



Home Office

Home Office
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Dear Colleague,

I am determined to do everything in my power to ensure that the police have the necessary tools to perform their duties effectively and keep road users safe. There is a clear need and public expectation that the law should give officers the necessary protection if they drive in accordance with their training with a view to protecting the public. While it is clearly vital that we protect public safety and that officers are accountable for their actions, it is also important that highly trained and skilled officers have the confidence to protect the public by using those skills to pursue offenders and respond to emergencies.

The police have raised concerns over the legal protection they are currently afforded if they are involved in a collision in the course of their duties. Under current legislation, the same legal test for careless and dangerous driving is applied to police officers and the general public.

That is why we published a public consultation in May 2018 on the law, guidance and practice surrounding police driving in England, Wales and Scotland. The majority of respondents to the consultation agreed with the need to strengthen the legal protection given to police drivers when pursuing a subject or responding to an emergency. The consultation response, which has been published today, can be found on Gov.UK at; www.gov.uk/government/consultations/police-pursuits

It is vital that we send a clear message to criminals, whether in car or on a moped, they cannot escape arrest simply by driving recklessly. That's why the Government will seek to introduce a new test to assess the standard of driving of a police officer. Should an officer be involved in a collision, this new test will allow the courts to judge their standard of driving against a peer with the same level of training rather than a member of the public. This new test will enable the police to keep the public safe on the roads and pavements around the country while ensuring that it is still possible to hold to account any officers that drive in an inappropriate manner.

Many members of the House have an interest in the law and practice surrounding police pursuits and will welcome the Government's proposals to provide police drivers with the necessary legal protection to perform their duties in confidence.

Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP