

Police Scotland 'Crime Cars' hailed a success



A Road Crime Team dedicated to denying criminals the use of the roads in the East of Scotland has seen over 650 road traffic offences dealt with, more than 240 vehicles seized and thousands of pounds worth of drugs and cash recovered since its inception last year.

The use of 'Crime Cars', where Road Policing officers team up with Local Policing colleagues to target areas where intelligence suggests criminals are committing offences, started in Edinburgh and the Lothians and Scottish Borders Divisions in early 2017. Due to their success they were further rolled out in Forth Valley and Fife several months later.

Since their introduction, the teams have seized 241 vehicles; arrested 42 people on warrant; dealt with 653 road traffic offences including driving whilst disqualified, without insurance, without a licence or drink/drug driving; recovered around £28,000 worth of drugs, almost £19,000 of cash and six

stolen cars.

Chief Inspector Mark Patterson, in charge of Road Policing in the East of Scotland, said combining the expertise of Road Policing and Local Policing has benefitted both areas of policing.

“Criminals use the road network to travel around to commit crime and transport the proceeds of their offending. Often they will travel in vehicles that are not roadworthy or without insurance or a licence. By using intelligence gathered by local officers alongside officers trained in road traffic matters and advanced driving, we have been able to target key offenders who are causing most harm to our communities.

“Whilst we deploy the Road Crime Team to support ongoing investigations, they will also come across situations or be sent to incidents that are unfolding, and of course stop any vehicles that cause them concern. In these circumstances the officers have stopped drivers who were six and nine times over the drink drive limit and one speeding at 127mph. They have also recovered a firearm, arrested a man who was wanted on a European Extradition Warrant, and seized three vehicles from the same woman.

“Two hundred and forty one vehicles linked to criminality have been taken off Scotland’s roads, and the work does not stop at that point. Other officers have been able to take up the investigations and we have gone on to seize a further £400,000 under the Proceeds of Crime Act and £550,000 of cannabis cultivations, just from one apprehension.”

Assistant Chief Constable Wayne Mawson said the value of the Road Crime Team is clear.

“The pilots have been so successful that Crime Cars are operating across the East of Scotland every day, and other policing divisions are considering introducing them.

“The message to those looking to use roads in the East for the purposes of committing crime or travelling to commit crime is clear – the Crime Cars are on patrol and will continue to act on intelligence and stop suspicious or concerning vehicles to deal with criminality and make our roads safer for everyone.”