



# Road Justice: an introduction

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Road Justice campaign coordinator

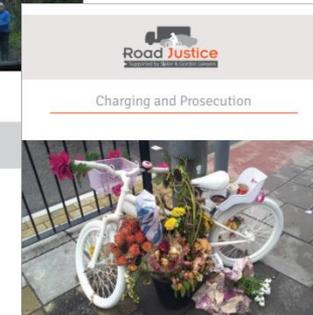
 #roadjustice

## Key message

The justice system needs to take a tougher approach to bad driving to raise driving standards and make our roads safer for all

# Campaign objectives

- 1. Policing** - To ensure the police conduct high quality investigations of all road traffic collisions involving injury and death
- 2. Charging and Prosecution** - To ensure the police and prosecution services make appropriate charging and prosecution decisions
- 3. Sentencing** - To ensure sentences reflect the severity of an offence, discourage bad driving and protect the public



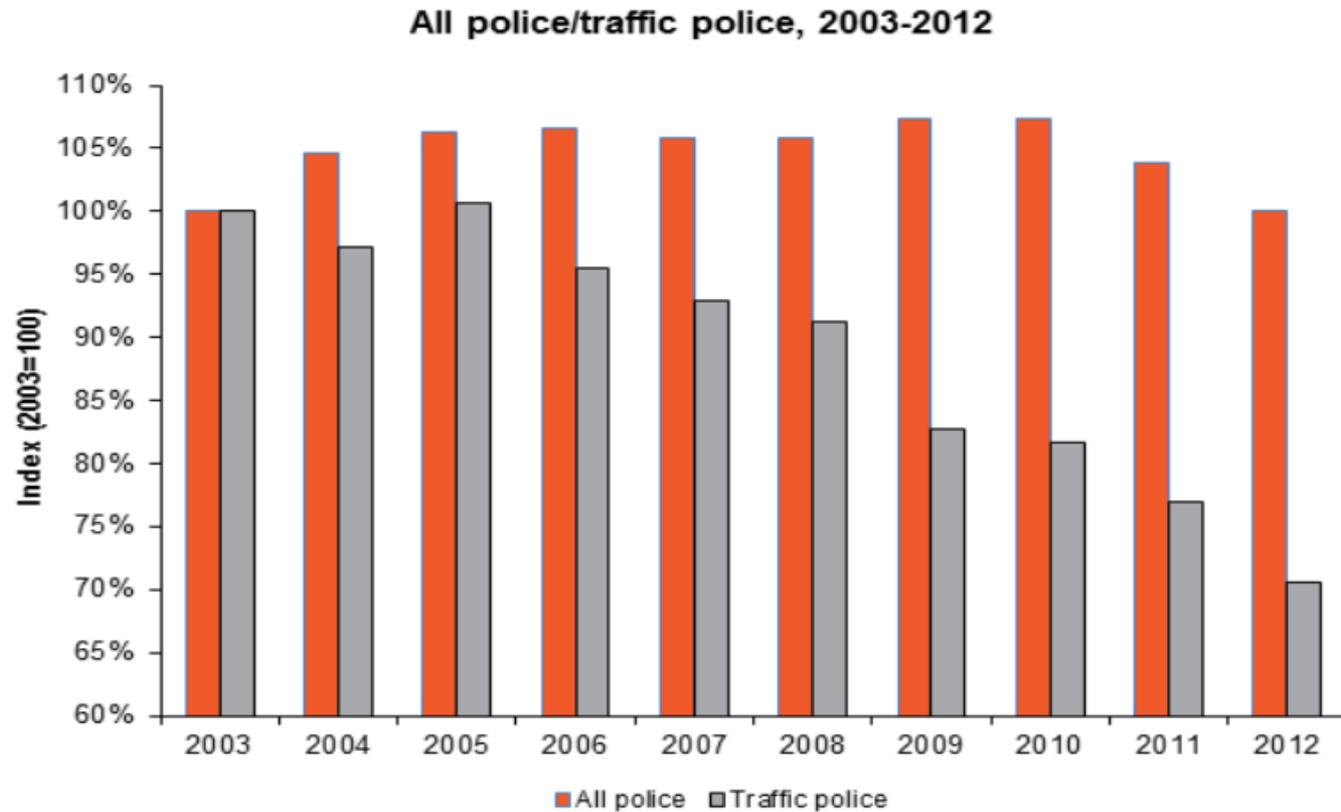


# Roads policing



- Roads police are under-resourced and over-stretched – 29% drop in roads police numbers over 10 years
- Non-specialist police are picking up the slack
- Police are under-reporting incidents and under-charging drivers (or sending drivers on training courses)

