



# **PROCEDURE (Essex) / Linked SOP (Kent)**

## **– Provision and Use of Vehicles and Equipment**

**Number: T 07104**

**Date Published: 23 August 2017**

### **1.0 Summary of Changes**

1.1 This procedure/SOP has been updated on its review as follows:

- Reference to bicycles has been added through the document;
- Reference to Driver Standards Department in 3.1.4 has been removed;
- Section 3.2 been completely updated;
- Section 3.4.1 has been rewritten;
- Section 3.7 - Decommissioning of Vehicles and Parts - has been updated throughout;
- New section 3.9.2 added re the ability for staff to purchase decommissioned fleet bicycles.

### **2.0 What this Procedure/SOP is About**

2.1 This procedure/SOP outlines the commissioning and decommissioning process of fleet vehicles, bicycles and parts and the management of safety and equipment within fleet vehicles. This procedure/SOP must be read in conjunction with D 2000 Policy - Safe Driving and its sub-procedures in Essex and O45 Safe Driving Policy, and its standard operating procedures in Kent.

***Compliance with this procedure/SOP and any governing policy is mandatory.***

### **3.0 Detail the Procedure/SOP**

#### **3.1 Commissioning of Vehicles**

3.1.1 Transport Services are responsible for the commissioning, decommissioning and evaluation of all vehicles used for police purposes. No other person is permitted to purchase or acquire a vehicle for policing purposes or make arrangements for demonstrator vehicles to be delivered for assessment.

3.1.2 All paperwork pertaining to the purchase, commissioning and eventual disposal of all fleet, sponsorship, loan, or demonstrator vehicles will be maintained by the Transport Services Fleet Section.

3.1.3 Vehicles will only be purchased by Transport Services via the appropriate manufacturer in accordance with the national framework agreements managed by the Procurement Department. Vehicles required for specific purposes may be purchased via a public auction through the Fleet Section of Transport Services or via any other method as deemed appropriate by the Head of Transport Services. Police officers or members of staff will not be permitted to directly procure fleet vehicles under any circumstances.



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3.1.4 Once a vehicle is purchased, or acquired, and delivered to Transport Services, it will be subject to the following process of commissioning:

- All vehicles will be subject to an initial vehicle check for roadworthiness, safety and legality by Transport Services workshop;
- Determination of the vehicle category in liaison with Driver Training Department;
- All vehicles will be fitted with equipment and livery appropriate to the duty of the vehicle;
- The issue of a fleet number for the vehicle;
- Registration of the vehicle with the DVLA, where appropriate;
- The issue of a Vehicle Equipment and Mileage Record Book (VEMR) and fuel card;
- Where appropriate, provision of a vehicle excise licence renewable every 12 months.
- The vehicle will be added to the relevant force insurance policy.

### **3.2 Seized Vehicles**

3.2.1 Vehicles that have been seized i.e. from members of the public will not be added to the core budgeted fleet.

### **3.3 Commissioning of Police Bicycles**

3.3.1 Commissioning of all Police Bicycles will be undertaken by Transport Services. See T07101 Procedure/SOP - Vehicle Maintenance.

3.3.2 In all cases, any associated uniform for bicycles is not the responsibility of Transport Services and is the responsibility of the individual in discussion with their relevant division or department.

### **3.4 Sponsorship Vehicles**

3.4.1 From time to time sponsorship vehicles are offered by local authorities or other such parties to work in partnership with Essex Police or Kent Police in crime reduction. Adoption to the fleet will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances and by Transport Services. Sponsorship involving the purchase of a vehicle will be declined. Sponsorship involving the supply of a vehicle by a third party will require commissioning in accordance with this procedure.

3.4.2 The sponsorship vehicle shall be treated as an Essex Police or Kent Police vehicle and shall be subject to all the same checks, guidelines, driver authorities and permissions. Under no circumstances will the vehicle be used for personal use.



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3.4.3 Transport Services are not responsible for the on-going costs for the service, maintenance and repair of the sponsored vehicle. If there is a requirement for Transport Services to carry out the service, maintenance and repair an agreed budget must be provided as part of the sponsorship arrangement. If the service, maintenance and repair are to be carried out by the sponsor or dealer it must be to recommended manufacturer standards.

3.4.4 It is expected that the sponsor will support all whole life costs in connection with the sponsorship vehicle, including commissioning, servicing, repairs, road tax, livery and fuel. Fuel shall be drawn against the police fuel card system.

