

# **Police officers issued with protective surgical face masks**

**Police officers and staff across Scotland will be given surgical face masks to wear as they respond to incidents or deal with the public where it is not possible to adhere to social distancing measures.**

Police Scotland has secured initial stocks of type 2 fluid resistant surgical masks and is distributing them to its workforce in response to advice from Health Protection Scotland, Public Health England and the UK Government.

Officers and staff will be able to choose to use the type 2 masks in certain low risk situations where they are unable to maintain a two-metre distance from their colleagues or members of the public.



Officers and staff who are in contact with someone who is suspected or confirmed to have coronavirus will still follow existing guidance which recommends the FFP3 mask.

A total of 4,000 officers and staff in divisions across Scotland have already been trained in the use of, and supplied with, FFP3 mask, which offers an enhanced level of protection through a face-fitted respirator.

Deputy Chief Constable Malcolm Graham said: “We are committed to doing everything we can to protect the public and limit the spread of the virus, and to protect our own people as they carry out their duties.

“We recognise that every day our officers and staff are putting themselves in harm’s way and we want them to have the right protection to do their job.



SONY DSC

“In line with scientific advice, these surgical masks

will be available for use as a precaution for officers and staff dealing with incidents where social distancing measures are not possible.

“Officers on routine patrol should not normally need to wear face masks, however they are being provided with the additional equipment to protect themselves, their colleagues and members of the public.

“The procurement of protective equipment continues to be challenging due to demand from across the emergency services but we are working hard to secure a sustainable supply of the masks for our people.”

The type 2 masks serve two purposes. If someone has COVID-19, even if they are showing no symptoms, the mask can stop them from spreading the virus to other people.

There is also some evidence from the UK Government and Public Health England that the type 2 masks offer some protection if the person wearing them comes into contact with someone with coronavirus.