction through communities, with the shared benefit of the members of the public working closely with the police. This not only serves to educate drivers and reduce speeding but

enhances the community aspect of policing. While Dorset is currently in a strong position compared to other areas, this still can be improved further with more CSW teams coming on board, something which the PCC has already advocated.

- 5.3 The roll out of the DAS webinar as an alternative option to classroom-based attendance, has certainly proven its immense benefit, providing flexibility for attendees and the platform to further increase the number of people attending the Dorset Driver Awareness Courses. Dorset is the first area in the country to deliver a fully interactive driver awareness course webinar and the feedback from course attendees is very positive. The interactive webinar approach has presented further opportunities for development of additional driver pattern changing behaviour courses to reduce the number of road traffic casualties in Dorset.
- 5.4 Dorset has worked with Devon and Cornwall to gauge public opinion on road safety enforcement levels. The results from the surveys showed there is public support for increased levels of enforcement and there is strong community support for road safety measures. Linked to this, opportunities exist to lobby Government for the levelling up of sanctions. A recent APCC survey showed that seven out of ten of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that fixed penalty notices for road traffic offences like speeding and failure to wear a seatbelt (currently £100) should be increased in line with other serious offences). Furthermore, 88% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that some of the money raised through fixed penalty notices should be reinvested into enforcement and road safety measures to deny criminals the use of the roads.
- 5.5 Drug driving also poses a significant threat on our roads. The Force and OPCC will continue to increase awareness of driving whilst taking medication, through both campaigns and social media, as well as targeted work with GPs and pharmacies. Dorset Police already carry out significant drug driving enforcement, and this will continue to be prioritised and improved where possible. The PCC has stated that this is an area he wishes to focus on in the coming weeks and months.

6. SUMMARY

- 6.1 Road safety is a complex, demanding and constantly changing area of business that requires constant vigilance, and the PCC will continue to support the many dedicated officers, staff and volunteers in Dorset Police and the partner agencies who work hard to reduce the number of people injured on Dorset's roads.
- 6.2 While some local activity has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the new ways of working have also enabled some significant progression within the education space.
- 6.3 The detail contained within this report does not represent an exhaustive list of road safety activity and input undertaken by the Dorset Road Safe partners and the PCC to address the issues. It also does not profess to fully capture the dedication, enthusiasm and hard work that goes into casualty reduction in Dorset. It may be beneficial for the Police and Crime Panel to nominate a representative to receive further information about this area of business should they wish to understand more about the focus on road safety casualty reduction and Dorset's proactive approach.
- 6.4 Members are asked to note the report.

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