



Department
for Transport

Reporting road accidents to the police

Personal details

1. Your details

Name

email address

2. Are you responding: *

on behalf of an organisation?

as an individual? (Go to question 4)

Organisation details

3. Name of organisation?

Thompsons Solicitors

Personal details

4. What is the first part of your post code? eg BS7 or EX4

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5. What currently available channels of communication do you think need to be considered for reporting road accidents at this time?

Please see subsequent answers.

6. What reporting methods do you believe might exist in the future?

Please see subsequent answers.

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7. What are your views about giving each separate police force the power to decide which communication channels they offer for reporting road accidents?

Unless there is a national framework, different police forces will have different reporting mechanisms. These proposals will require motorists to know (a) which force boundary they are in and (b) the reporting mechanisms for that force – and therefore would place an additional burden on motorists. It will create confusion to have different forces having different procedures. As an example, citizens often commute over two or three police force areas just to travel to work.

8. What is your opinion of allowing the use of automated processes for the reporting of road accidents?

Automated processes run the risk of removing the possibility of important questions being asked – for example an individual may report damage to their own vehicle but not see the need to report damage to other vehicles, individuals or property. They will only report in relation to the impact of the incident on them rather than give a full picture. Speaking to a Police Officer or Police Staff enables a dynamic risk assessment to take place and for a determination to be made as to whether resources need to be deployed and to connect up different incidents to the same dangerous driver.

Assessment by a Police Officer ensures other offences are identified. This can play an important part in road safety and removing dangerous drivers from the road.

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9. Do you agree that using new methods of reporting road accidents would deliver benefits to drivers?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Why?

The proposals would create an additional burden to drivers (see response to question 7).

Without direct interaction with police officers, there is a greater chance of road safety being diminished (see response to question 8).

10. Do you agree that using new methods of reporting road accidents would deliver benefits to the police?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Why?

Whilst Police may be able to access the Motor Insurers' Database to check insurance positions, this is complicated by the use of trade policies. A Police Officer may not be able to fully check insurance details without seeing a physical copy of a valid insurance certificate in situations where a trade policy has been used. Automated processes might be more open to fraud and could lead to more uninsured drivers on the road.

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11. Any other comments

The introductory comments of the consultation suggest that applying S170 of RTA 1988 to report collisions to police is misleading. The requirement to do so is only when a person does not exchange details with another person involved (S170(3)). The vast majority of collisions do not therefore not require reporting to the police.

This whole approach could be read as an attempt to mask the impact in the reduction in police officers since 2010, when the total police workforce has fallen from 244,497 to 198,684, an 18.7% reduction, according to 2017 Home Office data (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/629865/polic-e-workforce-tabs-jul17.ods).

Once completed email the saved document to roadacc.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Or post it to:

Road safety statistics – reporting road traffic accidents consultation
Department for Transport
2/13 Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR