

# 32800 POLICY – ESCORTING OF ABNORMAL LOADS (JOU)



**Version:** 1.0      **Last Updated:** 22/07/11      **Review Date:** 22/07/12

**ECHR**                      **Potential Equality Impact Assessment:** **Low**

## 1. About This Policy

- 1.1. This policy details how Hampshire Constabulary & Thames Valley Police staff will administer and when necessary deploy Roads Policing officers from the Joint Operations Unit [JOU] to escort abnormal loads through the Five Counties [Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire].
- 1.2. The policy reflects the aims and objectives contained within the JOU Roads Policy Strategy, in particular to reduce road casualties and enhance public confidence & reassurance. It is predominantly aimed at JOU Roads Policing officers and Abnormal Loads officers.

## 2. General Principles

- 2.1. Hampshire Constabulary & Thames Valley Police are committed to delivering a high quality road policing service throughout the Five Counties which is responsive to local need, and committed to making our roads, and thus our communities, safer places for everyone.
- 2.2. Both Forces are fully committed to providing public reassurance to all road users within the Five Counties.

## 3. Statement of Policy

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- 3.1. The JOU Roads Policing strategy dovetails into the overall Force Policing Strategic Plans for Hampshire Constabulary and Thames Valley Police by engaging positively in several areas of activity namely:
- a) Reducing road casualties.
  - b) Targeting criminals who use the road network.
  - c) Targeting anti-social use of the roads.
  - d) Tackling the threat of terrorism.
  - e) Reassuring the public on strategic roads networks.
  - f) Supporting local policing & specialist departments.
- 3.2. This policy reflects current ACPO guidance, including the 2009 IPCC recommendations regarding enforcement of legal requirements for marking and lighting, training, authorisation and movement of abnormal indivisible loads.

### **4. Implications of Policy**

#### **4.1. Financial Implications / Best Value**

- 4.1.1. The financial resources necessary for the implementation of this policy and associated procedures will normally be found within Force Control Rooms & JOU Roads Policing budgets.

#### **4.2. Staffing and Training**

- 4.2.1. JOU Roads Policing officers undertake training courses relevant to their individual role and policing activities. Financial costs incurred as a result of this training are catered for within current Force, JOU Roads Policing & Training Department budget allocations.

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## 4.3. Crime and Disorder Act

- 4.3.1. JOU Roads Policing recognises the value of working closely with local policing and specialist departments, as well as with external agencies to provide a comprehensive and consistent approach to Roads Policing issues.
- 4.3.2. In managing the movement of abnormal loads through the Five Counties, JOU Roads Policing currently works in partnership with the following agencies to achieve its objectives:
- a) Local Highways Departments
  - b) Public Utilities
  - c) Highways Agency
  - d) Department of Transport
  - e) VOSA
  - f) Fire and Rescue services
  - g) Ambulance services
  - h) All neighbouring forces

## 4.4. Bureaucracy

- 4.4.1. This policy and its associated procedures have been scrutinised. Abnormal Loads Officers work to minimise the involvement of front line officers in escorting abnormal loads. However if police officers are required they are not unnecessarily burdened with administrative activities.
- 4.4.2. Performance and data collection systems within JOU Roads Policing are designed such that they remove unnecessary burdens from front line officers.

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## 4.5. Risks

- 4.5.1. Roads policing, by its very nature, can present significant risks to staff members who engage in its activities. Risk assessments exist in both forces in respect of general policing patrol on motorways and trunk roads.
- 4.5.2. There is no legal requirement for any abnormal load to be escorted by the police. In certain circumstances such escorts will take place, but this will only occur following full assessment by Force Abnormal Load Officers who will carry out risk assessments & decide what if any other action is required with regard to the route or timing of the proposed movement. Safety of other road users & congestion will be key considerations.
- 4.5.3. Only JOU Roads Policing officers will be deployed to the escort of abnormal loads, by virtue of their specialist training, experience and legal & practical knowledge of escorting such loads.
- 4.5.4. When engaging in escorting abnormal loads JOU Roads Police officers will ensure that all reasonable steps are taken, including the consideration of dynamic risk assessments, in order to minimise the risk of injury/harm to police officers and members of the public alike.

## 4.6. Consultation

- 4.6.1. Initial consultation regarding this policy has included:
  - a) Abnormal Loads Officers for both Hampshire Constabulary & Thames Valley Police.

## 5. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 5.1. Superintendent JOU Roads Policing has overall responsibility for the monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

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## 6. Review

- 6.1. This policy will be reviewed on a three yearly basis or when dictated by either operational or organisational change.

## 7. Other Related Policies, Procedures & Information Sources

### 7.1. Related Procedures

- 7.1.1. 32801 Procedure - Escorting of Abnormal Loads

### 7.2. Information Sources

- 7.2.1. AD203 – Equality Impact Assessment

**Origin:** JOU Roads Policing