# Kenny MacAskill talks about Police Scotland – Transcript

***Can you explain why the Scottish Government created Police Scotland?***

**Kenny MacAskill**: Well, we've moved to a single police service here in Scotland. I believe it was the right thing to do. We had to do so because of financial challenges.

So we decided to ensure that we could keep that visible police presence in our communities. To ensure that we could keep numbers high and have officers needed and available where's necessary, then we had to save in the back offices.

We had to reduce from eight Chief Constables, eight Chief Constable drivers, eight HR and payroll departments. So that's come with some difficulty and not without its challenges.

But it has meant we have preserved frontline policing, officers in our communities, but equally it has also offered great advantages because every area in Scotland now has access to specialist resources.

There were times when only some of the large conurbations,  those in Strathclyde or Lothian and Borders would have access to some specialist crime matters, and we know that whether it's terrorism, whether it's internet offences, whether it's other aspects of serious crime, we do need to have specialist officers and indeed support staff able to assist.

So, we've made a virtue out of a necessity. We've had to change because of the financial challenges but in changing to a single service we now ensure that every area in Scotland from the islands, the remote Highlands, down to the urban areas in Scotland, is able to access specialist resources when they need it.

Crime doesn't recognise any jurisdiction. Whether Scotland as a nation, or whether individual communities within Scotland, every community in Scotland needs to have access to those specialist resources. We now provide that. Equally, every community wants their bobby on the beat and we're maintaining that.

 [End of transcript]