



ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS IN SCOTLAND

## Annual Conference 2010

### *The Scottish Policing Manifesto*

Presidential Address, ACPOS President, Chief Constable Patrick Shearer

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Being President of the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland is a great privilege and as I begin my second year in Office, it is my particular pleasure to deliver my second Presidential Address.

In opening yesterday, I referred to the fact that our conference theme, the *Scottish Policing Manifesto*, was an unusually political title for a service that cherishes its apolitical motivations and jealously guards its political independence.

We do not intend it to be political. Our values have not changed. And we are no less guarded in our desire for independence of political influence. However, as we square up to the significant challenges ahead of us, we believe that as a service, we must be in a position to state very clearly the priorities for policing. We must clearly voice those issues that we feel are important to protect; and lay out our stall to stakeholders, communities, partners and government, and those that aspire to be in government, so that we can work in mutual support of each other to deliver the outcomes that will ensure a *Safer and Stronger Scotland*.

Having passed the milestone of the United Kingdom election, the result of which will have direct and indirect consequence for Scottish Policing, and as Scotland moves toward its elections in May 2011. No doubt - as in the UK election - policing and crime will become a significant issue for the communities of Scotland.

As an Association we believe that *strong and effective* policing *will never been more important* than in the years immediately ahead of us, when the commitment of every public sector service will be tested and the overwhelming temptation might be to focus solely on meeting budgets, where everything will be tackled from a cost perspective, rather than understanding the importance of value - an important distinction and one we should be aware of. It is important in all we do to improve the lives and wellbeing of the communities and people we serve.

During the conference we have heard from the Cabinet Secretary for Justice, who has advised of his commitment to keeping communities safe in the challenging times ahead. In the face of the harsh financial reality ahead, the Scottish Policing Service welcomes and echoes that commitment to our communities but we do not under-estimate the scale of the challenge that we face, nor do we over-state the full commitment of the police service to meet that challenge.

And so to *the policing manifesto*.

Scotland is currently experiencing levels of crime that are lower than they have been in thirty years. And more offenders are being caught. Cutting crime and protecting and serving communities will always be at the heart of Scottish policing.

## CAPACITY

We will continue to Prevent and Detect crime and we will continue to engage with our communities to ensure that policing services remain relevant to their needs.

The priorities that we have established, '*our manifesto*', are the product of listening to the public and our partners, and of a stringent assessment of the risk these issues pose to our communities.

You have heard during the conference of the priority Scottish policing places on protecting the public, and have seen in the presentations by David Swindle and Stuart Hood how critical that role is.

Protecting the public in its broadest form is the bread and butter work of what we do, it is critical that we consider our public protection role against the specific vulnerabilities of the individuals and the communities we serve - vulnerable witnesses and victims; older people; children, and those who are sexually exploited and abused. We will continue to target violent and sexual offenders, paedophiles and organised criminals.

We have heard about about human trafficking, organised crime networks and of their use of modern technologies – so vital to our economy and our learning - for criminal purpose and for human and child exploitation – both Operation Anagram and Algebra evidenced this yesterday.

The police service is committed to exploiting that same technology and to increasingly using intelligence and information to ensure that these individuals' activities are thwarted and our communities and our children are protected.

I will highlight just two areas of this vast aspect of police work.

As part of our endeavour to protect children, and reassure communities, the *'Keeping Children Safe'* pilot, which operated in Tayside and enabled police to disclose information to individuals about convicted sex offenders, will now be extended across Scotland in the coming year. Several disclosures were made under the Tayside pilot, and on one occasion it was confirmed to a parent that a neighbour was a registered sex offender. The Keeping Children Safe pilot is a positive step which adds to our existing armoury of child protection measures and increases the intelligence the police have in relation to monitoring sex offenders. Its implementation throughout Scotland will increase our ability to protect children and other vulnerable members of the community.

The second area I would wish to highlight is the work that will be taken

forward this year to improve services to victims of rape and serious sexual crime.

The low conviction rate for crimes of rape is well documented and a stain on our society. The Scottish policing service will do everything within its power to ensure that we support victims who have been subjected to the most horrific and invasive of crimes.

ACPOS welcomes the introduction of the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009, which will come into force in October of this year; and further welcomes the establishment of the Crown Office and Procurators Fiscal Service National Sexual Crimes Unit, headed by Derek Ogg.

