Railways escape major disorder
Network keeps going during August’s violent disorder  page 3

NIAG Chair
A view from the National Independent Advisory Group  page 5
August’s violent disorder across England was as unusual as it was unexpected. The disgraceful events we saw on our TV screens led the prime minister to speak of “broken Britain”, but at the same time, the resilience and determination of communities in the aftermath, and the performance of the police service have been phenomenal.

The rail network escaped relatively lightly and that did not happen by accident. Like many areas of policing, such as crime reduction services we offer rail businesses or pre-emptive football operations, the absence of disruption is our measure of success, but it is a measure that is itself difficult to gauge.

Everyone has played their part – police officers, PSOs, control room and IT staff and other police staff. In addition, our Special Constables, who are an exceptionally cost effective resource, have responded to local calls for assistance.

Much hard work has been done and courage shown and I am very proud of the way BTP responded to the demands of the situation.

Caught up in the tide of events, it is tempting to think of the disorder situation as the only priority, but of course we have many other responsibilities and those do not go away.

The routine work of Neighbourhood Policing and other local teams loses none of its importance – in fact, in a time of community tension, they are even more important.

For 99 per cent of the time, it is not violent disorder that worries passengers or disrupts businesses, it is drunk and disorderly and lower level anti-social behaviour, and in this edition of The Line we look at this in particular. The Home Secretary, talking about proposed reforms to anti-social behaviour measures, has pointed out the connection between the two.

Maintaining a commitment to business as usual, as well as meeting the exceptional challenges of recent days, is not easy, but the one thing you can say about BTP officers and staff is that they relish a challenge. It is set to be a big challenge as well. If violent disorder cannot always be predicted, we can certainly anticipate the challenge of the Olympics next year and are planning for this. There has been a test which will serve us well.

Chief Constable Andy Trotter

Disorder and Disorderly

RAILWAYS LARGELY ESCAPE VIOLENT DISORDER

The rail network was left virtually unscathed by the recent violent disorder that broke out across London and other parts of England.

Some stations suffered temporary closures as violence erupted in surrounding streets, but there were no serious incidents on the network. However, a number of BTP vehicles did come under attack from stone-throwing youths in London.

At peak times, BTP had an unprecedented 1,700 officers deployed.

“That was a fantastic effort,” said Deputy Chief Constable Paul Crowther. “They have been well supported by our control room, IT and back office staff – everyone has been pulling together and gone that extra mile.”

Following the outbreak of violent disorder in Tottenham on 6 August, police officer rest days were cancelled and 12 hour shifts introduced. During the following week, BTP moved resources between Areas to provide assistance where it was needed, as well as supporting local police operations.

Scotland suffered no disorder, but played its part by sending a full Police Support Unit (PSU), specially trained and equipped public order-trained officers, south of the border to help out in the North West.

“The safety of rail staff and passengers is absolutely our first priority,” said Assistant Chief Constable Steve Thomas, one of BTP’s Gold commanders during the operation.

“The violent disorder we have experienced is unprecedented in recent times. We put in place very robust operational plans, worked with local police and kept railway management fully updated.

“Any hint of disorder affecting the rail system is being met with a very positive response – we are the dedicated police force for the railways and any attack on our patch is something we take very personally.”

The railways extensive CCTV resources are being used to help track down and bring to justice the rioters.

“People affected by these crimes will be pleased to see that those responsible are already being held to account for this appalling behaviour,” said ACC Thomas.

Minister of State at the Department for Transport, Theresa Villiers, wrote to the Chief Constable in August following the outbreak of violent disorder. Below is an extract from her letter:

“I know that last week placed exceptional demands on British Transport Police and I wanted to put on record my thanks to all your officers and staff for their unstinting efforts in keeping the public safe on the transport network.

“It is crucial that as far as possible the country remains open for business and normal life continues during periods of disruption such as we have seen recently. The fact that the transport network has kept moving, with only very localised closures, has been testament to the skill and determination of a wide variety of people, including the BTP.”