3.4.5 A sponsorship vehicle will not be used in any response, surveillance or covert policing role. No emergency equipment or radio will be fitted to a sponsorship vehicle, including airwave radios other than in exceptional circumstances and only under the direction of Transport Services.

3.4.6 Users of the sponsorship vehicle shall comply with the Essex Police or Kent Police guidelines and driver authorities.

3.4.7 Sponsorship vehicles will not be liveried although there may be some exceptional circumstances where this is required and in those circumstances will always be discussed with Transport Services before the vehicle is used. However, the vehicle may carry the Essex Police or Kent Police Crest and any corporate logos in consultation with Transport Services.

3.4.8 When returning sponsorship vehicles, all decommissioning including the removal of markings referring to Essex Police or Kent Police must be undertaken by Transport Services.

### **3.5 Vehicles on Loan to Essex Police or Kent Police for Evaluation (Demonstrator Vehicles)**

3.5.1 These vehicles are not owned by the relevant Force and are often loaned by manufacturers and dealers for evaluation purposes. No vehicle will be accepted without the specific authority of Transport Services Fleet Section and any such vehicle must be delivered to that section before being taken into service. Such loan vehicles will be allocated a fleet number and issued with a Bearer Fuel Card from Transport Services together with a Vehicle Equipment and Mileage Record Book (VEMR). See T 07103 Procedure/SOP – Vehicle Equipment and Mileage Record Books.



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3.5.2 Approval for the use of a demonstrator vehicle will be given at the discretion of the Transport Services Fleet Section in order to ensure that they receive the widest possible evaluation in a variety of roles. An evaluation form will be issued and users should comment on the suitability of the vehicle for a particular role. At the conclusion of the loan period, the vehicle must be returned to Transport Services Fleet Section, together with the VEMR and the completed evaluation form(s).

3.5.3 If operational equipment is required to be fitted to a loan/demonstrator vehicle, guidance must be sought and obtained from Transport Services Fleet Section before any such equipment can be fitted.

### **3.6 Operational Requirement/Assessment:**

3.6.1 Where a specific type of vehicle is thought to be of value to the organisation or required for specific operational purposes, Transport Services Fleet Section must be consulted and a written report submitted.

3.6.2 Transport Services will maintain a record of all vehicles assessed; duplicate assessments will not normally be allowed.

3.6.3 The vehicle assessed would normally be fitted with all the police equipment needed for a full assessment. The assessment period is determined by Transport Services Fleet Section.

### **3.7 Decommissioning of Vehicles and Parts**

3.7.1 Transport Services will decommission all police vehicles, boats and bicycles in line with the vehicle replacement programme. All livery pertaining to Essex or Kent police shall be removed before disposal.

3.7.2 Transport Services will manage the disposal and/or sale of all decommissioned vehicles, boats, bicycles, vehicle parts and workshop equipment via whichever method deemed appropriate by the Head of Transport Services. Items may be sold via public auction or via internet auction sites such as eBay, where Transport Services are solely responsible for the disposal process and management of the Internet or eBay account. If eBay is used as the disposal method, there shall be a minimum expected return of £250. Items below £250 will be sold at the discretion of the Head of Transport Services.

3.7.3 No police officer or member of staff shall be permitted to dispose of or sell any police vehicles, boats, bicycles, or parts, or any other such equipment other than Transport Services.



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3.7.4 Vehicles assessed as not suitable for auction will be 'written off' on the approval of the Head of Transport Services and will be disposed of via appropriate salvage contracts or broken for parts to be recycled within the fleet.

### **3.8 Removal of Livery**

3.8.1 All marked police vehicles will have livery pertaining to Essex Police or Kent Police removed before the vehicle is taken to auction or salvage.

### **3.9 Purchase of Decommissioned Vehicles by Staff**

3.9.1 Any member of staff wishing to purchase a decommissioned police vehicle or parts (excluding bicycles) must not have been involved in the decommissioning process and must purchase the vehicle via the public or internet auction process as if they were a member of the public. No preferential treatment or direct sale of vehicles to any member of staff will take place under any circumstances.

3.9.2 Decommissioned fleet bicycles can be purchased by staff for £75 where a deduction from net salary is made by way of payment. Staff wishing to purchase a bicycle should in the first instance email the Transport Services Boreham Fleet Co-ordinators for Essex or Transport Services Priory Park Fleet Co-ordinators for Kent, stating the frame size required. Requests will be dealt with on a first come first served basis and a waiting list will be maintained by the Fleet co-ordinators where requests cannot be fulfilled immediately. Bicycles for sale will be assessed by Transport Services as fit for sale but once the sale has taken place the relevant force will no longer bear any responsibility for that bicycle. Until the sale and transfer of any fleet bicycle is undertaken, they must not be used for personal business. Under no circumstances will bicycles be passed to staff via any other method of disposal.