Combined, this legislation and the new Sexual Crimes Unit represent the most significant and comprehensive reform of the law and prosecution of sexual crime in the history of Scots law.

For our part, the Scottish Police Service has invested in significant training and awareness of our staff in the role of the Sexual Offence Liaison Officers. These experienced officers will make sure that the needs of victims are both better understood and supported from the very first point at which they contact the police.

But ACPOS does not see the new Act as a panacea. While we and our Criminal Justice partners will work tirelessly to use its provisions to the full, there is evidence that the public still hold some very outdated attitudes on rape. A 2008 survey carried out for the Scottish Government found that 27 per cent of respondents thought that a woman bore some responsibility for her assault if she wore revealing clothing while 23 per cent believed that women contribute to rape if they have engaged in some form of sexual activity.

A key part of our future work together with our partner agencies is to change public attitudes towards sexual crime.

So our public protection manifesto commitment is that: -

- *We will continue to target those who seek to exploit children and will extend community disclosure of sex offenders across Scotland.*
- *We will exploit the same technologies used by paedophiles, to increasingly detect their activity; and we will work to influence Internet Service providers to provide 'report abuse' buttons on their web pages.*
- *We will continue to adopt 'Getting it Right for Every Child' protocols to ensure our children and young people are safe, protected and heard.*
- *We will develop our response to supporting victims of sexual crime and will work with the Crown Office and Procurators Fiscal Service to ensure that all opportunities are seized to support the successful detection and prosecution of offenders.*

Violence is unacceptable and we will tackle it in all its forms. I have stated that crime is at its lowest level in many years, but crime, especially violent crime is still too high and there are sections of our communities where life seems cheap and violence is more than loss of control; it is a way of life. You have heard John Carnochan describe the cost of violence, in human terms, in community terms - and in resource and financial terms, to both the police and the health service.

From the controlling violence and abuse of women - and men - within their own homes, to the mindless violence that accompanies the gang culture that exists in many of our urban communities, the police will act strongly to protect victims and detect its perpetrators. Violence IS preventable; NOT inevitable.

While continuing to respond to these crimes, supporting victims and pursuing offenders, we will continue to seek early intervention methods, working with partners, schools, educationalists, and health professionals, to act earlier in the cycle of violence and so have the greatest likelihood of changing attitudes and delivering long-term success. There is no doubt in my mind that *early*

*intervention* must be the cornerstone of delivering better outcomes for people's lives.

There is much truth in the saying that 'a penny's prevention will save a pound's worth of cure.' But marketing the success of a crime that does not happen is challenging. The temptation is to measure the success of a police officer by the number of tickets he issues or the stop searches she carries out, than by the influence they have on the youths they took time to engage. I do not in any way belittle the need for strong enforcement, it is essential, and targeted appropriately, it works.

But it is only part of the picture and it won't shift attitudes.

As a leader of the service it is important we adopt a measured attitude to performance and that we are not solely driven by numbers and performance tables.

Our policing manifesto commitment is that

- *we will continue to treat violence in all its forms as a priority for Scottish policing – supporting victims and communities, addressing gang culture where it exists and tackling domestic abuse by understanding the needs of victims and using the law to tackle offenders*
- *we will support partnership working and early intervention activities, which will deliver the strongest chance of improving outcomes for victims, for communities – and for offenders. THE BEST INVESTMENT FOR ALL.*
- *we will work with licensing Boards to reduce the impact of alcohol related violence, crime and disorder*
- *we will use our full powers and authority to target those who carry knives*
- *and we will be driven by delivering outcomes that make our*

*communities and in particular our young people safer*

We will fight serious organised crime – and will especially battle with drug trafficking. The effect of serious organised crime on our communities is corrosive and pernicious. These criminals are diversifying from drugs and violence to counterfeiting, human trafficking, e-crime, fraud and money laundering..... the list goes on. They will engage in any crime that gives them power and generates profits; and they show utter disregard for the lives of those they destroy in the process.

Scotland needed a coordinated approach to ensure that there is widespread understanding of the impact of serious organised crime and that communities and businesses, as well as police, can contribute to loosening its stranglehold on our streets and in our communities.

Following a significant mapping project last year, our collective knowledge of the scale and threat of serious organised crime in Scotland is greater now than ever. Almost 400 serious organised crime groups, involving more than 4,000 people were identified as operating across our country and more than 200 crooked specialists such as lawyers and accountants were linked to their trade. No Scottish police force area is immune from the threat.

