

POLICE VEHICLE COLLISIONS

POLICY & PROCEDURE

OFFICIAL

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Policy

Aims

The aim of the policy is to ensure that those persons involved in Police Vehicle Collisions receive an appropriate standard of service in relation to the severity of the collision.

This policy has two main aims:

- 1) Provide a consistent and effective framework for reporting; categorisation; recording; investigation and suitable disposal decision making for Police vehicle collisions, so that we understand our business; focussing on quality and doing the right thing in every circumstance.
- 2) Provide access to the correct level of support and information for victims and their families, and witnesses and other bona fide parties, to ensure we always put the needs of the community first.

Objectives

The primary objectives are to reduce the numbers of people killed or seriously injured in Police Vehicle Collisions through effective investigation, reduce the impact of vehicle and resource availability from PVCs and the wider adoption of structured disposal options, for the education and development, to impact on future driver behaviour.

The objectives will be underpinned by:

- 1) The collection, verification, and timely sharing of statistical data with the Department for Transport and Local Authorities under national and local road safety strategies.
- 2) Improved public confidence and satisfaction with action taken by the Police to include response times; follow-up from the Police; the investigation and treatment by the Police.
- 3) Increased number of investigations that meet the required standard, all completed within agreed timescales.

Application and Scope

All Police officers and Police staff, including the extended Police family and those working voluntarily or under contract to Merseyside Police must be aware of, and are required to comply with, all relevant policy and procedures.

This is a non-statutory policy that sets out the principles to help guide decision making. It provides guidance that, on occasions, officers and staff may depart from based on the particular circumstances they encounter. On such occasions, officers and staff will be supported provided they can demonstrate a clear rationale which can be objectively justified for why they have departed from the policy.

Officers and staff are reminded that the defences afforded by the Police Crime Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 are only afforded where the designated person is:

- a) Driving for a police purpose
and
- b) Has undertaken prescribed training [The Road Traffic Act 1988 \(Police Driving: Prescribed Training\) Regulations 2022 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the Driver Standards and Governance Standard Operating Procedure, Police Vehicle Driver Policy, and Police Pursuits Procedure.

Outcome Evaluation

Outcomes should reflect specific objectives and be measured against those objectives on a routine basis. In general terms, adherence to this policy should:

- a) Improve the quality and knowledge surrounding the reporting and investigation of Police Vehicle Collisions.
- b) Improve the quality and timeliness of Police Vehicle Collision investigations
- c) Ensure reporting and recording of Police Vehicle Collisions is compliant with national guidance.
- d) Reassure the public through the effective management of Police Vehicle Collisions

Procedure

Version History

Version Number	Date	Detailed rational behind amending/updating policy or procedure.	Policy Owner Details	Policy Author Details
V.?	6/10/2011	Paragraph 1.7 inserted to cover out of Force collisions. Paragraph 1.8 inserted to cover requirement to inform insurers. Paragraph 7.2 expanded to extend exclusions form mandatory suspension. Paragraph 7.9 expanded to cover “high risk” drivers.		
3.2	14/12/2011	Reference to newly approved Escalation Process included in “Application & Scope” of policy section.		
3.3	02/08/2012	All references to suspended/suspension removed at Chief Officer’s direction following misinterpretation and inaccurate reporting in Liverpool Echo. Slight amendment to the breath test requirement following recent guidance from the IPCC.		
3.4	24/10/2013	Section 9 introduced to cover protocol between RP and Armed Policing Teams.		
3.5	30/01/2015	Numerous relatively minor amendments to reflect the Niche reporting process, changes to organisational structure and responsibilities of Force PVC Manager		
3.6	01/12/2016	Changes made to terminology in line with Community First Force re-structure.		
3.7	01/05/2017	Changes made to reflect the change from the DTNA process to the Police Vehicle Collisions Review.		
3.8	11/09/2020	Changes to reflect introduction of DSG process and removal of the DTNA processes. Changes to recording of PVCs		

