

# Newsletter



**We remember General Secretary Ian Hamill,  
who died on 20 March 2014**

# A Tribute to Ian Hamill

From TISPOL Director  
Pasi Kemppainen



## **Dear Friends and Colleagues,**

It was with great shock and sadness for everyone at TISPOL that we heard of Ian's sudden and unexpected passing. We are still devastated at the loss of our great colleague and dear friend, and we are still coming to terms with life without Ian.

Ian was a remarkable and talented General Secretary and ambassador of TISPOL, with an unbelievable enthusiasm and dedication to his work. It is through his leadership, energy and commitment that TISPOL is now an enforcement body recognised by the European Commission, and by Traffic Police Services in Europe and throughout the world.

Ian was a highly respected member of the international law enforcement community. With his enormous drive and energy and strong focus on getting the job done, he has made a massive contribution to road policing, both in terms of road safety and road security.

He used his extensive knowledge and experience of road safety for the benefit of road users across Europe. Although many drivers, cyclists and pedestrians will never know it, Ian's legacy to them will be a safer roads environment.

Ian made a real difference and we can confidently say that because of Ian, many lives have been >>



>> saved and injuries prevented because of his contributions through the work of TISPOL to policing the roads of Europe. We are grateful to Ian for what TISPOL has achieved and what can be developed in the future because of him.



We will remember Ian not only for his capacity, ability and passion for his work in TISPOL, but also as a caring, kind and pleasant man. He was a great individual with a fantastic sense of humour and welcoming smile for everyone; a real gentleman with a friendly and informal style.



We know Ian was a dedicated family man and very proud of his wife and children, Heather, Claire and Chris. He would often talk about them with great love and affection. He also spoke about his dear mother Mary and about his dog Mac.



Ian was a wonderful human being and will be greatly missed by all. We are so sad in TISPOL to lose him as a leader, colleague and dear friend. We also offer our deepest sympathies and condolences to his family.

***Ian, we will never forget you. Let me tell you that you will be fondly remembered and the legacy you leave behind in TISPOL will endure and flourish. God bless you, my friend, and may you rest in peace. Our thoughts and prayers are with you today and always.***

A special memorial ceremony for Ian Hamill will be held in Brussels at the time of the Conference and meetings in early June. Full details will be provided in due course.

# OTHER ITEMS

*Edition 1, 2014*

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### CONFERENCE REVIEW

A report on the highly successful 2013 Conference, with details of how to register for this year's event. Also, a look at a successful initiative to destroy a large organised crime network in the Baltic states.

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### TACHOGRAPH MANIPULATION

TISPOL's Martin Bonthuis and Gerard Schipper of Euro Contrôle Route answer questions on offences, enforcement and penalties across Europe, particularly the contribution of tachograph enforcement to road safety and security across Europe.

## welcome

from TISPOL President  
Koen Ricour



IT IS a key part of my role as TISPOL President to ensure regular engagement with the appropriate police colleagues, as well as policy makers and stakeholders, in

order to make as many people as possible aware of the important work we do. It was therefore a pleasure to be in Helsinki very recently (17 to 19 March), not only for a meeting of our Executive Committee, but also for a meeting with Finland's National Chief Police Commissioner, Mikko Paatero and members of his closest staff.

As well as hearing from Commissioner Paatero about the new organisation and main strategies of the Finnish Police, I was delighted to hear him describe TISPOL's Road Policing Model as 'one of the best things that has happened in the field of policing in recent years.' The Model allows better use to be made of police resources, and ensures that transport security is also achieved through road safety work.

This is further evidence that TISPOL offers wisdom, experience and value in a rapidly-changing world. For sure, we don't have all the answers right away, but the strength of our shared know-how is a huge advantage as we work together to make the roads of Europe safer and more secure for all citizens.

**Pics (clockwise from far left):** a general discussion between TISPOL representatives and senior Finnish police officers: National Chief Police Commissioner Paatero with Koen Ricour; Paatero and Ricour with Deputy National Chief Police Commissioner Seppo Kolehmainen and the late TISPOL General Secretary Ian Hamill; delegates at the meeting.