We are now putting that information to use in the protection of the public and for the first time, acting under the Scottish Government's national strategy, we have an approach to serious organised crime that goes beyond traditional law enforcement. The multi agency Serious Organised Crime Taskforce, and its strategy are very much developing, but such as approach can and, I'm sure, will, have a significant and lasting impact on serious and organized crime. With a cash injection that will provide more covert officers, e-crime specialists and financial investigators, the Scottish Police Service and SCDEA will widen their net, doing all in their power to detect, deter, divert and disrupt these criminals, stripping them of their illegally gained assets and hitting them where it hurts.

- *We will divert individuals, particularly young people, from engaging in or using the products of organised crime.*

- *We will disrupt the activities of serious organised crime groups by arresting and dismantling the groups who carry out the crimes that make life within our communities a misery.*
- *Working hand in glove with the SCDEA and our partners, we will seize the assets of these criminal gangs and leave them with no place to hide.*

Fighting terrorism was described by the Home Secretary as being the new and biggest policing challenge of the 21st century. For the avoidance of any doubt, that threat is very real. The events of recent years have shown that Scotland is not immune.

Scotland's forces actively support the UK Counter Terrorism strategy, CONTEST, and actively contribute to its four composite strands – Prevent, Protect, Prepare and Pursue.

One of our greatest challenges is maintaining public awareness of the threat, and fully engaging our partners to play their part in ensuring that Scotland is protected as best it can be against this threat. In the past year, we have increased capacity and capability in relation to countering terrorism and in the year ahead, under our 'interoperability' agenda, we will focus on making sure that we can work seamlessly with colleagues in other parts of the UK.

Our Manifesto Commitment is that

- We will continue to support the UK Counter-terrorism strategy and work with colleagues throughout the UK (and beyond) to ensure seamless operating capability.
- We will continue to support awareness raising strategies, engaging the public, business community and our partners in counter-terrorism events

Anti-social behaviour blights many communities and cause misery for too many people. We have no need to convince anyone of the seriousness of

this issue. Tackling anti-social behaviour effectively, addressing its underlying causes and providing reassurance to communities is a key priority for policing.

There are many ways to tackle anti-social behaviour, some methods providing greater success than others. Once again, as highlighted by Iain MacLeod's presentation, we recognise that the key to change lies in early intervention, in strong and effective partnerships, decisive, positive actions, and in sharing responsibility and accountability.

A key and urgent issue in the tackling of anti-social behaviour however must be in addressing the unhealthy relationship Scotland has formed with alcohol.

Excessive alcohol use is closely linked with anti-social behaviour and violence, and places huge demand on the police service and the wider public sector. On a daily basis, evidenced by police demand, alcohol is by far the greatest contributing factor to incidents of crimes of violence and disorder.

It has been estimated that alcohol-related problems in Scotland cost as much as £3.6 billion every year, about £900 every year for every Scottish adult. In the current financial climate, indeed in any climate, such waste - dare I say it - is criminal! WE CANNOT AFFORD IT.

The Alcohol Etc. (Scotland) Bill introduces many changes to combat this culture and ACPOS supports many of its provisions, including one of the more controversial aspects of the bill - minimum pricing to reduce the availability of cheap, high strength alcohol.

It is important that Scotland continues to examine the causes rather than simply responding to the symptoms of crime. ACPOS welcomes the commitment, vigour and determination of the Scottish Government to tackle this major issue and recognizes both the challenges and the importance of such an approach.

The Scottish Police Service recognises the harm caused to communities from

Anti-Social Behaviour, and

- We will engage with partners and communities to support early intervention programmes to positively divert young people who are vulnerable to becoming involved in crime; we will develop our youth strategy to support that activity; and we will support appropriate measures to reduce the negative consequences of alcohol use on our communities.

Reducing deaths and serious injuries on our roads, and denying criminals the use of our roads to carry out their criminal activities continues to be a major part of keeping our communities safe.

Scotland met, and indeed exceeded the ten-year UK targets for casualty reduction to 2010 and we now look ahead to meeting the ambitious Scottish government targets set for 2010-2020.

