

Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee
Wednesday 11 September 2024
13th Meeting, 2024 (Session 6)

PE2013: Implementation of a National Dashcam Safety Portal

Introduction

Petitioner Neil McNamara

Petition summary Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to introduce without delay a National Dashcam Safety Portal, as already agreed by Police Scotland

Webpage <https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE2013>

1. [The Committee last considered this petition at its meeting on 4 October 2023](#). At that meeting, the Committee agreed to write to Police Scotland and delegated authority to the Convener to write to relevant organisations about how similar systems work in England and Wales. The Committee wrote to the National Police Chiefs' Council but has not received a response to its correspondence.
2. The petition summary is included in **Annexe A** and the Official Report of the Committee's last consideration of this petition is at **Annexe B**.
3. The Committee has received a new written submission from Police Scotland which is set out in **Annexe C**.
4. [Written submissions received prior to the Committee's last consideration can be found on the petition's webpage](#).
5. [Further background information about this petition can be found in the SPICe briefing](#) for this petition.
6. [The Scottish Government gave its initial response to the petition on 7 September 2023](#).
7. Every petition collects signatures while it remains under consideration. At the time of writing, 32 signatures have been received on this petition.

Action

8. The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take.

Clerks to the Committee
September 2024

Annexe A: Summary of petition

PE2013: Implementation of a National Dashcam Safety Portal

Petitioner

Neil McNamara

Date Lodged

3 April 2023

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to introduce without delay a National Dashcam Safety Portal, as already agreed by Police Scotland.

Previous action

I have been advised by an MSP's caseworker to submit this petition after contacting the MSP about this issue.

Background information

A National Dashcam Safety Portal for drivers and other road users to submit examples of dangerous driving has already been agreed and a budget for it provided to Police Scotland in March 2022. However, so far it has not been set up nor has information been offered to citizens on why it has not been implemented. This petition asks Members and Ministers why Police Scotland's own initiative has stalled.

Annexe B: Extract from Official Report of last consideration of PE2013 on 4 October 2024

The Convener: Agenda item 5 is consideration of new petitions. In case people joining us to follow our proceedings this morning have a petition that we are considering I will let them know, as I always do, that, ahead of each petition's first consideration, we invite the Scottish Government to comment on it and we seek comment from the Scottish Parliament's independent research unit, SPICe.

The first new petition is PE2013, which is on the implementation of a national dashcam safety portal and was lodged by Neil McNamara. It calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to introduce without delay a national dashcam safety portal, as has already been agreed by Police Scotland.

The SPICe briefing explains that a national dashcam safety portal would provide an online channel for members of the public to submit directly to Police Scotland evidence of potential road traffic offences that is recorded on dashcams, helmet cameras and mobile phones.

The Scottish Government's response to the petition highlights its recent programme for government commitment on the issue. The programme states that Police Scotland will seek to build on the Scottish Government's investment to make it easier to submit digital evidence to report poor road user behaviour. Dundee has piloted the digital evidence-sharing capability programme, or DESC, which allows a request for digital evidence to be sent to a member of the public.

Do members have any comments or suggestions for action?

Fergus Ewing: Can we write to Police Scotland to ask how it intends to fund improvements to the ways in which digital evidence is submitted and, in particular, where the funding will come from to implement the digital evidence-sharing capability programme?

I wonder whether I might make an additional suggestion. My understanding is that dashcam technology is available throughout police forces in Wales and England. Scotland therefore appears to be the laggard. Reference has been made to the Welsh experience and the technology company Nextbase, which apparently provides some services free of charge, whereas the Scottish Government and Police Scotland tend to labour the costs of this. Plainly, there is a slight contradiction in the evidence that is before us.

Can we write to the UK Government or to police forces in England and Wales or their representatives to try to elicit information on their experience? They have implemented the technology already. How much did it cost them, what have the benefits been and what has been their experience and evaluation of it? It seems to me that, since they have done it, we should learn from them.

The Convener: I invite the clerks to give some consideration as to whom we might write in order to fulfil that objective. I am quite content with the suggestion.

Foyso Choudhury: Data protection and privacy could be affected as well. We see quite a lot of stuff online. People post footage of cyclists and people in private cars. What measures will the police or the law take to protect them?

The Convener: We could add that question to our inquiry to those who have implemented the technology elsewhere, in order to learn how they have overcome those particular considerations. That might help inform anything that might happen in Scotland. We will do it that way. Are there any other suggestions? No. Are we therefore content to proceed on that basis?

Members *indicated agreement.*

Annexe C: Written submission

Police Scotland submission of 13 November 2023

PE2013/B: Implementation of a National Dashcam Safety Portal

Police Scotland is working in partnership with Scottish Government, Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) and Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service to deliver Digital Evidence Sharing Capability (DESC) into the Criminal Justice sector within Scotland.

This programme is fully funded by Scottish Government for Design, Implementation and Run for a period of 10 years as outlined within the original business case.

There are other programmes within Police Scotland which will further enhance the use of digital evidence as well as enhance options for Public Digital Contact which are being delivered through a range of improvement programmes within the Police Scotland Transformation portfolio – The funding of which is requested through annual budget submission to Scottish Government.

Given annual funding cycles, funding for multi-year programmes is not guaranteed and requested each year alongside progress to date.