

FEBRUARY 2008 Tayside Police single non emergency number (SNEN)

WHAT WE ARE DOING...

- Introducing a single non emergency number to replace a large range of existing non emergency phone numbers
- This means that you will be able to call us from anywhere in Tayside on one number
- Currently it can be confusing to know which number to call in either emergency or non emergency situations. The move to a single non emergency number will be linked to the provision of more detailed information about when to use 999 or the new number.
- We are following the Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland national strategy for call handling which represents all eight Scottish Forces. The action being taken is the first step towards moving to a single non emergency number for all Scottish Forces.

HOW WE ARE DOING IT...

- We will go live in early April 2008 with this single number which we are currently testing.
- The new number will be an 0845 number which will be advertised throughout March 2008 in a variety of formats.
- The new number will be linked to an Interactive Voice Response System which will improve access to the appropriate service on first contact. There will be 4 caller options which will cover all call requests. These are likely to be
 - 1/ Lost and Found Property
 - 2/ Custody matters
 - 3/ Advice, guidance and transfers
 - 4/ Police attendance
- We want to prioritise calls requiring police attendance so they get through to the right resource as soon as possible. This is necessary because we receive approximately 30000 non emergency calls a month covering a wide range of issues, such as reporting crimes, asking to speak to a specific officer, enquiries about lost and found property and non police related calls such as asking for a plumber or reporting matters which should be dealt with by councils, such as street lighting defects.
- Research carried out recently on behalf of the staff union Unison found that calls to police control rooms can be difficult, distressing and need an accurate and timely response.

WHEN TO USE THE NEW NUMBER OR USE 999

- 999 should be used if there is **any danger, or risk to life, or a crime is in progress.**
- The non-emergency number should be used in circumstances that don't meet those criteria, such as reporting an incident or crime which has happened some time ago, or when seeking advice on policing matters

COST

- Call costs will depend on individual packages and will vary.
- Experience in other forces shows no decrease in the number of calls to the police, which would indicate that cost is not an issue
- The average duration of a call is around 2 mins or less so cost from a landline is unlikely to be significant regardless of the package.
- Charges from mobile phones will of course be higher than from a landline and will vary according to your mobile phone operator.
- 999 calls remain free

OTHER LINKED MATTERS

- We are also trying to make access to our services more easily available to other groups. We are developing an SMS Text system for the deaf and those with hearing impairments. This will be available in March 2008 and will be by registration only. Further Information on this service is available from ourselves and Sound Sense.
- Information in relation to policing matters is also available through our website at www.tayside.police.uk

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When should I use this number or 999.

999 should be used if there is **any danger, or risk to life, or a crime is in progress.**

The current and new non-emergency number should be used in all other circumstances that don't meet the 999 criteria, such as reporting an incident or crime which has happened some time ago, or when seeking advice on policing matters

What if I have someone's direct dial phone number.

If you have someone's direct dial number and it is them you want to speak to, you can still contact them direct and provided they have an answer phone / voicemail facility leave them a message in their absence.

I previously reported something locally and need to speak to my local station for an update.

All call takers can access any previous report you may have made, i.e. a crime or lost property and can therefore assist you in a variety of ways. If you want to pass on additional information then this can be done. Depending on the sensitivity of any information you may request however, they may not be able to divulge this over the phone but can pass any request to the member of staff dealing with the matter.

What if I want to speak to my local station.

As above the call taker may be able to assist, however they can transfer your call to a specific station or individual if this is appropriate.

If I cannot phone my local station then does that mean no one is working there.

No, the Tayside area is covered 24 hours a day by operational Police Officers and staff and most stations have Police Officers working from there 24 hours a day.

With the exception of Dundee and Perth who operate a Public Enquiry Office open to the public 24 hours a day, the officers working from these other stations spend the majority of their time on patrol in the community or dealing with calls away from the station. Through consultation with the public, this is what you tell us that you want our staff to be doing, not sitting in the office answering telephone calls. When you contact us, we can pass a message onto these Police Officers via radio and have them attend anywhere in the Force area, 24 hours a day.

Why not just keep the existing phone numbers.

We currently receive 30000 non emergency calls a month and wish to answer as many as possible at first point of contact. Therefore if we can direct calls such as lost and found property to the right department without operator involvement, calls requiring police assistance will get through to the right resource quicker.

This move fits in with the Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland national strategy for call handling and is the first step towards moving to a single non emergency number for all eight Scottish Forces.

Where can I get the new non emergency number.

We will be advertising the new number through a variety of means. Rest assured we will have things in place so that if you don't have the new number it will be easily possible to get the new number.

What if I don't have your new number only your old number and need to speak to you fairly urgently but it's not an emergency call.

If you phone one of the old numbers you will be advised of the change and asked to use the new number. If it is an emergency, always use 999.

How much will it cost.

999 calls remain free. Costs to the 0845 number will depend on individual packages and will vary. The average duration of a call is around 2 mins or less so cost from a landline is unlikely to be significant regardless of the package. Charges from mobile phones will of course be higher than from a landline and will vary according to your mobile phone operator.

The average duration of a call is around 2 minutes or less so cost is likely to be very low regardless of the package.

What if I select the wrong option, can I go back to the menu.

If you choose the wrong selection you will have the option to return to the main menu.

What do you want the public and businesses to do.

As of the launch date in April, 2008, please use this number to contact Tayside Police for any matter other than an emergency.

Keep a note of this number in your personal phone book or near your phone. If you use a mobile, store the number now in the phone before you need to use it.

If you have elderly relatives or care for someone, tell them about it and make sure they have a note of the new number.

KEEP IT HANDY