# Roads policing





# Charging and Prosecution

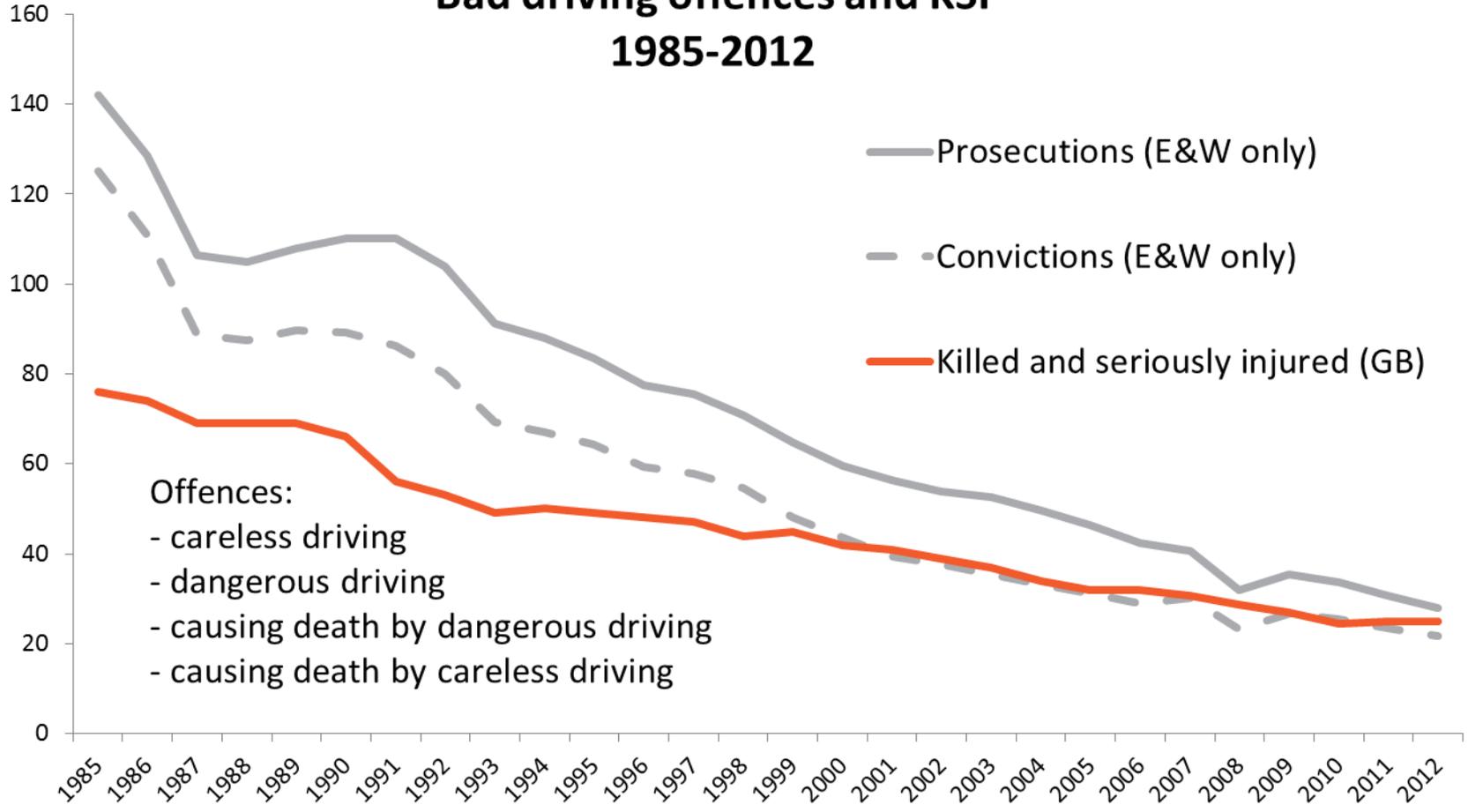


Between 1986 and 2006 there was a 77% drop in prosecutions and convictions for careless, dangerous and death by dangerous offences, but only 58% drop in road casualties, why is this happening?