		on Police premises. Pursuit Policy link removed. Changes to procedure regarding Investigating officer's responsibilities including Victim Contact. Review of T-P-A-C incidents changed to include Driver Training and PVC Manager. Oshens reporting added to Policy. Automatic removal of driving authority removed. Updated regarding armed policing tactics		
3.9	02/08/2023	Minor changes to reflect current terminology, allocation practice and changes to the DSG Policy.		
4.0	22/05/2024	Minor changes to reflect amendments to the DSG policy.		
4.1	20/11/2024	Minor changes to amend reporting requirements. Formatting changes to align to current force standard policy template.	Ch/Supt Matrix	Sgt. Police Veh. Coll. Mgr.
4.2	29/03/2026	Changes made to reflect the new Force Strategy, Organisational changes from Functional Policing model to BCU model, removal of references to High-Risk drivers. Updated to match current Force standard policy template.	Ch/Supt Matrix	Sgt. Police Veh. Coll. Mgr.
4.2.1	07/09/2026	Update to correct page numbers in contents page – no change to content	Ch/Supt Matrix	Force Policy SPOC, CSD

Introduction

Merseyside Police records approximately 500 collisions annually involving Police vehicles and although given huge volume of miles driven every year by the Force it is imperative that each collision is dealt with professionally and transparently as this is what the public would rightly expect of us.

1. Definitions

1.1 Police Vehicle Collision (PVC)

Owing to the presence of a Police vehicle on a road or public place an accident occurs by which: -

- Personal injury is caused to any person.
Or
- Damage is caused to any mechanically propelled vehicle or trailer drawn by it.
- Damage is caused to any animal.
- Damage is caused to any other property constructed on, fixed to, growing in or otherwise forming part of the land on which the road is situated.

1.2 Police Vehicle

Any vehicle owned, hired or leased under any agreement by Merseyside Police. Any privately owned vehicle used for Police purposes whilst on duty. Any vehicle that has come into the possession of the Police due to operational reasons.

1.3 Public Place

Any location to which the public have access to on payment or otherwise. Also includes any location which the Police and subsequently any Police vehicle gain access to with lawful permission of the landowner or via the use of Police powers.

1.4 Personal Injury

In line with Department for Transport (DfT) guidelines all death or injury to any party occurring on the Highway must be recorded as such on a RTC report. Highway includes footpaths, embankments, land adjacent to highways, pedestrianised areas, rail/tram tracks that cross a highway and cycle lanes which form part of a highway.

1.5 Damage

Damage will be taken as its regular everyday meaning, size or cost of damage is irrelevant.

1.6 Animal

Animals are specified by the Road Traffic Act as horse, cattle, ass, mule, sheep, pig, goat, or dog.

1.7 Police Station Collisions

A damage only collision that occurs within the confines of Police premises is to be recorded by the Police driver's supervisor or line manager. In this case there is no requirement to record on Niche however the driver will complete a F104 and email via their supervisor to the Force PVC Manager and Vehicle Fleet. The PVC Manager will advise the Line Manager if any further action is required, such as a formal 1-2-1 and an intervention using the ePDR system.

1.8 Police Driver

The term police driver includes police officers and police staff that are driving a Police vehicle at the time when a collision occurs. The term police driver also includes a Police officer or Police staff member who is responsible for a stationary vehicle, unattended or otherwise, at the time it is involved in a collision.

1.9 Criminal Damage

Where Police vehicles are subject to criminal damage offences a crime report should be created in line with Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR). This crime reference number should be emailed with an accompanying F104 to Vehicle Fleet Management via the reporting officer's supervisor.

1.10 Off duty Collisions

1.10.1 Commuting

Any collision occurring when travelling from a Police driver's home to their place of work or vice versa is not a Police Vehicle Collision for the purpose of this policy. However, for Police Pension purposes only, officers are regarded as being on duty for such journeys. All such collisions will be reported on the Oshens Health & Safety Portal by the person involved.

1.10.2 Recall to duty / On call

If a member of staff is called to immediately return to duty, then they are on duty from the time of the call, and any collision is a Police Vehicle Collision for reporting purposes. At the conclusion of duty any return to home does not amount to 'on duty' time and any collision is not a Police Vehicle Collision.

1.11 Covert Vehicles

Officers involved in covert operations should where possible, follow the guidance in this policy. However, on occasion this will not always be possible thus they should follow their standard operating procedures/contingency procedures.

