

North Yorkshire Police select 'Connected Survey' solution for time saving at Collision Scenes



PC Dave Taylor with the new Trimble 'Connected Survey' System

The North Yorkshire Police Collision Investigation Unit operates out of two offices at Tadcaster and Thirsk and attends around 90 fatal accidents a year. In recent years the unit has increased from four officers to six and as well as attending all fatal or potentially fatal collisions now also attends crime scenes, all off road incidents and scenes on behalf of the Air Accident Investigation Branch.

The increased workload, combined with the unit's desire to thoroughly investigate all scenes and keep traffic disruption to a minimum, meant that the demands on the unit's existing robotic total station purchased eight years previously were becoming very heavy.

The decision to update the equipment was made following a potential fatal collision on the A1 (M) which was visited by Chief Constable Della Cannings. Having seen PC Dave Taylor using a robotic total station, she asked him to prepare a business plan in order to purchase new up to date equipment.

Selecting a System

Following demonstrations from the major survey equipment suppliers, a tender was drawn up and advertised. PC Dave Taylor was clear in what was required of a new system. "Any system we purchased had to be quick and have the facility for GPS work. This means that when there was no line of sight or if the scene extended over a wide area we could seamlessly switch from a total station to GPS cutting out the need for station set-

ups. Our requirements for a robotic total station were that it had to be 'future proof'. We were after all planning to spend around £80,000 of taxpayer's money! The data logger for both GPS and Total Station would have to have the facility to show a real-time plan to ensure that when we left the scene we knew that we had surveyed all that we needed. It also had to have a back lit screen and keypad so we could continue working after dusk. Finally, any system we purchased would have to be compatible with our plan drawing software 'RelMo'."

Following the submission of tenders, the Unit purchased two Trimble S6 DR Total Stations and two Trimble 5800 RTK GPS with Trimble CU loggers (detachable control units). It was agreed that this system would provide the 'connected survey' operation that would bring the greatest time saving benefits - optical and GPS data could be seamlessly integrated into a single data file whilst officers were still in the field.

Time Saving

The Collision Unit took delivery of the new systems in April from Trimble's leading UK distributor KOREC. Normally the S6 DR Total Station is used to record all collision marks such as skids, gouges, scrapes and people and vehicle positions but if the scene extends over a great distance or out of the line of sight, the TCU can be placed onto the 5800 GPS and seamless surveying continued.

PC David Taylor concludes, "We selected the Trimble S6 DR (Direct Reflex) Total Station with TCU because it scored so highly on our tender document. We required an instrument that was future proof and with the S6 MagDrive servo technology the instrument provides us with high speed turning and low power consumption as well as reducing instrument wear. We needed equipment that was reliable and from a trustworthy company. Since taking delivery from KOREC in April we have attended twenty fatalities, twenty potentials fatal, two crime scenes and one plane crash and have been cutting survey time on site by up to 50% in some cases. Shorter time on site means shorter road closures and less disruption to traffic."