# 77,500 offences reported in truck safety operation

A WEEK-LONG police safety operation late last year across Europe led to the removal from the road of some 2,929 trucks for dangerous defects. The action followed checks of more than 147,045 trucks across 29 countries between 7 and 13 October. Co-ordinated by TISPOL, the operation saw police carrying out a wide range of safety inspections that focused on speeding, alcohol, drugs, seatbelt use, tachograph infringements, excess weight, dangerous loading and document offences.

A total of 77,524 offences were reported, including the following:

- 443 drivers for alcohol and drug offences
- 21,445 offences of exceeding the speed limit
- 11,681 instances of drivers exceeding their maximum permitted time at the wheel
- 1,756 overweight trucks and 1,514 insecure loads.

Of the 2,929 trucks prohibited from continuing their journeys, most were because of dangerous technical defects on the vehicles.

Stopping drivers for speeding

offences also provided police officers with the opportunity to make other appropriate safety and security checks. For example, during the week of this truck safety operation, officers also detected and dealt with offences connected with irregular immigration and human trafficking (18), possession of drugs (5), firearms (6), stolen goods (36) and other crimes (735).

TISPOL President Koen Ricour said: "TISPOL is committed to safer, more secure roads across Europe. Key to this is improved monitoring of large goods vehicles, their drivers and their cargoes. We know that the vast majority of truck drivers and operators take a pride in the quality and safety of their work, and we strive to support them. We find they value the work we do, and co-operation with them at the roadside is generally excellent.

"It is against the less scrupulous operators, who put profits first and who will cut safety corners in the process, that our efforts are focused. We are also working to ensure a more consistent enforcement of current laws governing large goods vehicle safety."

## News in brief

### POLAND: DRINK DRIVE ACTION

The Polish government is cracking down on drink driving after a recent tragedy sparked national attention. A 26-year-old man allegedly caused the deaths of six pedestrians, including a child, when his car veered onto a pavement on New Year's Day. A week later, Prime Minister Donald Tusk announced that courts would now issue fines of up to 5,000 zloty (EUR 1200) for causing accidents while driving drunk, licences would be confiscated for three years and there would be less use of suspended sentences.

### SPAIN: EMERGENCY LIGHTING

Lawmakers have approved an amendment to the Traffic, Motor Vehicle and Road Safety act, which will ensure that all emergency vehicles will use blue lights. Both fire engines and ambulances currently show orange lights - a privilege they share with other non-priority vehicles including rubbish trucks, cranes, diggers and breakdown vehicles. It will bring Spain's emergency vehicles in line with most of the European Union.

### ESTONIA: ICE ROADS OPEN

The first official ice road was open to traffic in Estonia in January, a little later than usual. The 3.5 kilometre track on the sea ice from the town of Haapsalu to Noarootsi peninsula on the opposite coast of the Bay of Haapsalu was opened to vehicles weighing up to 2.5 tonnes.

Estonia's ice roads are the only European roads where the wearing of a seat belt is not only compulsory, but is in fact forbidden.

### HUNGARY: ANTIFREEZE

A brine solution discovered and developed in Hungary is helping to keep the roads of Tennessee free from ice and snow during the winter months. The liquid, which contains potato juice, has been used alongside the snowploughs to keep roadways open and clear during winter. The potato juice is mixed with a traditional salt brine at varying ratios depending on the temperatures and weather conditions.



### FOLLOW US ON TWITTER

If you haven't already done so, then do sign up to follow us on Twitter. Our name is 'tispologr'. Also, if you have anything you may wish to contribute to future newsletters and bulletins, do please send it to us. We are always grateful for articles and photographs... or if you come across a video or story that deserves a mention, do let us know. Just send an email to [media@tispol.org](mailto:media@tispol.org)



# Latest operation: 1.1m breath tests

**A PAN EUROPEAN operation in December saw police conduct 1,141,058 roadside breath tests for alcohol, in 31 countries. Of these, 15,305 offences were detected.**

Motorists were also checked for drugs in the operation, and 2,133 offences were detected. The operation was organised by TISPOL in 31 countries between 9 and 15 December.

TISPOL President Koen Ricour said: “These results show that too many people are still prepared to risk driving after they have taken alcohol or drugs. Regardless of the legal limit, it’s vital for everyone to know and accept that impairment starts with your very first drink and will reduce your ability to drive safely.

