

**Police Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex
Essex Police Strategic Board**

Title of Report / Agenda Item	Scene Pro CI200S Accelerometers
Document Classification	Official
Date of PFCC's Strategic Board meeting	27 th September 2021
Agenda Number	8iv)
Chief Officer	T/ACC Thomas Richards
Author on behalf of Chief Officer	Forensic Operations Manager Mark Walsh
Date paper was written	19 th August 2021
Version Number	1.3
Date of approval at COG (or other named meeting or person authorising)	8 th September 2021
Date Approved by Essex Police Finance Department	Date: 25/8/21 (Matthew Tokley, Head of Corporate Accounting)

1. Recommendations

The recommendation is that the PFCC approves the capital monies to purchase 3 x Scene Pro CI200S Accelerometers for the FCIU, as recommended by the Forensic Capabilities Investigation Network (FCIN) in its communication to forces in March 2021.

2. Executive Summary

The purchase of 3 x Scene pro CI200S Accelerometers to ensure the force is compliant under UKAS for examining Road Traffic Incidents in line with the Forensic Regulator Codes of practice which is due for completion by October 2022. This accreditation deadline requires **all the equipment to be in place by December 2021**, in order to meet this milestone. The equipment is vital for use in specialist road traffic investigations and measures speed, acceleration and deceleration times for vehicles involved in fatal and serious road traffic incidents. Its primary function is to ascertain the coefficient of friction at the tyre/road interface, which is the very cornerstone of collision investigation and forms part of the primary physical evidence gathering process as set out by the FCIN Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The current equipment used by the Forensic Collision Investigation Unit (FCIU) is not recognised as being accurate enough for presenting evidence at court and will lead to evidence being challenged in court as its accuracy will need to be declared.

3. Background (to include context, need, current Work and Performance, etc)

As with many areas of forensic investigation, UKAS has developed ISO accreditation for the field of Forensic Collision Investigation as underpinned by the Forensic Science Regulator Act 2021. This is a defined set of standards dictating every element of how a Forensic Collision Investigation should be handled, including the equipment which must be use. The Forensic Collision Investigation Network (FCIN) is the national body working with forces to get them ready for accreditation. Essex Police also signed the national FCIU S22a which was setup to ensure Forensic Collision Investigation departments meet the ISO 17020/5 mandatory accreditation requirements. As a member of this network, Essex Police have the FCIN over £79K per annum for their guidance to help prepare the force for accreditation.

The final deadline for Essex Police to have accreditation in place is October 2022, and according to the agreed timeline, Essex must have all equipment in place by December 2021.

The FCIN completed the national validation work in relation to the Scene Pro CI200S Accelerometers, and forces were notified of their decision in March 2021. These accelerometers are now the only recognised and validated equipment by the FCIN that can provide evidence which cannot be challenged in court in relation to its accuracy. Failure to purchase and deploy this equipment will potentially result in undermining police investigations and a failure to secure prosecutions in court.

There are currently no other accredited providers of this equipment, and the current Essex accelerometers are over 8 years old and in need of replacement.

4. Options and analysis (to include proposals, benefits, alternatives)

Proposal – Purchase three Scene Pro CI200S Accelerometers to replace existing unvalidated accelerometers in accordance with the FCIN for presenting evidence in court in relation to RTC investigations.

Benefits - Scene Pro will provide evidence that cannot be challenged in relation to its accuracy. Failure to purchase and deploy this equipment will potentially result in undermining Police investigations and failure to secure prosecutions in court.

Alternatives – The FCIN have not identified any alternative equipment (see attached FCIN briefing sheet under section 14).

5. Risks and Mitigations

The only risks in relation to this equipment relate to if it is not purchased.

1. Essex Police will not achieve ISO 17020/5 accreditation for Forensic Collision Investigations.
2. Failure to purchase will result in the forensic evidence of RTC prosecutions being challenged in court, as the current equipment is not accredited and no longer fit for purpose.
3. The wider national rollout of the FCIN in relation to ISO accreditation may affect other police forces because of the sequencing and tight timetable.

