

# A week in the life...

**Role: Police Constable**

**Location: B Division**

**Years of Service: 12**

My week starts on a Tuesday morning after a 4-day long weekend. I begin work for 7am at my busy Police Station in South-East London. I'm currently a Police Constable on B-Division Operational Support Unit and have 12 years service. I currently work with a team of 5 Constables and 1 Sergeant.

We all work as one team if that makes sense; teamwork is one of the fundamental cogs of being a Police Officer. The variety of our work is also something which is very important to me; it sounds very cliché but no-two days are the same for us. The complete unpredictability of a shift is what has kept me keen and enthusiastic

My day begins with a briefing from our Sergeant; she gives us an update on any incidents of note from the weekend and what our pairings for the day will be. It's a good opportunity to have a quick catch-up with the rest of my team and for us to receive the latest Intel for our Division

I receive my first radio-call at 07:10am; a drunk male harassing passengers on a busy station platform. This is a very busy time in London as the rush-hour is beginning and platforms will already be full of passengers.

Not many people appreciate the environment a BTP Officer works in; lots of people, moving trains and not a lot of space! Force Control Room London has categorised this call as an immediate response; this means that an appropriately trained Police Officer will be authorised to utilise the "Blues and Twos" of our Police Vehicle. We make our way through the barrage of traffic in Central London. It never ceases to amaze me how busy London already is at this time!

We arrive at the underground station and make our way from the vehicle to the Central Line Platforms. One thing about wearing the uniform; you will always get everyone's attention, *especially* when you're running somewhere!

We find our man as he is being very disorderly and abusive to other passengers. My partner and I take control of the situation and move him out of harm's way as he may have had or caused a fatal accident. One of my most important skills is communicational ability; as a Police Officer this will be your most important tool. I try to talk to the male and attempt to reason with him whilst my partner tries to find any potential victims and/or witnesses

The male's behaviour does not improve and he begins to struggle with us. He ends up being arrested for being Drunk and Disorderly in a public place. We take him to our dedicated Custody Suite where we book him in; he is bedded down due to his level of inebriation. We write our statements and are back out on the patch within an hour.



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We then arrive at a busy Mainline Hub for a station check. Part of a Police Officers skill base is the ability to talk to people and people will always want to talk to you! Be-it directions or a general chit-chat. I always make the effort to talk to station-staff. They are part of the community I serve and making sure they are okay is important to me.

The good thing about shift work is that my working “Week” is only 4-days long. My shift-pattern provides me with variety, the chance to get more than 2 days off in the week and starting/finishing work before the rush-hour.



British Transport Police is the most specialised and oldest Force in England; it's also national and serves a very unique environment. We deal with a large frequency of people on a daily basis, from a diverse range of backgrounds.

The ability to adapt to a wide range of situations is of paramount importance. A short while into my day comes a call that will have every London-BTP officer's attention; a person under a-train. This basically means that a person has jumped/fallen or been pushed into the path of an oncoming train. As units across London race to the scene, a catalogue of things go through my mind; how many casualties? Are they still alive? Is this a crime scene? Who else is supporting me? Have the ambulance been called? Are there trains stuck as a result of the incident with hundreds of passengers on board?

This particular incident has occurred at a busy underground station. We are the second vehicle to arrive on scene; these types of calls are some of the worst you may attend. To be frank they can be quite harrowing and you may see things that will affect you emotionally. If this is the case it's okay to take a step back as long as there is sufficient to deal with what you may be presented with. I'm still a Police Officer and have a duty to deal with this casualty professionally and in a dignified manner.

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Sometimes the body may be badly disrupted; you may be tasked with searching it to find some kind of identification. You must remember that it is our duty to inform next of kin who have a right to know what is going on.

On this occasion he is still alive having fallen into the “Pit” below the running rails. My colleague is a Public Order medic and he naturally wants to help but we are told it’s unsafe to go down there by the Fire-Brigade... This upsets him as the injured man look to be in a really bad-way. The ambulance-service arrives and together we deal with the gentleman.

Where possible we attempt to return the scene to normal running in under 90 minutes; these awful situations also have consequences for our partners in the railway industry who have to pay hundreds of thousands of pounds in disruption payments. It is important that we understand this too.



The week has come off to a busy start. Our Sergeant has a debrief at the end of the day to make sure we’re all okay; it’s essential that if you are affected by things that you see, you make someone aware of how you feel.

During my week I deal with many different situations from the person under a train to lost children and tourists. I end up talking to a variety of people from all walks of life. What many forget is that when people talk to a Police Officer they normally see the uniform and will link their particular experience on that occasion to

the uniform; we must always be polite and courteous as the reputation of the BTP is represented by each and every one of us.. Being rude or short isn’t acceptable.

My next day is a football shift on a Police Support Unit (PSU); our Chief Constable has promised that he will ensure football violence and disorderly behaviour is stamped out. It’s not fair on the traveling public who have to tolerate drunk, rowdy fans on the trains. Our uniformed presence provides visible reassurance and engagement with the fans shows we have taken notice of them. Conversely it provides members of the public who are not going to the game that we challenge any unruly behaviour and make the journey they have paid for a more pleasant-one.

Being public order-trained means that I deal with the more “rowdy-type” of football-fan and situations which require specialist officers. It’s a skill that I would always encourage a new officer to get trained in after their Probation.

Sometimes what we do can be really boring and monotonous, i.e. standing at a station for hours and answering the same questions from different people, like, “Which way is.....” and, “How do I get to....” But, like I have said before, people link their experience to the Uniform we wear; we have to try and leave them with a lasting good impression.

My next two-days involve answering response calls across the Division which can be from London all the way to Portsmouth! Be prepared to travel all across England and see the sights! A-lot of the time we attend calls where we can’t use the “Blues and Twos” so end-up being stuck in traffic quite a-lot.