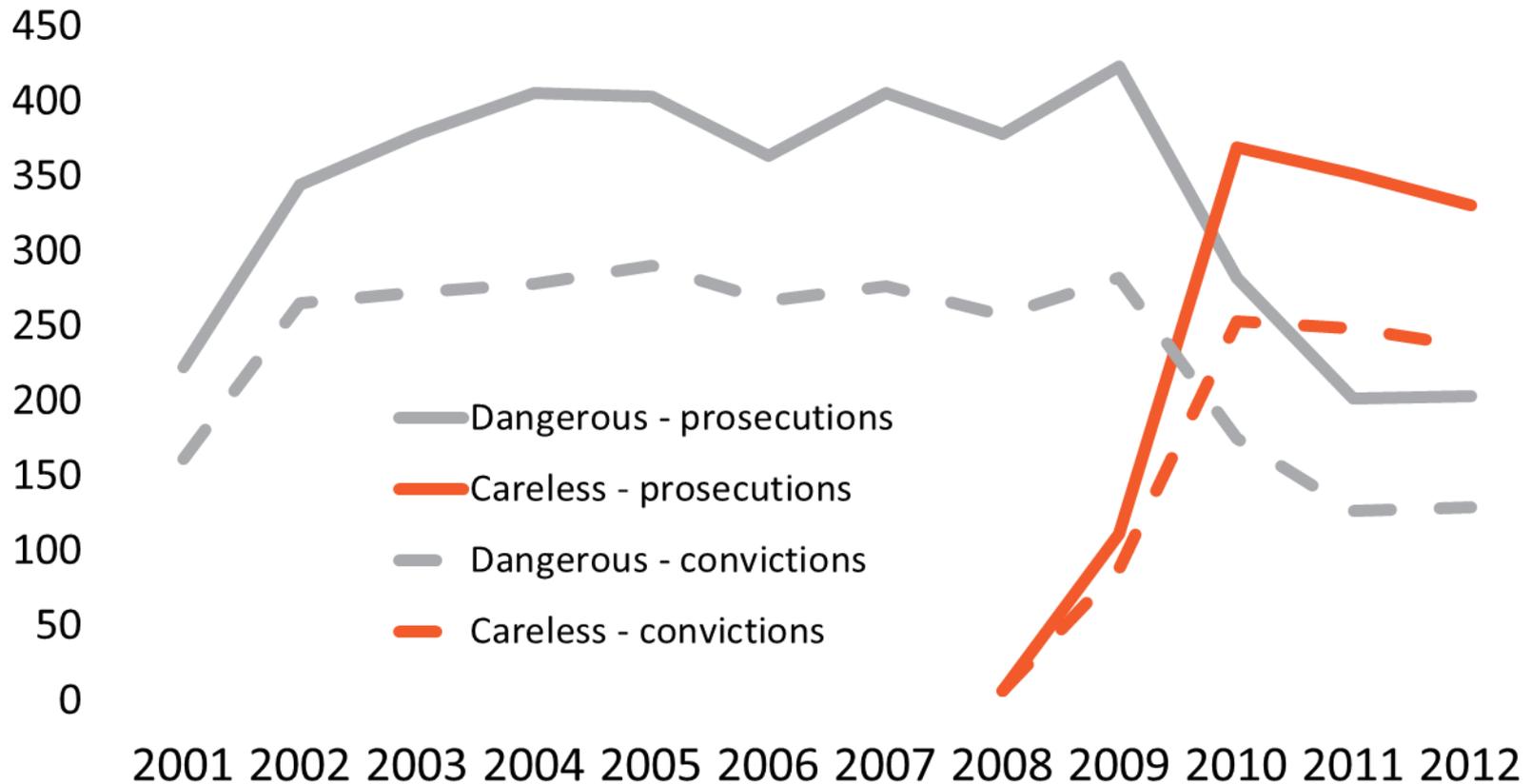
Drop in prosecutions and convictions due to:

- a) Offences being charged differently (careless instead of dangerous)
- b) Offences not being charged (the thick end of the wedge)