1.12 Insurance

All staff are reminded that in the event of being involved in a Police Vehicle Collision there is a requirement to inform their own insurance company. Advice has been sought on this issue and it is likely that failing to inform the insurance company of a collision may render a policy invalid and leave a person uninsured.

2. Police Driver Responsibilities

- 2.1 When a reportable Police Vehicle Collision occurs the CCM must be informed as soon as possible. CCM staff will then create a Storm log and Niche occurrence and will notify the duty RPU Sergeant who will agree a suitable officer or supervisor to obtain the PVC report. In the case of a disagreement between CCM and Roads Policing Supervision the FIM will act as final decision maker.
- 2.1.1 Please note, damage only collisions on Police premises do not require a Storm log or Niche occurrence to be created. As such the Police driver should contact their own supervisor / line manager to report the matter. In the event they are not available then a different supervisor from the same strand **must** be contacted.
- 2.1.2 It is the Police driver's responsibility to ensure they comply with Section 170 of the Road Traffic Act and supply their name, address, vehicle registration etc. otherwise they may commit an offence under the Road Traffic Act.
- 2.1.3 Under **no** circumstances should the officer leave the scene of the collision and report it later.
- 2.1.4 Under **no** circumstances can the Police driver be involved in the reporting or investigation of a PVC which they played a part in. As such Matrix Roads Policing Sergeants, Scene Managers or Lead Investigating Officers should not routinely be involved in high-risk activities where PVC's can occur such as pursuits or pre-planned vehicle tactics, etc.
- 2.1.5 It is the Police driver's responsibility to ensure the IDR is activated following a PVC (where fitted). This can be done manually by long pressing the IDR button until it beeps. In the event of damage to the Police vehicle the IDR may activate automatically and will be illuminated red. There is no action required for a VUE Telematics equipped vehicle.

2.2 Out of Force Collisions

In the event of a Police driver being involved in a collision out of the Merseyside Force area the collision will be reported at the time to the local Force who will investigate the collision as per their Force Policy. The Police driver **must** also report the matter to their own supervision. PVCs on the Motorway Network included within the agreed patrol area for Merseyside will be reported to and investigated by Merseyside Police. RTC Reports will be provided to the force with geographical responsibility to ensure home office reporting is completed correctly.

- 2.2.1 The Force PVC Manager **must** be informed of the collision at the earliest opportunity. This can be by the officer's own supervision or the Force Incident Manager, depending on the circumstances and the severity of such a collision.
- 2.2.2 On reviewing the collision a decision will be made on whether to amend or withdraw the Police driving authority of the driver if the investigating Force has not undertaken this.
- 2.2.3 Any investigation into criminal matters will be reported to Merseyside Police PSD for consideration and case management. At the conclusion of the investigation and any sanction

by the investigating Force the completed file will be subject to the Driver Standards and Governance (DSG) process within Merseyside Police.

3. Initial Reporting

Upon creation of a PVC Storm log, it will be tasked to an CCM supervisor. The CCM supervisor will then assess the matter for threat, harm and risk based on the information known and notify the duty RPU Sergeant who will decide on suitable resources required, or a suitable reporting officer. In the case of a disagreement between CCM and RPU Supervision the FIM will act as final decision maker.

The following officers can attend and report a PVC:

3.1 Damage Only

Any Police Staff Supervisor or Manager from the relevant BCU or Department responsible for the driver involved (Police station premises only), any Police Sergeant or Inspector from the relevant BCU or Department, Matrix Roads Policing Sergeant, Matrix Roads Policing Constable.

3.2 Slight Injury

Any Police Sergeant or Inspector from the relevant BCU or Department, Matrix Roads Policing Sergeant, Matrix Roads Policing Constable.

3.3 Serious Injury

Any Police Inspector from relevant the BCU or Department, Matrix Roads Policing Sergeant, Matrix Roads Policing Lead Investigating Officer (LIO) or Scene Manager. The FIM must be informed and a DSI referral completed via PSD.