### **3.10 Security of Equipment in Vehicles**

3.10.1 It is the responsibility of the user to ensure vehicles and their contents are secure at all times, especially when the vehicle is left unattended. Any items of value including mobile phones, satellite navigation equipment, laptops, mobile communication devices etc., which are removable, should be removed from the vehicle or secured out of sight when left unattended to avoid the risk of theft. It is recognised, however, that it is not always operationally possible, for example when a unit is deployed then sets off on foot, for the officer to have time to remove such equipment.

3.10.2 Theft of police computer equipment poses a considerable security risk and this must be considered when transporting such equipment. Security of data must be paramount at all times.



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### 3.11 Use of Communication Devices and Mobile Phones

3.11.1 **Essex:** The use of mobile telephones while driving is illegal if no hands free device is in use. Evidence shows that the use of hands free equipment can still lead to driver distraction, however, if individual judgement is such that it is felt that a call must be made or received while driving, and a suitable stopping place is not available, then mobile telephone calls must only be carried out using hands free equipment or via Blue Tooth devices and must adhere to the current Road Traffic Law. Airwaves or hand held radios should also be used in line with mobile communication legislation.

3.11.2 The sending or reading of text messages while driving is strictly prohibited.

3.11.3 **Kent:** Please refer to Standard Operating Procedure O45L Use of Mobile Phones Etc., in Vehicles.

### 3.12 Mobile Devices

3.12.1 **Essex:** A mobile device must not be used while the vehicle is in motion unless it is installed into an approved dock. The device must only be operated by the front seat passenger. Drivers must observe and adhere to current road law in relation to viewing moving images whilst driving and should restrict mobile device use to Satnav only.

3.12.2 Mobile devices must be removed when the vehicle is being repaired, serviced or recovered by a third party.

3.12.3 **Kent:** See O45L Use of Mobile Phones etc., in Vehicles for further information.

### 3.13 Satellite Navigation Equipment

3.13.1 **Essex:** When in use, sat nav equipment (or other mobile devices) must be placed in a position where it does not obstruct the vision of the driver or the deployment of any airbags. If there is any doubt, advice should be sought from Transport Services New Vehicle Build Section.

3.13.2 **Kent:** See O45L Use of Mobile Phones etc., in Vehicles for further information and guidance.

### 3.14 Smoking

3.14.1 Smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes, or vaporizers is not permitted in any Kent or Essex Police vehicle at any time including hire or loan vehicles. See L 1630 Protocol – No Smoking – Section 3.3.



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### **3.15 Food and Beverages**

3.15.1 Wherever possible food and beverages must be consumed outside of vehicles to enable them to be kept clean and free of contamination for other occupants.

### **3.16 Keys**

3.16.1 All vehicle keys must be readily available at LPAs/Divisions or departments at all times to enable those who have a need, and an entitlement to drive, to have ready access to those vehicles. Under no circumstances must keys to fleet vehicles be kept by individuals or teams to allow sole use of a vehicle. The only exception would be for certain covert vehicles.

3.16.2 When the vehicle is being used on the road, every care should be taken to keep vehicle keys safe and secure and ensure that vehicles are locked and properly secure when leaving them unattended.

### **3.17 Vehicle Equipment**

3.17.1 The approved level of equipment carried in each vehicle is defined by Transport Services in consultation with Driver Training and the Vehicle User Forums. This equipment is replaced divisionally via procurement contracts. No additional items must be added to vehicle equipment without the knowledge of Transport Services who will consult the relevant forums as this may affect the overall legal weight restrictions of the vehicle.

### **3.18 Additional Vehicle Equipment**

3.18.1 Additional equipment of any kind must not be fitted to the interior or exterior of any police vehicle without prior authority and agreement of Transport Services.

3.18.2 Secondary Internal Rear View Mirrors are permitted for Driver Training Vehicles, but no other vehicle without prior authority and agreement of Transport Services.

### **3.19 Child Seats in Vehicles**

3.19.1 Police vehicles are not equipped with child restraint seats and these are not provided separately by Transport Services.