“We want to educate road users about the consequences of impairment, not just in the run-up to Christmas, but throughout the year. TISPOL is committed to a united approach, working with other stakeholders, governments and road safety organisations to provide effective deterrent messages. But we will also continue to seek out those drink drivers and drug drivers who ignore the warnings, and, in so doing, unnecessarily put their own lives and the lives of other innocent

road users at risk.”

Stopping drivers to check for alcohol and drug offences also provides police officers with the opportunity to make other appropriate safety and security checks. For example, during the week of this operation, officers also detected and dealt with offences connected with illegal immigration and human trafficking (107), possession of drugs (460), firearms (79) and stolen goods (82), as well as 1,803 other crimes.

## **AN AVOIDABLE TRAGEDY**

It’s tragic to consider that alcohol is linked to around 6,500 deaths each year on European roads. And, as ETSC points out, while progress has been made in recent years, the figures are still far too high. Especially so considering that drink-driving is a totally avoidable risk factor.

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# Alcohol enforcement updates

## Crime detections

The total number of crimes detected during TISPOL's nine operations in 2013 was 21,606. This figure was reached from results provided by each member country at the end of each operation. The offences included:

- irregular immigration and human trafficking (585 offences)
- drugs-finding (1,911 offences)
- firearms (260 offences)
- stolen goods (432 offences)
- other crimes (18,418 offences).

This reinforces the value of these operations in helping to make Europe's roads **safer and more secure**.



### *Ireland: use of social media*

Police officers in Ireland used social media to raise awareness, and remind people not to drink and drive. They also made them very conscious of police enforcement of drinking and driving rules. This in turn promoted an online conversation.

The action was one in a series of operations as the need to change driver behaviour is ongoing. Social media is very important as it gives the Irish police direct access to 56,000 followers. Tweets have been retweeted to more than 300,000 people. Many of the items posted are used by online media. For example, the Irish Journal attracted 40,000 views for its coverage of the drink-drive operation.

Challenges to social media include the requirement to provide timely information images while recognising the privacy and legal issues. Officers say they avoid publishing registration numbers. Interaction online does require monitoring of Twitter and Facebook, as well as and compiling responses.

All types and sorts of questions arise and in order to support the good name of the organisation, the responses must be accurate. Linking back to other documents is a simple way to provide comprehensive replies. Ensuring the website has as much information about enforcements and Mandatory Alcohol Testing checkpoints facilitates a great number of responses to questions, and clearly raises awareness regarding enforcement.

Social media requires a different tone and approach; less formal but it must be part of the communication strategy. Social media is merely another tool to be used in conjunction with tradition media. Feedback is very quickly obtained, in respect of new road layouts, road signage etc. Recently, police covered on Twitter the new 'bus corridor' in Dublin city centre. This showed enforcement and was a reminder to the public regarding the new road layout. It also permitted us to obtain feedback in relation to signage and the need for more advanced signage as drivers were committed to a route traffic lane before encountering the signs.

Members of the public like the interaction and are thankful of the response, even if the police message does not resolve the issue fully in all cases.

### *Switzerland: tougher measures*

The Swiss government has adopted new measures to tackle drink driving. As of 1 January, novice drivers are subject to a zero alcohol limit for

their first three years behind the wheel. The same restriction applies to all professional drivers.

### *Portugal: alcohol limit reduced*

Portugal has lowered its blood alcohol limit for novice drivers and some categories of professional drivers to 0.2g/l, down from the standard 0.5g/l limit.

### *Belgium: interlock use*

Four years after a new law came into force, judges in Belgium have finally begun requiring convicted drink drivers to install alcohol interlocks in their vehicles. Since August 2013, seven drivers have begun rehabilitation programmes with the Belgian Institute for Road Safety (IBSR), which is also responsible for installing the interlocks.

### *Tackling professional drivers*

ETSC Executive Director Antonio Avenoso says that lorries and buses crash less often than other vehicles, but when they do, the consequences can be catastrophic. "Here in Belgium, a school-bus driver transporting 49 children was tested and found to be over the limit. He was sacked within days. Zero tolerance in such a case is a good thing, but surely it would be better if drivers who have been drinking were automatically blocked from starting the ignition," he explained recently.

"The technology to do that already exists and several European countries have laws that require so-called 'alcohol interlocks' to be installed in specific cases such as school buses, or to prevent convicted drink-drivers from re-offending. Finland was the first to introduce them, back in 2008, and now has a well-established rehabilitation programme. In neighbouring Sweden, it is estimated that there are now close to 100,000 of the devices in use. France requires alcohol interlocks on new school buses, and retrofitting of the rest of the fleet will be completed by next year.