3.4 Fatal, Likely to Prove or Life Changing Injury.

Matrix Roads Policing Lead Investigating Officer (LIO) or Scene Manager only. In the event of the duty LIO or Scene Manager being an immediate colleague or line manager of the Police driver an LIO or Scene Manager from Matrix Roads Policing Serious Collision Investigation Unit (SCIU) should assume the role during office hours. Out of hours the responsibility remains with the duty LIO or Scene Manager. The FIM must be informed and a DSI referral completed. Consideration should be given to the declaration of a critical incident.

4. Reporting Officer Responsibilities and Investigation

It is recognised that the reporting officer and investigating officer (long term) may not be the same person.

For ease of use this policy contains all investigative procedures in this chapter.

- All PVC's **must** be investigated by a Matrix Roads Policing Sergeant / Inspector.

- If a PVC has resulted in death or serious injury the Death and Serious Injury Post Incident Procedure (PIP) process should be considered.

Where a conflict of interest occurs e.g. The Matrix Roads Policing Sergeant is also the line manager for the Police driver, the Force PVC Manager will re-allocate the matter to a different Matrix Roads Policing Sergeant for investigation.

- 4.1 On attendance at the scene the first responsibility is to determine the severity of the incident, and the following factors will determine this:
- Level of injuries in line with DfT classifications.
 - Level of damage caused.
 - Aggravating factors such as a pursuit situation or vehicle tactics used.
 - Whether there are any potential misconduct issues.
 - Disruption to the road or Motorway network.
- 4.2 For a collision involving a Police pursuit, the investigating officer must make themselves aware of the procedures outlined within the Police Pursuit Procedure and ensure that all standards have been adhered to.
- 4.3 If the reporting or investigating officer identifies any potential breaches of the Police Code of Ethics, they must ensure PSD, and the Force PVC Manager are informed as soon as practicable. Similarly, if the Police driver is suspected of any offences, they should be informed they are being treated as a suspect at an early stage and informed of their rights within legislation to consult with a legal advisor before any account or statements are obtained. Where consideration is given to Post Incident Procedures, if being treated as a suspect the Police driver should be removed from this process.
- 4.4 The initial reporting officer must complete a Niche RTC report, including the RTC report where injuries are reported. A PVC should have its own occurrence which should be separate to any associated crimes or arrests. Any witness statements or accounts taken at the scene or immediately after the collision, must be completed in full and on the most up to date version of the form MG11 or via Pronto. The Niche occurrence must be tasked to the Force PVC Manager Niche Pot before the end of the current shift so an early assessment of the incident can be made.
- 4.5 The reporting officer is responsible for ensuring that all drivers involved in a Police Vehicle Collision must provide a preliminary breath test. The officer should also consider eyesight tests, primary field impairment test and/or drug wipe where appropriate. In the event of serious injury these **must** be completed with **all** involved drivers.
- 4.6 The reporting officer is responsible for the download of any IDR or telematics data if installed in the Police vehicle. Similarly, the reporting officer is responsible for the download of CCTV installed in the Police vehicle. The CCTV (and audio) must be secured evidentially, and a copy placed on NICE Investigate.

- 4.7 The reporting officer should obtain photographs of the collision showing the general collision location / dynamics and any damage caused. Body Worn Video should also be utilised at the scene. Comprehensive first accounts and/or Mg11's should be obtained from involved drivers, injured parties, and witnesses. Comprehensive contact details, including names/addresses/phone numbers and email addresses must also be obtained from all vehicle drivers/users/owners and all 3rd party property owners.
- 4.8 A Niche task must be sent to the PVC Manager and Vehicle Fleet Management before the end of that shift, notifying them of the incident. The initial reporting officer must then complete a comprehensive summary of the circumstances on the Occurrence Enquiry Log for the PVC.
- 4.9 All Police Vehicle Collisions require the completion of an Oshens Health & Safety Report. The Police drivers involved, or the relevant Supervisor is responsible for ensuring these forms are completed at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.10 The investigating officer **must** keep all victims updated with the progress of the investigation every 28 days or following a key significant event in line with the victim's code of conduct. The investigating officer should also update key witnesses, where the incident involves an injury that is classed as life changing or threatening, if the incident resulted in a fatality or if the profile of the incident is such that contact is required to maintain public confidence in the Organisation.