- We will work to further reduce road deaths and serious injuries and we will support the Scottish Government's casualty reduction targets for 2010-2020
- We will develop and promote our Automatic Number Plate Recognition system to increase our effectiveness in identifying vehicles of interest
- We will, with partners and the courts, work to extend the use of vehicle forfeiture to other serious driving offences

On broader issues, the UK election demonstrated that attacking crime is one of the most important issues in the minds of the public. It is of course uppermost in ours.

I make no apology for restating that crime, both recorded by the police and experienced by the public is at its lowest level for thirty years and more offenders are being caught. The debate about policing and criminal justice however, often centres on what sounds tougher, rather than what *actually* works to cut crime. It has been described as a '*sentencing arms race*' and we

are all too aware of the potential for prison gates to be no more than revolving doors.

ACPOS fully supports a 'tough' approach to crime and we wholeheartedly endorse the principle that offenders must pay for their actions and, that communities must feel safe and know that justice is done.

However, it is also important to ensure that when we talk about 'getting tough', it also means 'being effective'. It does not simply mean increased prison terms.

The Scottish Policing Service actively supports restorative justice programmes, making offenders confront what they have done and also allowing victims to confront them. Sentencing must be mature and aimed at reducing offending in the long-term. When someone commits a serious offence, a long prison sentence is absolutely right, but if we are serious about supporting better outcomes, then diverting people from poor lifestyle choices has to be the priority to set these people on a different course and it is important to shift the emphasis of policing away from reacting to offences, to getting upstream, and focusing on prevention. It has to be about breaking the cycle of crime.

The importance of 'early years' and 'early and effective intervention' must be central to everything we do as a police service, but also core to what our partners do. This is essential if we are to face challenges and deliver on the significant and important outcomes for all.

We believe the voice of the public must lie at the heart of justice. They must have confidence in the police and believe that we, and the wider criminal justice system, will support them.

ACPOS believes it is important that all of those involved in the delivery of Criminal Justice across Scotland demonstrate that we provide a victim-centred system.

Our Manifesto Commitment is that

- we will work with the Scottish Government, Crown Office and Procurators Fiscal Service to develop justice measures that will influence offender behaviour, and
  
- we will work to provide the criminal justice processes from the perspective of victims and witnesses and develop a strategy to improve their confidence.

Lades and Gentlemen, during the conference, alongside the manifesto commitments I have articulated, we have heard presentations that describe the breadth, depth and challenge of policing. We have heard about the extensive and complex planning that is underway to ensure that we are prepared for and will deliver a successful and safe Commonwealth Games and indeed we are working alongside our colleagues in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to deliver a safe and successful Olympic and Paralympic Games.

We have heard about excellence in investigation and in public protection, of policing specialisms and policing innovation, and our commitment to a powerful IT supported service. All of this is achieved through our excellent and diverse team of officers and staff, and the support of the SPSA, who make the delivery of our service possible.

The consistent theme of all our efforts is a commitment to partnership, to early intervention, and to delivering outcomes.

ACPOS recognizes the challenges of the Current Economic Climate and the continued worldwide financial instability. This will become even more stark as we move in uncharted financial waters in the year ahead. It will have a major impact on the shape and delivery of Scottish Public Services. The Police Service will not be immune; for planning purposes, we are modelling a budget that by 2014 could be reduced by as much as 12% to 15%.

All Scottish forces have considered their organisational structures; flattened

ranks; broadening spans of responsibility and in some areas have frozen the recruitment of police staff.

The opportunities to flatten structures further, without compromise, to command resilience and sound governance are minimal. While such events are rare, the horrific and tragic shooting events of Wednesday in my neighbouring Cumbrian force, highlight the importance that such command resilience exists.

Both within forces and across ACPOS, there is considerable work ongoing to develop plans to meet budgetary challenge. We have work streams progressing including procurement, operational and corporate collaboration, process review, income generation and best practice. All these seek to identify opportunities for savings. The overriding principle being the continuity of key services to our communities.

We will work to achieve savings; our key challenge however is that approximately 85% of our costs are related to staff; the vast majority being attributed to officers. A sizeable proportion of our remaining budget is accounted for by non-controllable costs.

While other public services are able to reduce staff numbers, the police service, unlike almost any other service has a growing, almost insatiable public demand for more “bobbies” on the beat. Officer numbers have become a proxy measure for good policing or for safer communities. No other service is measured by its staff visibility in the way that police are. Would anyone enter an accident and emergency unit and say how good it was by the number of staff you can see, rather than the quality of the service you received?

