

Operation Tenacity – speed enforcement for unlawful vehicle use

Operation Tenacity uses existing speed offence enforcement data to identify vehicles and drivers who repeatedly fail to respond to Section 172 requirements.

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Key details

Stage of practice	Untested
Purpose	Prevention
Topic	Criminal justice Roads policing
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Region	West Midlands
Partners	Police
Stage of Implementation	The practice is implemented.
Start date	January 2024
Scale of initiative	Local

Key details

Target group	Offenders
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Aim

The aim of Operation Tenacity is to target unlawful vehicle use by those who poses a safety risk to other road users.

Section 172 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 stipulates that the police have the power to require the registered keeper of a vehicle, or to require any other person, to identify or name the driver of that vehicle at the time of any alleged motoring offence.

Driver/keepers who fail to engage with the Section 172 requirements or commit multiple speeding and road related offences may be linked to other criminality and pose a danger to the public when driving on the road. These are high-harm offenders who the Force believes have a deliberate intention to avoid detection and accountability for speeding and other offences, which may include:

- no insurance
- no Ministry of Transport (MOT) approval
- invalid driving license
- disqualification
- vehicle defect offences
- transport of drugs or weapons

By targeting these drivers, the operation aims to:

- remove vehicles from the road that do not comply with legal requirements
- bring offenders who use such vehicles to justice
- disrupt criminals, by denying them use of the road
- make the roads safer for law-abiding members of the public
- allow disruption to have an effect across all force areas

Intended outcome

- reduction in speeding offences

- reduction in offences relating to no insurance, driving licence and other document offences
- increase in removal of vehicles from the road that are not lawfully being driven
- increase in arrests of offenders involved in vehicle related criminality
- increase in trust and confidence from the public that those using vehicles illegally are being targeted and removed
- denying offenders use of the UK road network

Description

Speed is a factor in over 50% of fatal collisions in the UK ([Department for Transport, 2023](#)), and it is a requirement for road users to drive safely within the specified speed limit. Camera activated speed detection occurs in high volumes and will often catch careless criminals.

While most drivers are safe and abide by the law, not all drivers are entitled to use vehicles, and not all vehicles comply with the requirements of the Road Traffic Act when used on the road. Warwickshire Police identified repeat speeding offences in which users/drivers/keepers were failing to engage in the lawful requirement to provide driver details. In some cases, the vehicles were registered under false names or the DVLA had not been updated, in an attempt by some drivers to avoid detection. With the support of senior leaders in the Force, the Warwickshire Road Safety Unit team responsible for speed enforcement created Operation Tenacity to effectively target this high-risk offender group.

Vehicles were identified for Operation Tenacity by performing 'analysis reports' for outstanding 'Pentip' (National penalty recording system) enforcement data. In particular:

- volume or repeat offences
- vehicles and persons, in addition to keepers repeatedly nominating false people/companies
- vehicles with no current keeper
- identified fraudulent insurance / keeper details.

Once an associated vehicle is identified, multiple checks were carried out regarding the vehicle, keeper and address, as well as using national Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) data.

A Police National Computer (PNC) marker was applied to the vehicle, with a summary of outstanding offences. The application of this marker meant that the local force would have been alerted if the vehicle was detected by an ANPR camera. Officers would then have the opportunity to

intercept and stop the vehicle and determine who was using it and whether the legal requirements for road use had been met.

Once a vehicle has been stopped, officers at the scene will deal with any offences they identify during the stop. Information is then relayed to officers in the road safety unit who will make a decision about the outstanding speed offences.

Operation Tenacity is now a long-term, 'business as usual' approach within the Warwickshire Road Safety Unit. The 'Op Tenacity' tagline promotes the idea of consistency in targeting and gives officers an indication of what they can expect from an ANPR hit from a PNC marker.

A short animation video can be found on the Warwickshire police YouTube page which outlines the aims and implementation of Operation Tenacity.

Evaluation

An evaluation is ongoing and being led by Warwickshire Police.

Every vehicle identified for an Operation Tenacity marker is captured within a prescribed data set, that allows monitoring of the results, including stops, arrests, seizures, location, to allow assessment of the impact of Operation Tenacity.

With the support of senior leaders in the Force, the initiative has been incorporated as a long term 'business as usual' tactic to tackle this high-risk cohort of offenders/offending.

Vehicles will continue to speed, some offenders will seek to avoid being caught, therefore the objective and aim of Operation Tenacity will continue to be met based on ongoing demand.

Overall impact

Officers monitored the number of vehicles stopped over a 12-month period with an Op Tenacity PNC marker for outstanding speed offences.

The first 12 months of the initiative have resulted in:

- 176 vehicles stopped
- 96 vehicles seized

- 27 suspects arrested (for offences unrelated to the speeding offence)
- 27 forces stopping vehicles with Operation Tenacity markers
- 11 disqualified drivers identified
- 71 drivers not insured identified
- drugs, weapons, and cash seized
- 85% of the stops occurred on a different force area than where the original speeding offence took place
- over 50% of vehicles stopped were seized by officers due to offences they identified
- additional offences such as no MOT and vehicle defects were also identified.

Other forces adopting Operation Tenacity would have a wider reach, and bring more offenders to justice, and deny unlawful use of vehicles by criminals from the road, resulting a safer roads for the public.

The first six months of 2025 has resulted in:

- 177 vehicles stopped across
- 29 forces
- 77 vehicles seized
- 23 arrests
- drugs and weapons seized

The force are expanding the scope of Operation Tenacity to target misuse of Motability vehicles, whereby a vehicle is not being used for the benefit of the registered disabled person, and also for foreign registered vehicles (which may not be on PNC) which are caught repeatedly speeding.

Learning

- The illegal use of vehicles on roads is not confined within force border areas, with the data revealing that criminality is clearly taking place across the UK and travelling through police force areas.
- It is important that PNC marker use is monitored, regularly reviewed and where necessary either extended or cancelled. A master spreadsheet is maintained and updated in Force to assist with this. It also allows us to capture the results and effect.
- An Operation Tenacity logo has been created to promote the initiative both in Force and externally.

- ANPR is a tool also used as part of the review/removal process. Having a specific point of contact leading the oversight of the tactic has allowed the force to collate effectiveness data.
- Although some forces do use a PNC marker for locating vehicles involved in speeding, the Force recommends using the operational name. Using a named marker 'Operation Tenacity' gives weight and recognition to the ANPR marker announcement for officers to become familiar with it. Data recorded shows that an Op Tenacity marker is likely to result in a 50% chance of the vehicle being seized.

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