Case Study: South Wales Police

DriverMetrics®

The past decade has witnessed public and media scrutiny of police accidents, not only in the way in which they are managed but more importantly how the service scopes safer training of risky operational behaviours on the highway.

The RAC Foundation (2010) supplements previous research suggesting that driver training initiatives and interventions may have an adverse effect on driving performance improvements. Post-accident involvement, the police service fails to consider behavioural competencies as generic psychomotor skills are predominantly under evaluation.

The 1998 Lind review made specific recommendations challenging historic methodologies by promoting the use of technology. South Wales Police have promoted safer road usage by designing a system which challenges historic police driver education using simulation, psychometric evaluation, blended with coached outcomes.

South Wales police integrated the higher levels of the Goals for Driver Education and utilised a behaviour-based approach to ensure trainers and students alike understand the underlying attitudinal and behavioural issues associated with police crashes (Dorn and Brown 2003) rather than focus on the development of pure psychomotor skills.

DriverMetrics®

DriverMetrics® Profiling

As part of the new curriculum within South Wales Driving School, a psychometrically-based assessment called DriverMetrics® Profiling available via the Cranfield University spin-out company DriverMetrics® was used. DriverMetrics® Profiling has been the subject of a research programme at Cranfield University leading to peer-reviewed academic papers.

DriverMetrics® Profiling reliably identifies those officers that have a more risk-oriented view about the nature of police driving and coaching interventions addresses the risk identified.

The curriculum is a scientifically-based intervention addressing potential sources of risk at the early stage of a police officer's career. It draws on the research in driver behaviour to accurately identify those officers at increased risk via simulator-based algorithms and profiling using DriverMetrics® Profiling.

The Benefits

- Return on investment in capital costs, given the training demands reducing the requirement for one police vehicle which equates to a saving of £15,000.
- Reduced abstraction rates for police officers are a significant return on investment. In reassessments alone there has been a cost saving year on year of £88,958.
- Used in communication protocols for pursuits with a helicopter module. This one initiative has taken 25% of on road training for pursuits off the highway, effectively saving some £10,000/course.
- An immediate 10% reduction in police crash statistics representing a saving of 225 hours of police officers 'down time' which equated to £7,087.50 over the first year. This saving is calculated as the time saved in accident investigation.
- The new approach is now self-financing, set up cost were recovered within the first year, and it now runs at a profit in terms of crash reduction rates.
- The anticipated reduction in crashes alone will give a net saving on repair costs of £25,000 during the initial set up period.
- There has been a direct cost saving of officers suspended from duty time due to police accidents.
- Accident reduction has produce a quantifiable saving on force insurance premiums by decreasing damages paid to victims of Police related accidents.
- Reducing time spent in dealing with accidents for officers engaged in response duties has directly affected the operational capabilities of the organisation.

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