5. Withdrawal of Driving Authority

- 5.1 The starting presumption will be that police driving authority will not be removed from officers following a PVC.

An officer's driving authority should only be removed at the scene or during the subsequent investigation where the circumstances of the incident are felt to be serious enough. Examples could include significant or serious damage or injury, offences under the Road Traffic Act, breaches of professional standards of behaviour, significant breach of driver standards / training.

The removal of an officer's driving authority may be undertaken by any supervisor. Following withdrawal, the return of that authority can only be undertaken by the Force PVC Manager or authority of the Matrix Roads Policing (Investigations) Inspector.

- 5.2 The officer removing the driving authority will inform the Police driver of the removal of their driving authority as soon as practicable and document this in writing via email. The rationale for the withdrawal of the driving authority will also be recorded.

The purpose of withdrawal of the Police drivers driving authority is to allow an objective assessment of the driver's training / development needs to be undertaken and to ensure that public confidence in Merseyside Police is maintained.

- 5.2.1 The temporary withdrawal of the persons driving authority will be reviewed by the PVC Manager or in their absence the Matrix Roads Policing Inspector (Investigations) at the earliest

opportunity. This review will determine whether the withdrawal of the driving authority is to be lifted or ratified.

- 5.2.2 If a Police driver is reinstated by either the PVC Manager or Matrix Roads Inspector (Investigations) the driver will be notified via email.
- 5.2.3 The PVC Manager or Matrix Roads Policing Inspector (Investigations) must also update the OEL stating that the Police drivers driving authority has been re-instated.
- 5.2.4 If the withdrawal of the Police drivers driving authority is ratified by either the PVC Manager or Matrix Roads Policing Inspector (Investigations) the driver will be notified via email. They must also update the OEL.
- 5.2.5 The 1st and 2nd line managers of the Police driver and the Academy Driver Training Program Manager will be informed of the decisions made above.
- 5.2.6 The PVC Manager or Matrix Roads Policing Inspector (Investigations) may elect to conduct an initial review meeting, following a PVC. The purpose of the meeting should be to answer two questions based on Threat, Harm and Risk.
 - 1) Should the driver(s) have their Police driving authority suspended or amended and
 - 2) Who should investigate the matter (RPU Syndicate or SCIU)

This meeting should be held within 72 hours of the collision and include the PVC Manager, Matrix Roads Policing Inspector (Investigations), the SCIU and the Duty RPU Sgt. The meeting will be recorded, and the outcome emailed to the officer. The rationale and outcome will be emailed to their 1st and 2nd line managers.

When such a review is held, a subsequent review meeting may be held every 4 weeks subsequent (or at pertinent points in the investigation), to answer the question “should the driver(s) remain grounded or with amended driving authority?”. These meetings will include the PVC Manager, Matrix Roads Policing, the SCIU, a line manager for the drivers affected and the Duty RPU Sgt. The decision to hold these meetings will be made by the PVC Manager or Matrix Roads Policing Inspector (Investigations).

5.3 Driver Training

Where a collision occurs involving a student engaged on a Driver Training course the reporting or investigating officer should consult the Driver Training Programme Manager or in their absence the Police Driver Instructor prior to withdrawal of driving authority.

5.4 Driving Standards

- 5.4.1 Any supervisor may temporarily withdraw or amend a Police driver’s driving authority if they receive information or there is an incident that causes them concern in respect of their driving standards whether a PVC has occurred or not. Such circumstances may include complaints from members of the public, excessive speed, and medical / welfare needs.

- 5.4.2 Where a supervisor withdraws a Police driver's authority the Police driver should be notified in writing via email with an explanation / rationale as to why the decision has been made.

The Force PVC Manager, Head of Driver Training, 1st and 2nd line managers must be included in this notification.

- 5.4.3 The Force PVC Manager will conduct a review of this decision as soon as practicable and inform all persons involved of their decision in writing.

6. Finalisation

The investigating officer at the conclusion of the investigation will complete a finalisation report on the OEL of the Niche occurrence. This may include recommendations or observations as to an appropriate outcome, based on the Driving Standards and Governance policy, if the investigating officer wishes to do so.

