



The Alliance of British Drivers

London Region: PO Box 62, Chislehurst, Kent, BR7 5YB; Tel: 020-8295-0378; Web: www.abd.org.uk

Press Release

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Making Bribery of the Police Legal

The Alliance of British Drivers has been running a campaign against police waivers and speed-awareness courses under the name AMPOW for some time. We have been considering a legal challenge to the abuses that this system has created. But the Government has launched a Bill in Parliament that could make it very difficult to challenge.

For the first time in British history this Bill would introduce into English law the concept that it is legal to pay bribes to the police to avoid prosecution for offences.

The Vehicle Technology and Aviation Bill is currently passing through Parliament and is due for a second reading on the 6th March. In Part 4 Section 23 of this Bill the offer of courses as an alternative to prosecution for Road Traffic offences is covered. That effectively would regulate, and make legal, the use of police waivers and the offer of speed-awareness courses.

The Alliance of British Drivers (ABD) has shown how these arrangements have been abused. Such practices have enabled the police to generate cash to fund their operations and that includes equipment and services that have nothing to do with road safety. In addition it has financed the acquisition and use of more speed cameras. In effect the police have been using the funds so obtained to maintain their establishments and the consequence is that there are clear incentives to the police to raise money in this way. This is a distortion of the justice system.

Although the ABD has called for proper legal regulation of this system, the proposals in the Bill actually make matters worse. There is a provision that any excess over costs must be used for promoting road safety but there is also a provision that "promoting road safety" includes the prevention, detection or enforcement of offences relating to vehicles. So this fixes into law the ability of the police to finance more speed cameras and their operation so as to generate more cash, and so this dubious industry will be expanded as a result. This has nothing to do with road safety and everything to do with empire building by the police.

Indeed the evidence obtained by the ABD shows that the police are diverting the funds raised in this way to other activities and are misreporting the profits generated. This is a natural consequence of the perverse financial incentives that are being created.

The ABD is asking its members and supporters of the AMPOW campaign to write to their Members of Parliament to get this legislation changed.

More Information

You can learn more about this campaign from our campaign web site here: <http://www.speed-awareness.org> . Members of the public can register their support for the campaign and sign a petition here: <http://www.speed-awareness.org/join.html>

You can read the draft Vehicle Technology and Aviation Bill and follow it's progress through Parliament here: <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/vehicletechnologyandaviation.html>

For more information on this issue, contact Roger Lawson on 020-8295-0378, email: roger.lawson@abd.org.uk

About The Alliance of British Drivers (ABD)

The Alliance of British Drivers was formed from a merger between the Association of British Drivers and the Drivers Alliance. The ABD is the leading independent organisation which represents the interests of private motorists in the United Kingdom. We campaign to protect the rights of individual road users and believe that road transport is a beneficial and essential element in the UK transport infrastructure. We oppose excessive taxation of motorists and are against tolls and road usage charging. We also campaign for more enlightened road safety policies. The Alliance is a "not for profit" voluntary organisation which is financially supported primarily by its individual members. More information on the ABD is available from our web site at www.abd.org.uk