The community reassurance provided by a visible policing presence is real. Managing this issue in the face of reducing budgets and affordability factors will be a challenge for the police service – and a political challenge for any government.

As a police service we are appreciative of the Scottish Government's commitment to provide extra police officers for our communities and every Chief Officer wishes to have as many officers as possible, however, effective policing is a complex weave of officers, skilled police staff, analysts, financial investigators, control room staff, custody officers .....

It is my view that an investment balance between officers, staff and technology is necessary to achieve optimal performance. What makes the optimal balance will be quite different for each force area, and is a matter for each Chief Constable to determine.

I do not wish to further ignite debate about police structures, however, the current economic situation causes the issue to resurface with a somewhat regular monotony, and it would be remiss of me not to restate the position of ACPOS.

The current public sector geographic alignment is not acceptable and it is not how we would draw it. However any large-scale redrawing of geographic boundaries must consider all public services, including local authorities, health Boards, police forces and sheriffdoms. It must also consider the new landscape of Single Outcome Agreements and differing performance measures, as these do not align well to support joint working, nor do they enhance opportunities to deliver effective outcomes.

Restructure at this time however would be a distraction; that said, ACPOS would contribute fully to any future debate on the issue

## Conclusion

Colleagues, our conference has shown that policing in Scotland is in good shape. It is both open to, and driving forward, change and has a clear focus and direction of travel.

I would like to conclude my presentation not by restating our strategic priorities; but by referring to a recently screened reality television programme, which shows that our policing priorities are firmly anchored in the reality of our communities.

.....*The Scheme*.

You may have seen it. If not you will certainly have heard the public debate around it. Did the programme makers exploit its participants? Was it edited fairly to show balance – or was it edited to create car crash TV? Did the cameras cause participants to “act up”? Was the programme voyeuristic or a valid social commentary for a section of today’s society.

I have no wish to engage in the programme’s controversies. My personal view is that the programme is probably a bit of all of the above.

What is clear though is that the programme delivered a shockwave to many of its viewers.

Quite different from the other ‘reality’ TV shows, this show does not depict normally privileged individuals, temporarily swapping their life comforts for a couple of weeks of challenge.

In “*The Scheme*”, we see real people; not famous; and not *temporarily* living challenging lives.

We saw raw violence; young women, little more than schoolgirls really, “standing by their man” because he swore he loved her and promised he would never hit her again.

We saw a family struggling to keep their daughter out of trouble and doing their best to keep her away from drugs and the peer pressure that would draw her in to the life they had lived – they wanted better for her.

We saw the ready availability of drugs in a small community and the anti-social behaviour, violence and bullying that were part of every day life and survival.

We saw teenage pregnancy, underage sex, absence from education, homelessness, worklessness and drug use – all accepted as being the normal expectation and aspiration of life.

We also saw individuals who were fighting to create positive opportunities to support their community; fund-raising, giving their own time - and not giving up.

We also saw the charm of a young child growing up in an environment where she saw the police come to her home during the night to arrest her mother.

And of course, we saw the reality of the far reaching tentacles of serious organised crime invading a small community.

The violent threats issued by those higher up the supply chain to the low level young dealer who had failed to discharge his drug debts - his family living in fear - not knowing whether the knock at their door would be the police or the dealer - either one there to claim their son.

For all the criticism of the programme, and while many may have watched this programme in shock and disbelief; there is not a police officer, social worker, health worker or teacher for whom the situation shown in this programme has not at some point been part of their working reality.

Ladies and Gentlemen, my reaction to the programme was one of absolute resolve. Despite, and indeed even because, of the financial crisis ahead, the Scottish Police Service must maintain two core principles: - an absolute focus on outcomes – not activities - and an absolute commitment to create even stronger bonds with partners to deliver those outcomes.

I mentioned that every police officer, social worker, health worker or teacher would recognise 'The Scheme'. Every one of them would also acknowledge that in isolation they do not have the skill, resource or ability to support a community and its people to fight back.

The key message from our conference today is that extreme partnership and a firm focus on working together, both within ACPOS and across the public, private and voluntary sectors, is essential if we are to deliver better outcomes to Build a Safer, Stronger Scotland. I hope that you will share in that vision.

Ends