

Appendix 5

INTRODUCTION OF ROAD TRAFFIC OFFENCE REPORTS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Appendix outlines proposals to change the process in dealing with Road Traffic Offences, this change offers the opportunity to remove both endorsable and non endorsable fixed penalty tickets and replace them with a Road Traffic Offence Report (RTOR).
- 1.2 The change offers a number of benefits ranging from a consistent decision making and disposal process, opportunity to increase the number of educational courses offered and a significant reduction in printing costs of tickets.
- 1.3 A number of other forces nationally have adopted the process, in the Yorkshire and Humber region all other forces have adopted RTOR at differing levels.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Currently officers have a number of options available when dealing with an offender who has committed a road traffic offence in line with force policy:
 - Verbal Warning
 - Issue a Fixed Penalty Notice
 - Issue a Vehicle Defect Rectification Notice
 - Report for Summons
 - Submit a Roadside Referral form for consideration of educational course
- 2.2 The officer decides on what course of action to take at the roadside, whilst there is clear guidance many mistakes are made leading to a lack of consistency in the application of force policy. This results in the Central Ticket Office having to deal with complaints and rectify errors where possible.
- 2.3 There are many examples of FPNs being issued for offences that should have resulted in Report For Summons, such as speeding offences in excess of 30 miles over the limit.
- 2.4 The current PentiP numbering system and 'trust accounting' in relation to issued tickets does require a significant amount of auditing to ensure clear management of issued and unissued fixed penalty notices,

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The introduction of a RTOR will simplify the roadside process and provide consistency. The key difference in approach is that when an RTOR is issued to an offender the issuing officer does not decide what the disposal of the offence will be. The offender is advised that they will be contacted within a fixed time period by the Force and at that time they will be notified of what action, if any, the Force intends to take. The officer is still able to make a recommendation for disposal on the RTOR when submitting to a centralised hub.
- 3.2 The process will be as follows:- A road traffic offence is witnessed by the officer who then decides whether to offer words of advice or issue a RTOR. The RTOR is a two part form, the top copy is submitted to the administration team and the second copy issued to the offender, this copy advises them to wait to receive further communication from the police.
- 3.3 The administration team will utilise PentiP to determine whether it is appropriate to offer an educational course, a conditional offer of fixed penalty or proceed to postal requisition/ summons. All communication, administration and preparation will be dealt with by the administration team who only refer back to the officer in the event of a query or for court statements.
- 3.4 All responses for the acceptance of a conditional offer of fixed penalty will be sent directly to the Court so the police will not need to seize driving licences thereby removing any processing time by front counter and other administration staff.
- 3.5 The RTOR does not replace Vehicle Defect Rectification Scheme (VDRS) notices, HORT or graduated penalty / roadside deposits. The officer will also still have the option to report for summons in the normal way.
- 3.6 If an HORT is issued at the same time as a RTOR both would be sent to the administration team together and that team would carry out all necessary checks to ensure compliance prior to processing the RTOR

Driver Educational Courses

- 3.7 During the last 10 years there have been significant moves by ACPO to make driver education the default status when dealing with low level motoring offences.

- 3.8 National Driver Offender Retraining Services (NDORS) has been established to allow the police the opportunity to offer drivers / riders who commit selected road traffic offences the option to attend a course as an alternative to prosecution.
- 3.9 The courses aim to address the driver / riders attitude through education and raise awareness of their individual driving skills, in order they may rethink their approach and address such areas.
- 3.10 The introduction of RTOR will allow the opportunity for a greater number of motorists to be offered such courses due to a more consistent, central decision making process.
- 3.11 Following the introduction of Pentip, the new national penalty notice processing system, forces are required to account for all penalty notices and can potentially incur a penalty if issued notice numbers cannot be accounted for. This could occur when a notice has been issued by an officer, the offender pays the associated fine on line, but the ticket is never registered on the Pentip system. When using RTORs a fine offer is not issued until a Pentip record is created, this therefore removes the issue of lost or unregistered FPNs and meets the requirement of the trust accounting in relation to offers of fixed penalty.
- 3.12 The force currently can't fine register against a conditional offer of fixed penalty. This increases the number of police files that need to be created by police officers, but may also lead to an increase in the number of PLPs. This will generate further revenue for the force. If this proves to be the case a 'File Builder' post could be considered which would alleviate some of the burden on officers producing files.

Printing Costs

- 3.13 RTORs are a single form rather than the current carbonated FPNs. They are cheaper and quicker to print, and do not require the use of non-standard carbonated printing. Based on the number of FPNs issued last financial year a saving of approximately £10,000 could be realised.
- 3.14 It is recommended that RTOR are introduced within NYP as part of the establishment of a centralised traffic bureau identified in the decision notice.

4. OUTCOMES

Anticipated benefits:

- 4.1 Achieve a more consistent and proportionate approach in dealing with road traffic offences both within force, but also mirroring the approach taken within the Yorkshire and Humber region.

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- 4.2 Minimal training will be required for officers as RTOR are almost identical to a fixed penalty notice currently undertaken
- 4.3 The RTOR should be easier to complete therefore reducing the time spent allowing the officer to return to operational duties quicker.
- 4.4 Officers can still influence the disposal of matter by endorsing the RTOR with views or information to assist in ensuring a proportionate disposal decision is made.
- 4.5 The police will not need to seize or process driving licences
- 4.6 Reduced printing costs of notices
- 4.7 Potential to increase the number of motorists attending educational course leading to an increase in levies received by the police from the completion of such a course.
- 4.8 Reduces the level of audit of the current fixed penalty notices, in addition reduces the risk of lost tickets which would lead to accounting concerns.

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