

## **POLICY ON KNIVES**

### **OPERATION SHIELD**

#### **REVERSING THE KNIFE CRIME CULTURE**

Hand held metal detectors and portable walk-through detection arches are the latest weapons to be used by the British Transport Police to combat violence and robbery on the railway network of Great Britain.

Initially they were part of a six week pilot scheme called Operation Shield, in London. In the first two weeks 2,000 people were scanned. In all 30 crime arrests were made and 17 offensive weapons, including eight knives, a pair of knuckledusters, a hammers and CS spray as well as several sharpened screwdrivers were recovered.

The success of Operation Shield in London has led to extensive coverage in many newspapers raising the profile of the British Transport Police.

The Home Office, after a presentation and being invited to experience Operation Shield in practice, of which they were very impressed, particularly with BTP's non-obstrusive approach, the Home Office has awarded the British Transport Police a grant towards the purchase of secure mobile trailers. These trailers will allow each British Transport Police Area to carry out Operation Shield initiatives at various hotspot locations across England, Scotland and Wales.

British Transport Police will carry out such Operations in partnership with other organisations such as the local police, Revenue Protection Officers, railway Security Guards and Police Community Support Officers. Many of the operations are further supported by the use of drug sniffer dogs.

In addition to the Home Office the Chief Executive Officer of the Damilola Taylor Trust has attended Operation held and wishes to work in partnership with the British Transport Police on educating young people on the dangers of knife crime.