Editorial

NUMBER’S UP FOR BOMB HOAXER

A bomb hoaxter who dialled 999 to report a bomb in a rail tunnel has been jailed for six months.

Harry Geer, 22, claimed an explosion would take place in a tunnel in Crowborough East, Sussex in January last year.

Emergency services searched the area and train services suffered delays.

His initial claim that a friend had phoned him with the information was disproved when his mobile phone was examined by BTP’s Hi-Tech Crime Unit.

‘MI5’ man used pet as sniffer dog

A stolen Oyster card reader was being held to account for this

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MANY STRANDED WEB TO REDUCE LONDON THEFT

Now, BTP has joined up with the Metropolitan Police and Transport for London in a bid to reduce theft long term across the capital’s public transport network. Project Spiderweb aims to deliver a 10 per cent reduction in theft ahead of last London Olympics next July. The influx of visitors in 2012 will provide a tempting target for thieves, and Project Spiderweb is designed to mitigate the threat.

BTP has been reducing theft every year on the London Underground and this is an even more ambitious goal we’re working to achieve,” said PC Paul Franklin from the coordinating team, “but we’re ready for the challenge. “It’s a true cross-agency project where we’re all working towards a common goal.”

Forty-eight per cent of all crime reported on the Underground is TPP – 40 per cent is pickpocketing. TPP was four per cent down in 2010/11 with 6,520 crimes reported. 5,450 pickpocketing offences were reported, down five per cent.

Aimet at delivering a long term legacy, Project Spiderweb has ten active work streams, including targeting organised crime, offender management, designing our crime at theft hotspots and joint covert operations by specialist ‘dip’ officers from BTP and the Met.

The project supports the Mayor of London’s three year strategy, The Right Direction, launched last year.

I don’t pretend to have the answer to why, probably there isn’t one single answer anyway, but I would like to comment on some community aspects of the recent disorder and how BTP’s engagement policy remains the right way to go.

In the context of the riots, the word “community” kept cropping up – community protest, community tensions, communities pulling together in the aftermath, but in many ways this was about the exact opposite, lack of community.

The small businesses we saw being looted in Tottenham, Hackney and elsewhere are very much part of the fabric of those communities; the furniture store that went up in flames in Croydon had been there for over 100 years; the despairing people burnt out of their homes we saw interviewed on TV, are the community.

So what we saw was an attack on communities, as well as an attack on the police, and I think that is the point. Communities and police should be on the same side, but the reality is that they sometimes find themselves on opposite sides.

It was BTP’s realization of this that led to the setting up of the National Independent Advisory Group back in 2007.

The important point to remember is that some of the violence has been gang related, but gangs are communities too and we have to ask ourselves why some young people prefer to identify with gang culture rather than with the culture of their parents and neighbours.

Neighbourhood is maybe a useful concept in this context. A neighbourhood can encompass many different ethnic, religious and generational communities, particularly in London. Neighbourhood policing is aimed at offering a policing service, protection and reassurance to all communities within their area – and very valuable that is too. The police and the criminal justice system must be seen as working in harmony.

Arrest and strong action is an immediate and necessary response to violent disorder. The police and the criminal justice system must be seen to be effective in protecting people. But the daily work of neighbourhood policing, building trust in communities, getting them on your side, using their resources to achieve your operational objectives, is the only long term solution for the police, unless officers are to be permanently parked outside our railway stations and on our streets in full public order kit.

In NIAG, we are certainly ready to play our part in helping to reach out to people, explain what BTP is doing and win their confidence. We will also continue to look carefully at those police operations and offer constructive criticism where we think it is warranted.

GUUEST COLUMNIST

The riots – it’s not black and white

Following the appalling scenes in London and many English towns and cities in August, everyone is asking the question why? What underlying factors caused this violence? Mohammed Khalieel, Chair of BTP’s National Independent Advisory Group, considers some of the issues: "Communities and police should be on the same side, but the reality is that they sometimes find themselves on opposite sides…”

from that has been good: BTP’s operations are seen as proportionate and effective. We know that communities can defeat terrorism, but they can also defeat crime and disorder. “You cannot arrest yourself out of a problem,” says Bill Bratton, the so called US Supercop David Cameron has asked for advice. I believe that policing in the UK is amongst the very best in the world and we are not the US. I am not sure what Mr Bratton can add to the debate, but as far as this statement is concerned, I believe he is right.