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### **3.20 Seat Belts**

3.20.1 Seat belts must be worn at all times. See:

- Essex - D 2002 Procedure – Driving Authority, section 4.8;
- Kent – Standard Operating Procedure O45a, General Driving, section 3.3

### **3.21 Traction Control & Electronic Stability Program (ESP) Vehicles**

3.21.1 Traction control and electronic stability programs will remain switched on at all times. Drivers are not authorised to switch off these driving aids other than when driving in extreme weather conditions at low speeds.

### **3.22 Fire Extinguishers**

3.22.1 Fire extinguishers currently fitted to vehicles are designed primarily for engine and electrical fires on motor vehicles.

3.22.2 If the fire brigade attend, they should be informed on arrival that an oxygen free nitrogen propellant dry powder extinguisher has been used.

3.22.3 These extinguishers can only be used once, although it is possible by releasing the trigger or button to stop and re-apply the jet. Once the seal is broken the extinguisher must be replaced. It is essential therefore, that extinguishers should not be activated either for testing or practice purposes.

3.22.4 When extinguishers have been discharged, replacements can be obtained from the Transport Services workshops on production of the used (or defective) extinguishers and Vehicle Defect Form.

3.22.5 Extinguishers fitted to protected personnel carriers will be tested by the workshop on vehicle service.

### **3.23 Dartford Crossing Charges**

3.23.1 All fleet vehicles will be allowed to use the Dartford Crossing free of charge. Transport Services will manage the registration and removal of all fleet vehicles on the Dartford Crossing database system.

3.23.2 Further information can be obtained as follows:

- Essex : G 1603 Procedure - Excess Travel, Dartford River Crossing
- Kent: SOP - V01b – Mileage and Miscellaneous Allowances





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### **3.24 Vehicle Excise Licence (Tax Discs)**

3.24.1 Vehicles are not required to display VELs and the taxation of all fleet vehicles will be managed annually by Transport Services who will liaise with the DVLA in all circumstances to obtain licences.

## **4.0 Equality Impact Assessment**

4.1 An equality assessment has been carried out and shows the proposals in this procedure/SOP would have no potential or actual differential impact on grounds of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, transgender, disability, age, religion or belief or sexual orientation.

## **5.0 Risk Assessment**

5.1 There is a risk of compromise associated to individuals and frontline policing if this procedure is not adhered to.

5.2 There is an organisational risk of loss of reputation and vulnerability to criminal or civil liabilities that would arise from a failure to adhere to the procedures within this document.

5.3 Users should be aware that vehicles and associated equipment are regarded as 'work equipment' under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regs 1998 (PUWER).

5.4 Under the Health and Safety at Work etc., Act 1974 and The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Essex Police Force and Kent Police Force has a duty to protect the Health and Safety of its staff and others who might be affected by its work activities and to carry out risk assessments in relation to those work activities that staff are required to undertake, to provide a safe place of work and suitable safe work equipment.

5.5 Sec 7(2) of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 requires an employee to cooperate with the employer to enable them to comply with meeting these statutory duties. Furthermore Section 7(1) places a duty on an employee to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions. Section 8 states that no person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with, or misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.



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### **6.0 Consultation**

6.1 The following were invited to provide feedback in the consultation phase during the formulation of this document:

- Unison
- Federation
- Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator
- Health & Safety
- Strategic Change Team
- PSD Superintendent
- Policy/Risk
- Head of Roads Policing
- Head of Driver Training

### **7.0 Monitoring and Review**

7.1 This procedure/SOP is scheduled for full review every two years and will be reviewed by the author and owner to ensure it still remains accurate and fit for purpose.

### **8.0 Governing force policy.**

**Related force policies or related procedures (Essex) / linked standard operating procedures (Kent)**

#### **Essex:**

- D 2000 Policy – Safe Driving and all its associated procedures.

#### **Joint:**

- T0710 Policy – Vehicle Fleet Management
- T07101 Procedure/SOP – Vehicle Maintenance
- T07102 Procedure/SOP – Fuel Management
- T07103 Procedure/SOP – Vehicle Equipment and Mileage Record Books
- T07105 Procedure/SOP – Wheel and Tyres Management
- T07107 Procedure/SOP – Hire Vehicles
- T07108 Procedure /SOP – Telematics – Provision & Management of Equipment and Users.



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### **Kent:**

- T07106 – Procedure Vehicle Lease Schemes
- O45 Policy – Safe Driving and all its associated Standard Operating Procedures

### **9.0 Other source documents, e.g. Legislation, APP, Force forms, partnership agreements (if applicable)**

- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regs 1998 (PUWER)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Management of Health Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Construction and Use Regulations