An alcohol interlock device is demonstrated.

# Solutions that work



**FOR 2013**, the TISPOL Conference returned to the Radisson Blu Hotel at Manchester Airport. A total of 220 delegates attended from 34 countries around the world, from places as far away as Palestine, Hong Kong, the United States and Australia.

The theme for this year was 'Improving Road Safety: Solutions that work' and a priority for the Conference was to review the techniques that would always be effective in reducing road traffic deaths and serious injuries, as well as to consider new ways of dealing with familiar challenges.

Conference Chair Noel Brett introduced an opening video message from Brian Simpson MEP and welcomed Szabolcs Schmidt, Head of the European Commission's Road Safety Unit. Mr Schmidt emphasised the importance of enforcement with the Commission's ongoing road safety priorities and praised the contribution TISPOL continues to make toward the target of halving the number of people killed on Europe's roads by the year 2020.

'Much depends, in terms of road safety, on the enforcement of existing rules, and this enforcement

does not stop at national borders," Mr Schmidt told delegates. "TISPOL is the organisation which provides cross-border co-operation for enforcement officers throughout Europe, so we in the European Commission attach tremendous importance to the work of TISPOL and we very much appreciate this work."

There were opportunities during the Conference for networking as well as catching up with some of the latest scientific and technological developments. Feedback from delegates attending was very positive, not only for the opportunity to learn and debate within the formal Conference programme, but also for the chance to chat, share experiences and consider ideas and solutions more informally.

Reflecting on the Conference, TISPOL General Secretary Ian Hamill said: "We were pleased to see such strong support for the event, from delegates and exhibitors alike. It is always of great importance to us to provide value for money, as well as a stimulating, relevant and worthwhile programme. We pledge the same commitment for the 2014 Conference and we look forward to seeing you there."

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## Join us in Manchester for the 2014 Conference

**Do make sure you book to attend this year's Conference, which will be taking place at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Manchester Airport, on Tuesday 30 September and Wednesday 1 October. The programme has been published, and there are details of delegate and exhibitor packages available, as well as the accommodation options. Please visit [www.tispol.org/theconference2014](http://www.tispol.org/theconference2014) now.**

# Huge joint investigation of Baltic car thefts

AN ORGANISED crime network originating in and operating from Lithuania and specialising in the theft of luxury cars from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania has been dismantled. In total, 99 thefts were committed. In Estonia, 25 people were convicted in relation to 56 thefts, while in Latvia, 43 thefts were committed. The amount awarded in victim compensation is almost €550,000.

A joint investigation team (JIT) composed of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian authorities, with judicial coordination support and funding for the JIT under the JIT Funding Project provided by Eurojust and analysis supplied by Europol, also disrupted the operations of four related mobile organised crime groups of Lithuanian thieves operating in Estonia and Latvia.

This case involved one of the largest and longest-running joint investigations in the Baltic region, from April 2009 to April 2012. In a coordination meeting held recently at Eurojust, the performance of the JIT was evaluated by Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian authorities and Europol. They also exchanged views on the results achieved and **experience gained**.

Estonian JIT leader and Chief State Prosecutor Ms Heili Sepp commented: "Estonia has been involved in 25 JITs since 2007. This so-called "JITBalcar" has been the largest in terms of time and resources. This JIT provided valuable experience and solutions in terms of international cooperation. Overcoming the gaps between national legal systems required a great deal of creativity. Fortunately, we had the advantage of working with people with a very high level of experience. Also worth mentioning is the final outcome - 11 decisions and 25 convictions."

## News in brief

### UK: TRUCKER SENTENCED

A TRUCK driver has been sentenced to 18 weeks imprisonment and a three year ban from driving in the UK after being found guilty of drink driving. Marian Piziuk, 52, from Poland was sentenced when he appeared at Guildford Magistrates Court. Inspector Richard Mallett from Surrey Police Roads Policing Unit said: "The driver of the lorry was breathalysed by officers at the roadside after the vehicle had been made to pull over. A reading of 144 was taken – which is over four times the legal limit of 35 microgrammes per 100 millilitres of breath."