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So what we saw was an attack on communities, as well as an attack on the police, and I think that is the point. Communities and police should be on the same side, but the reality is that they sometimes find themselves on opposite sides.

It was BTP’s realization of this that led to the setting up of the National Independent Advisory Group back in 2007. As society changed, police, probably since the 1960s, have not been able to rely on automatic support from the community – indeed entirely new communities, teenagers and ethnic for example, had emerged as independent forces for the first time.

With tensions growing, community became in many cases shorthand for black or Asian, or more frequently nowadays Muslim, but the recent riots are certainly not primarily about inter-racial, or religious violence. It is possible that misuse of the violence has been gang related, but gangs are communities too and we have to ask ourselves why some young people prefer to identify with gang culture rather than with the culture of their parents and neighbours.

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The Government looks set to streamline the tools available to the police, councils and other authorities to tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) in communities.

Practitioners currently use an extensive toolkit, ranging from warning letters to court enforceable orders such as ASBOs (Anti-social Behaviour Order).

A Government review found that there are simply too many tools, with authorities tending to stick to the ones they know; ASBOs in particular can be bureaucratic, slow and expensive; and the growing number of people who breach ASBOs suggests they are not working.

Government proposals would see ASBOs scrapped and replaced by Criminal Behaviour Orders, that can be attached to a criminal conviction, and a Crime Prevention Injunction, aimed at preventing anti-social behaviour escalating.

The response by the RPSG generally supports the new measures saying that Crime Prevention Injunctions would be more accessible than ASBOs and be more effective at curbing anti-social behaviour. It also welcomed the inclusion of duties on an offender under the new Criminal Behaviour Order and Crime Prevention Injunction, as well as the current prohibition conditions used in ASBOs.

However the Group also stressed that much ASB is crime and should continue to be treated as such and not downgraded.

On Community Protection Orders, the RPSG highlighted fly-tipping as a particular problem for the railways, and wanted it included in the examples of environmental incidents, alongside noise, graffiti and litter, to be subject to the new orders.

Around 170 ASBOs are currently in force protecting the railways and there were 55 breaches in the first quarter of 2011.
The greatest train robbery yet... The latest national day of action against metal theft at the end of July was marked by the launch of a new poster campaign.

“The greatest train robbery yet” is how the new campaign describes the growing problem of cable theft on the rail network. It is a call to communities to take a stand against cable theft, which causes delays to thousands of rail passengers every week.

“The day of action was coordinated by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and comes after six months of rising metal theft across the country, with more thieves targeting copper, lead and other metals than ever before.”

BTP’s Deputy Chief Constable Paul Crowther heads the ACPO Metal Theft Working Group.

“Every single metal theft is an attack on either an individual or the wider community,” he said.

“When thieves steal lead from residential properties it is the householder who suffers – when they steal the same material from a school or church then hundreds of people are potentially affected by the crime.

“BTP, alongside Network Rail and Virgin Trains, has helped reduce non-suspicious fatalities on the Area by a third in 2010/11, and fatalities overall by a quarter.”

Prosecuting people contemplating or attempting suicide may seem counter-productive, but in practice, arrest and possibly prosecution may be a positive intervention as Tara Doyle explains.

“Sometimes, people end up on the rail network as a way of forcing a hospital admission or other action. The PIER plan notes aggravating factors such as depression, drug, abuse or financial problems. One can lead to another and sometimes their lives just spiral out of control.”

Two south London brothers were jailed in August after a railway cable theft went wrong in Peckham, south London.

Just before 5.30am on 4 December 2010, Jason Tusting and John Tusting were stealing cable from the railway network. Tusting pleaded guilty to burglary, criminal damage recklessly endangering life and perverting the course of justice. He was jailed for four years eight months.

