

RoadPeace

COLLISION INVESTIGATION CAMPAIGN

Thorough collision investigation is the cornerstone of justice. Without it:

- criminal culpability escapes detection
- fair compensation is denied to victims
- prevention programmes are biased
- victims suffer secondary victimisation, and
- the public lack confidence in the police, which deters many from walking and cycling more.

RoadPeace, the national charity for road crash victims



Why this campaign is needed

RoadPeace estimates that no more than one in seven casualty collisions results in a court prosecution. And the number of court prosecutions relative to investigations is declining. There are reasons to believe this is due to lack of investigation rather than lack of culpability. This means less justice, more road danger and more trauma for victims.

Lack of priority

Police are not evaluated on their collision investigation performance. Hence it is not a priority for the police, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC), nor the Home Office. Avon and Somerset PCC were the only PCC to include improving investigations in their Police and Crime Plan.

Lack of resources

Police budgets cuts have fallen disproportionately on roads police, whose numbers have dropped by 40% in the past decade.

Lack of transparency and accountability

Police do not report the outcomes of their investigations, nor their investigation procedures, or their investigation budgets. So it is not possible to know how often their investigations result in a prosecution or sanction and if they have enough funding to do a proper job.

Lack of standards

There are no national standards for collision investigation, not even for fatal crashes. Guidance exists but has been weakened in recent years. It is not clear how police evaluate their investigation effectiveness, or if they even do evaluate this.

Lack of confidence

Others share our concern. The much needed increase in active travel is unlikely to happen if walkers and cyclists do not feel safe. The cycling community is united in their lack of confidence in the police's ability to do thorough and impartial investigations.

The House of Commons Transport Committee is the latest to call for police collision investigation procedures to be reviewed.

WHAT WE WANT

We want quality assurance of collision investigation. This means:

- National best practice investigation standards
- Training programmes with national accreditation
- Local reviews and national inspection of fatal and injury collision investigation
- Better resourcing of police for investigations
- Transparency with investigation outcomes, budgets and procedures
- Annual reviews of collision investigation, including which crashes resulted in prosecutions and the reasons for no further action
- Lessons to be learned from acquittals, appeals, complaints and victim feedback
- Victims to be kept better informed

What now

Phase 1 of our campaign involves:

- 1. Conducting a baseline review.** All PCCs and police areas will be surveyed as to how road death and injury collision investigation is resourced and quality assured, as well as when it was last reviewed.
- 2. Building a coalition.** Many others, including cycling and walking campaigners, personal injury solicitors, collision investigators, and the road safety profession are keen to see investigation improved.
- 3. Presenting the victims' perspective.** We will collate the experiences of road crash victims and their recommendations as to how to improve police practice.

Join the campaign

- Tell us about your experience of collision investigation
- Order a campaign pack, which will include background information and what to ask your local PCC.

Email justice@roadpeace.org for more information and to receive campaign updates.