There is no mitigation, failure to invest as instructed will lead to Essex police having to declare they are working with unvalidated equipment in court. This will lead to successful challenges from defence and result in lost cases.

6. Links to the Police and Crime Plan

The seven priorities within the plan include:

- More local, visible and accessible policing
- Crack down on anti-social behaviour
- Breaking the cycle of domestic abuse
- Reverse the trend in serious violence
- Tackle gangs and organised crime
- Protecting children and vulnerable people
- Improve safety on our roads

The purchase meets the Police and Crime plan priority of improving safety on our roads as well as the Essex Force Plan 20/21 of safety on the roads.

In the 2020 FMS improving safety on our roads has highlighted that road fatalities are rising again and there is a drive to improve safety on our roads. Investigations, section 3 and Forensics Services, points 2 and 3 are also included in the FMS.

This equipment is required to accurately record and understand RTC incidents and how they occur from a road safety aspect as well as supporting the successful prosecutions. Failure to purchase this equipment could jeopardise the ISO accreditation status and significantly delay or prevent 'go live' date for achieving accreditation status, which is set for October 2022.

7. Financial Implications

There is a one-off capital cost of £54,673.00 for Essex. There are recurring revenue costs of approximately £924.00 per unit, (£2772 for all 3) for calibration and £850.00, (£2550 for all 3) per annum for software licencing. Properly serviced and calibrated there is no known

replacement timescales. Typically, accelerometers last many years, but we would recommend replacement every six years.

8. Legal Implications

This links to the Forensic Science Regulator Act 2021. There may also be issues in court if Essex Police does not purchase these accelerometers as the force will fail to meet accreditation. This will mean that any forensic evidence for Forensic Collision Investigations will automatically be undermined, and this will almost certainly result in challenges in court that will potentially see the force failing to secure prosecutions.

9. Staffing Implications

There is no impact on staffing, this request is to replace aging equipment the Forensic Collision Investigation Unit (FCIU) are already using. Whilst it may take some time for staff to adjust to using the new equipment, the fact its accuracy cannot be challenged in court for both the FCIU staff and investigation teams.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no Equality & Diversity issues, this paper relates to the purchase of equipment to replace the aging, non-FCIN complaint equipment Essex Police are already using. An Equality & Diversity Impact Assessment has been completed and a copy is included below:



Equality Impact
Assessment - FCIU Pu

11. Police Operational Implications

Essex Police pay the FCIN over £79K per year to advise us on how to prepare for accreditation, which must be in place by October 2022. Essex Police also signed the national FCIU S22a which was setup to ensure Forensic Collision Investigation departments meet the ISO 17020/5 mandatory accreditation requirements.

The FCIN advised Essex Police in March 2021 of their recommendation to use Scene Pro CI200S Accelerometers, and these are the only validated equipment for use in RTC investigations.

Not purchasing this equipment will mean Essex Police will fail to achieve ISO 17020/5 accreditation for Forensic Collision Investigations. This will mean that any forensic evidence for these investigations will automatically be undermined, and this will almost certainly result in challenges in court that will potentially see the force failing to secure prosecutions.

12. Governance Boards





Due to the late notification by the FCIN that this equipment is required, we have been advised to go directly to a stage 2 bid in order to meet the accreditation timetable.

The paper has been approved by the SCD ACC and was approved at COG on 8th September 2021.

13. Future Plans (long-term strategic direction)

This is a one-off purchase to comply with the requirements of the FCIN and is part of the wider project to achieve ISO accreditation for the Forensic Collision Investigation Unit.

14. List of background papers and appendices

			
FCIU Capital Business Case 24th	FCIN-Briefing Deceleration Testinç	Stage B (SOC) FCIU Capital bid.docx1.dc	FCIN Playbook B Transition Pack.pdf