

# Press release: Life-saving training for Highways England Traffic Officers

More than 950 Highways England Traffic Officers are being trained in life saving first aid, giving them enhanced skills which may be used to help casualties in need of urgent medical attention.

The traffic officers, who patrol England's motorways and major A-roads 24 hours a day, are often first on the scene to help when drivers are in trouble.

Safer journeys across England's motorways and A-roads is the top priority for Highways England, but if incidents do occur what happens in the first minutes following a road traffic collision can be crucial to the outcomes of those involved.

The first priority for Traffic Officers is making the scene safe for everyone, which may mean controlling moving traffic, moving vehicles and helping customers find a place of safety.

Once the scene is safe, Traffic Officers can then put the nationally recognised Driver First Assist training into practice. The training is also specific to the environment Traffic Officers work in, and signals a change in how our staff can provide direct assistance that can save lives in the crucial few minutes before the emergency services arrive.

Highways England Executive Director of Operations, Nick Harris, said:

I strongly feel that traffic officers should be able to perform lifesaving first aid to members of the public using our roads. Combining life-saving first aid training with key scene management will help our staff safely make a real difference for our customers.

By teaming up with Driver First Assist our traffic officers will receive the expert training needed for this important task.

The training began last month in the South East region and will be rolled out nationally.

The one-day course is the same training that is received by emergency services personnel and includes instructions in how to implement the recovery position and CPR, respond to a cardiac arrest and shock, and treat wounds and bleeding.

David Higginbottom, chief executive officer at Driver First Assist said:

Every day, victims of road traffic collisions die needlessly because individuals immediately at the scene lack the ability to administer basic first aid. The training we're delivering to Traffic Officers will give them the skills to provide medical assistance to those in need, making a vital difference in those first crucial moments before the arrival of paramedics.

Driver First Assist is a not-for-profit organisation comprising drivers who have been trained to provide life-saving first aid and manage the scene at a road traffic collision, prior to the arrival of the emergency services. DFA has been created in partnership with and is supported by the Police, Ambulance and Fire and Rescue services.

### **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

### **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.