## Bad driving offences and KSI 1985-2012



**Causing death by dangerous and careless driving - 2001-2012**





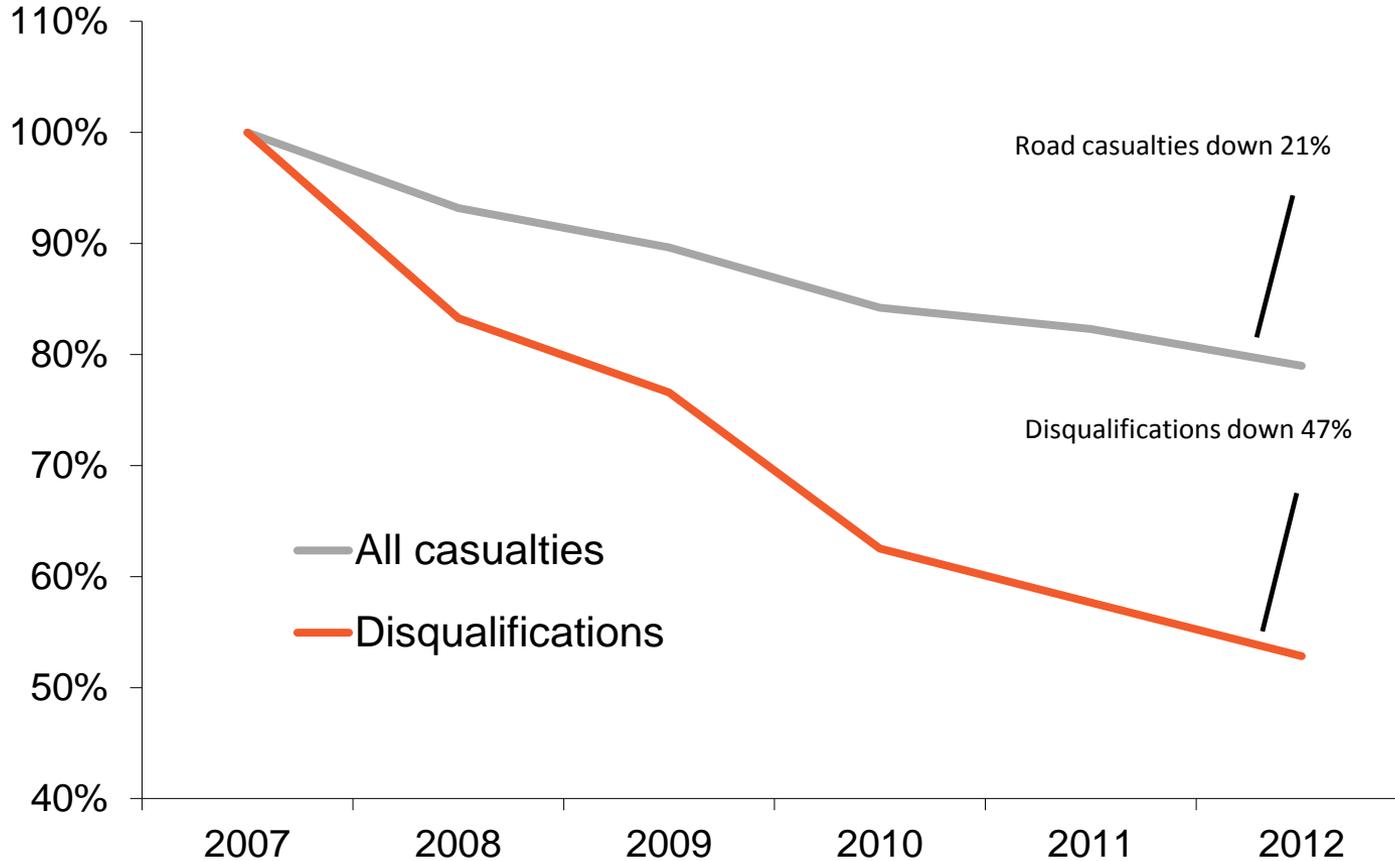
# Sentencing



- Weak charging leads to weak sentencing
- There is a big variation in maximum sentences for very similar offences
- Sentences rarely come close to maximum permitted – but of late this seems to be changing
- Driving bans are not prioritised in sentencing guidelines
  - Bans rarely exceed 3 years for causing death offences
  - 65% of bans given for careless driving and driving whilst disqualified last less than a year
  - Only 3% of careless driving convictions come with a ban
  - Only 1.7% of all bans imposed in 2012 were for life

# Sentencing

## Casualties and disqualifications 2007-2012





# What the campaign is doing nationally



## **Collaborating with other organisations**

- Working with RoadPeace, British Cycling and others to put pressure on government departments and public bodies to tackle road crime
- Working with the police to improve roads policing
- Fighting cases of injustice with the Cyclists' Defence Fund

## **Raising awareness of injustice**

- Disseminating reports
- Holding debates on topical issues (sentencing debate and road danger reduction conference)

## **Conducting research**

- Analysing criminal justice data
- Recording cases of bad driving
- Researching presumed liability laws

## **Providing advice to victims**

- Providing advice on what to do after a road crash and how to pursue cases



# Impact to date



## Commitments made in draft Cycling and Walking Delivery Plan:

- Government to review driving offences and penalties by 2015
  - Already committed to increasing sentence for driving whilst disqualified and creating new offence of causing serious injury whilst disqualified, unlicensed or uninsured
- Magistrates sentencing guidelines to be reviewed by 2017
  - Magistrates' will have power to impose unlimited fines for careless driving, dangerous driving and drink-driving
- Sentencing Council to review sentencing guidelines for most serious offences by 2020
- Ministry of Justice to increase transparency of case outcomes

## Other impacts:

- ACPO Cycling Lead encouraged all Assistant Chief Constables to engage with cycling groups
- There has also been an increase in parliamentary debates about dangerous driving

# The Campaigner's Role

- To represent the campaign at the local level
- To raise awareness of the campaign locally
- To engage with the police
- To track and attend court cases