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BTP dealt with 292 fatalities in 2010/11. London North Area was the rail sector with the highest proportion – 25 per cent or 74

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**CASE STUDY**

**MP ON PATROL IN SCOTLAND**

**What is the problem?**
Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituents had been in contact with BTP, train operator ScotRail and their MP, Cathy Jamieson, about issues of anti-social behaviour on trains travelling between Kilmarnock and Glasgow and back.

**What did you do?**
The Labour MP agreed to come and see the problem for herself and go out on patrol with BTP. At the end of July, she travelled from Kilmarnock to Glasgow Central returning later in the evening.

**What was the result?**
No serious incidents were reported, but officers were needed to help a ticket inspector in a case of suspected fare evasion.

**What happened next?**
“It was an extremely useful, helpful and productive meeting,” commented Chief Superintendent Ellie Bird with Inspector Ricky McCartney and Sergeant Nicola Phillips attended, and local community council members. ScotRail station manager Angus Tousia was also on hand to answer questions.

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**NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM IN CROYDON**

Shortly before violent disorder erupted in August, a new Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) to help deal with crime and disorder on Croydon trains was launched at a Safer Croydon Travel open day.

Led by Sergeant Tim Bradley with PC Dean Fennell, PC Adam Brown, PCSO Mark Luker and PCSO Adam Mee, the new team is part of a BTP partnership initiative with Croydon Business Improvement District, local police, Southern Railway, Croydon Council, Transport for London and Tramlink.

“AFTER THE DRAMATIC events that took place at Croydon transport centre, the work of this team in building up trust and confidence is even more important,” said Inspector Jack Ioannou, officer-in-charge at BTP Croydon.

“This new team represents an enhancement to our policing in Croydon, and will be aiming to drive down crime, arrest more offenders and ensure that passengers are not only safe, but feel safe.

“Tramlink doesn’t have high levels of crime, but anti-social behaviour remains a problem – something the team will be addressing.

“The day itself was a great success and a helpful and productive meeting,” commented Chief Superintendent Ellie Bird, whose team has since instigated Operation Star.

That aims to increase high-visibility train patrols on services which appear to be giving most concern, including those between Glasgow and Kilmarnock.

On its first two weekend days 10 trains were targeted on the Glasgow to Kilmarnock route. Train crews were pleased to see the increased police presence and no incidents of note were reported.

The only offence to come to light was a 23-year-old man from Dunlop, who was charged with a bye-law offence for smoking in the toilet and also for attempting to pervert the course of justice by giving false details of passengers, and it is reassuring to know that BTP is taking these concerns seriously.”

As well as the train patrol, Ms Jamieson gave the opportunity to raise concerns at a special rail surgery she hosted at Stewarton Area Centre the following week.

Area Commander Chief Superintendent Ellie Bird with Inspector Ricky McCartney and Sergeant Nicola Phillips attended, and were quizzed by residents, rail users and local community council members. ScotRail station manager Angus Tousia was also on hand to answer questions.

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**60 second interview**

Cathy Jamieson is the Labour/Co-operative MP for Kilmarnock and Loudoun. She’s an ex-National Executive member and former Deputy Leader of Labour in the Scottish Parliament. Amongst her particular political interests, she includes poverty, children and criminal justice. She has also recently been out on patrol with BTP in Scotland (see page 10).

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**What did you think of your patrol time with BTP?**

Being out on patrol with BTP was a very useful way to see first hand how the railways are policed. I was very impressed by the officers’ local knowledge, and their engagement with the public.

**Do you think your constituents feel safe on the railway?**

Generally speaking my constituents are happy to travel by train. However, there have been some problems with anti-social behaviour on some later night trains on one particular service, which led to me asking BTP to take some additional action.

**What is the one thing you think the police should do to improve safety?**

Visibility is critical for public confidence and continuing high profile patrols is essential for the public. Encouraging people to report railway crime is also important, as BTP, like other forces, needs to have good intelligence to help prevent crime.