The investigating officer is to ensure that all parties including members of the public are aware of the finalisation.

6.1 Avoidable / Unavoidable

Based on the finalisation report the Force PVC Manager will file the PVC as an avoidable or unavoidable collision. The Force PVC Manager will determine which collisions require further discussion at a DSG meeting.

6.2 Pursuits

In the case of PVC's following pursuits / tactical resolutions, consideration must also be given to how the pursuit was conducted and if it complied with relevant Force Policies, College of Policing Tactics Directory and APP.

In a collision involving damage and or injury where tactical pursuit and containment tactics (TPAC) were used, the tactics will be reviewed by the Driver Training Program Manager to identify any training/ development requirements.

Damage caused in the correct application of TPAC Tactics, by trained and authorised staff, will not ordinarily be considered by the Driving Standards and Governance policy. Debrief and reflective practice will be the preferred outcome following a proportionate and appropriate investigation.

6.3 Offences

If the investigating officer identifies that a member of the public has committed an offence as part of a PVC, then action should be taken in line with the Force RTC policy.

7. Matrix Armed Policing Tactics

- 7.1 The deployment of ARV tactics can occur as part of a spontaneous or pre-planned scenario. These tactics will be deployed under the command of an accredited Firearms Commander.
- 7.2 The use of such tactics will often result in a collision that fits in the definition of a PVC. However, the use of such tactics is a use of force.
- 7.3 When a collision occurs as a result of ARV tactics in a firearms operation the Tactical Firearms Commander (TFC) will firstly assess if the tactic(s) have been applied in line with training and nationally approved standards. Secondly, they will assess if the collision is damage only or injury. In the event of damage only the matter will not require recording as a PVC. It is for the TFC to obtain sufficient information at the scene such as photographs, body worn video, mg11's or accounts to justify the use of force and protect the Force from civil litigation in this matter.
- 7.4 In the event of injury being caused to any involved party this requires recording in line with DfT guidance. As such the matter will be recorded as a PVC. The TFC will request as such via the CCM in line with this policy.
- 7.5 In the event of serious injury advice should be sought with recognition of the Death and Serious Injury (DSI) Policy.
- 7.6 The Force PVC Manager and Matrix Firearms Inspector will review such incidents jointly as soon as practicable.

8. Force PVC Manager Responsibilities

- 8.1 The Force PVC Manager is a Sergeant posted within Matrix Roads Policing Investigation.

The role of PVC Manager includes:

- Quality assure all PVC investigations / driver standards.
- Allocate PVC investigations to the relevant person for progression.
- Ensure the PVC database / driver records are maintained accurately.
- Oversee any temporary withdrawal and reinstatement of driving authorities.
- Ensure cases are concluded within timescales.
- Be the point of contact for any PSD / IOPC referrals.
- Liaise with CPS.
- Review and identify collisions for the Driving Standards and Governance meeting.
- Determine whether a collision is Avoidable or Unavoidable.

9. Responsibilities of the Force RTC Dedicated Decision Maker (DDM)

- 9.1 The role of Force RTC Dedicated Decision Maker is undertaken by the Matrix Roads Policing Inspector (Investigations). The purpose of the role is to ensure consistency in the decision-

making process in relation to Police Vehicle Collisions working closely with the PVC Manager and to ensure transparency and a consistent approach throughout the investigation process.

Matters that will be considered for referral to a Criminal Justice DDM for advice will be as follows (list not exhaustive):

- Police Driver not responding to/dealing with an acknowledged policing matter.
- Police Driver acting **far** outside of their level of training.
- Injury to a third party (Police or public).
- Level of damage caused.
- Lack of information to identify/justify the reasons for the manner of driving.
- Where it is in the public interest or interest of Merseyside Police demonstrating impartiality/third party oversight.

9.2 When a file is submitted recommending that a Police driver is prosecuted the DDM will consider the following criteria:

- Current CPS Charging Standards.
- Any relevant legal exemptions.
- All circumstances of the incident.
- Police Driver record.
- The potential impact on public confidence.

9.3 If having considered these criteria the DDM considers a prosecution is appropriate a full prosecution file will be requested from the investigating officer and forwarded to a PDM for a charging decision.