### FINLAND: RETIRED OFFICERS

Representatives of the Samarbetsorgan Angående Nordiska Trafikfrågor (SANT) retired officers section were in Helsinki recently. Members of the group had the chance to visit an on-the-spot traffic control concentrating on heavy vehicle and dangerous goods. TISPOL Director Pasi Kempainen hosted the group and was able to outline TISPOL's Road Policing Model to them.

## NORFOLK POLICE TOOL OF ENGAGEMENT

This Lotus Evora S is currently on loan to Norfolk Police as part of a longer-term initiative to connect with young people. Chief Inspector Chris Spinks told us: "Lotus is working with the region's police by providing a fully liveried car to help officers engage with drivers and spread the word about risky driving behaviours, which of course include drink driving. The principal purpose of the liveried Evora is to enhance the work currently carried out with the driving simulator which is already in use across the region to engage and educate drivers and road users of all ages – not as a regular patrol vehicle."

Pic: Richard Sowersby



# Tachograph manipulation: offences, enforcement and penalties across Europe

## TISPOL's Martin Bonthuis and Gerard Schipper of Euro Contrôle Route answer your questions

### *Is the manipulation of tachographs on trucks and buses a major issue?*

Tachographs are manipulated to enable longer driving time and less rest. In some cases up to 24 hours of driving without rest is self-evidently detrimental for the wellbeing and safety of the



driver as well as other people in traffic. Moreover the manipulation neutralises the effect of the speed limiter on the truck, and speed is a well

known contributing factor to road deaths in Europe. Additionally the manipulation gives companies an unfair advantage and as such disturbs the fairness of the road transport market. A number of member states have made tachograph manipulation an enforcement priority. In those countries we see infraction levels of 30% of trucks.

### *What contribution does tachograph enforcement give to road safety in Europe?*

Driver fatigue, especially in professional drivers who clock hundreds of kilometres every day, needs to be prevented. Drivers have to be well rested and alert when going into traffic. The driving and resting time legislation, which is EU legislation and as a consequence the same in all member states combats driver fatigue.

### *Is the European Commission aware of the issues with tachograph enforcement and what steps are they taking to assist enforcers?*

There have been regular exchanges of Information between ECR and TISPOL, through the TWG working Group, and the EC (DG MOVE). The Commission is and has been aware of this issue for years. However, the EC has only limited possibilities to encourage member states in making headway in improving tachograph enforcement. In the recast of EU Regulation 3821, a few cautious obligations on the improvement of enforcement have been included.

### *How does the co-operation between Traffic Police and Vehicle Inspectors benefit tachograph enforcement?*

It is clear that the joint ECR-TISPOL TWG

tachograph fraud and manipulation working group contributes positively to tachograph enforcement. By exchanging expertise and experiences with enforcement colleagues and the policy making organs TWG contributes to the improvement of tachograph enforcement. Joint training and controls are very beneficial, as is the elaboration of a European network of tachograph manipulation enforcement experts.

### *Is the enforcement of tachographs and penalties harmonised in Europe?*

Not at all. There are huge differences. In some countries there is only basic enforcement on this issue, whereas in other countries there is high level of expertise as a result of priority being given to tachograph enforcement. This shows clearly in the offence statistics. There is even less harmonisation in terms of penalties and fines. The consequences of tachograph manipulation vary from a simple fine to imprisonment. The level of fines varies significantly from member state to member state.

### *What is the feedback from the participants of the TISPOL/ECR TWG training courses?*

The feedback is always very positive. Since the start, 157 colleagues have taken part in the master classes and three member states have received training on demand. The master classes fill a clear need for training on the subject. Some of the colleagues, dealing with HGV enforcement for over 20 to 30 years, indicated that it was the best training they had attended, geared towards the practical and highlighting the right topics.

*A full version of this interview can be found in the new edition of the Tacho Web Group News.*

## Not just Tacho crime

Experiences in the Netherlands, where tachograph enforcement is a priority, have shown that transport operators who are consistently non-compliant in tachograph use are more often than not non-compliant in other areas such as labour laws and tax fraud. There are even cases where company investigations have turned up ties with drug trafficking, receiving of unlawfully obtained goods, and the smuggling of alcohol and drugs.

The Dutch approach shows that co-operation between the different enforcement agencies yields results. Political support for the pooling of resources from the different enforcement agencies is needed.