**What sort of anti-social behaviour really annoys you?**

The biggest complaints are about drunkenness and intimidating behaviour. Many of the things which annoy passengers can be put down to thoughtlessness or bad manners - loud music for example. I travel regularly on long journeys and my pet hate is people shouting into their mobiles!

But the train environment means that nuisance behaviour can feel even more threatening, as there is often no way to move carriages or escape from it.

**Being a Westminster MP with a constituency in Scotland, you must travel a lot. Do you use the trains? What do you think about the service?**

I travel by train every week from my home in Ayrshire to London and back. I prefer to use the trains both for environmental grounds, and also because I can read and work on the journey. There is a perfect connection between my home station in Auchinleck and the London trains to and from Carlisle - so please don’t alter that hit of the timetable, ScotRail!

**What is the best thing about your job?**

I enjoy getting back in touch with my constituents, and seeing their lives improved. I also enjoy parliamentary work including debates and working on changes to legislation. There isn’t always an instant reward for that work, but it’s vital.

**What is the worst thing?**

The worst part is when there is no immediate solution for a constituent’s problem. I always try to help my constituents, and feel there’s no greater frustration than to feel that a change in the law could be years away and they might not benefit.

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**BILL IS A LOSS TO BTP AND WALES**

Community Partnership Co-ordinator Bill Rogerson has brought the curtain down on a career spanning five decades

Bill has been a popular figure since he joined BTP in 1971. After spells as a Detective Constable and Sergeant in Leicester and Crewe, he was appointed supervisor officer at Holyhead in 1986 before retiring in 2001.

However, four years later he returned to the Force after being offered the position of Community Partnership Co-ordinator, which he filled until the role became redundant last month.

Bill was originally from Morecambe and says he has no regrets over his long career.

The biggest complaints are about threatening, as there is often no way to move carriages or escape from it.
**TOP DOG OPERATOR HELPS TOP DOGS**

National Express operator c2c is helping train police dogs through donations of old, unclaimed lost property.

June Carpenter from c2c’s lost property office has spearheaded the scheme through which property unclaimed for more than three months is donated to BTP’s dog section.

“We hugely appreciate all the donations,” said dog handler PC Steve Madden.

“We take unclaimed lost property such as broken laptops and mobile phones, as well as old clothing, bags and suitcases. Everything is used to train our dogs in the most realistic way possible – and it’s proved invaluable.

“The dogs become acclimatised to the type of objects they will come across every day, and that way, they’re not fazed when faced with them at work.”

As well as the general purpose dogs, mostly German Shepherds, used for public order, BTP’s dog section has dogs trained to find drugs, explosives and cash.

“Donating old, unclaimed lost property to the BTP dog unit is a simple way to re-use these items and assist the BTP in their efforts to provide high quality policing for the benefit of c2c customers and the wider community,” commented c2c MD Julian Drury.

**INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR INNOVATION IN MAPPING**

BTP’s Information Services Department has won a top international award for innovation in its use of mapping software.

Force Information Manager Richard Smith and the team were up against competition from the USA, Switzerland and Tasmania in the Intergraph Security, Government and Infrastructure (SG&I) Icon Awards.

“We are very pleased of course,” said Richard. “The award nomination specifically acknowledges the work we have undertaken over the last two years with ERDAS Apollo, our spatial data management solution.

“EDRAS Apollo allows us to make effective use of all the data we receive from Network Rail and Train Operating Companies. It is future proofing our ability to manage and distribute base mapping, aerial imagery and rail specific location data to applications forcewide. It also builds on BTP’s increasing reputation as leaders within the geospatial field and the growing use of this type of information within the Force.”

The Icon award was the second award won by the Information Services Department. In May, they took the Data Centre Solutions award for Public Sector Project of the Year for implementation of cost saving software in the server virtualisation project.

**c2c achieved the best punctuality record of any operator from February to April 2011, and recently won the Best Business in the Community award at the Essex Business Awards.**