

PRESS OFFICE

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CUMBRIA
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PRESS RELEASE

Issued at 5.35pm on Wednesday 2 June 2010 (to support press call on scene)

Following the tragic events that have unfolded in Cumbria today, Deputy Chief Constable Stuart Hyde of Cumbria Police said: "Our condolences and thoughts are with the families and friends of those who have been affected by the horrific incidents that unfolded in Cumbria today.

"This has truly been the most exceptional, challenging incident that Cumbria has had to deal with in a long time and so soon after the tragic collision on the A66. This has shocked the people of Cumbria - and around the country - to the core.

"The body of Derrick Bird was located in a wooded area near Boot at around 1:40pm today and at this time we believe that he took his own life. No shots were fired by police officers.

"Throughout the day we have been dealing with a very fast paced operation that stretched over three hours, and emergency services responded during very difficult, challenging circumstances.

"We are still at a very early stage in our investigation and we are not able to really understand the motivation behind it - or establish whether this was a premeditated or random attack.

"Current indications are that twelve people have died, plus Derrick Bird. And a number of people are also receiving treatment in hospital.

"We are working hard to support the families of those involved and our focus is now on gathering as much evidence as possible to build up a clear picture of what happened this morning.

"The nature of this incident has stretched the Constabulary and thanks to the support of our colleagues at the Civil Nuclear Constabulary and neighbouring forces, we were able to respond.

"Detective Chief Superintendent Iain Goulding is now leading a full and thorough investigation to find out exactly what happened and why, and will look into Mr Bird's history, his access to firearms and his motivation for the shootings. It would be wrong of me to speculate at this stage, however, the circumstances of this tragedy and the gravity of it dictates that we have a full investigation and try to understand why someone would want to take so many lives in such a short space of time.

"I'd like to appeal for members of the public with friends and family in the West Cumbria area to ensure they are safe and well. If you cannot make contact with

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relatives, or you are not sure if they are safe, please contact the police helpline number on 0800 096 0095.

"Anyone with information that can help us understand Mr Bird 's movements this morning are asked to contact police urgently on 0845 33 00 247.

"Whilst this was a terrifying and horrific incident, it is by its nature, very unusual - locally, regionally and nationally. Cumbria prides itself on being a safe place to work, play and visit. Cumbria is a tightly knit community covering some of the most beautiful countryside in the land its strength is as much its people as its geography. It remains one of the safest areas of the UK and is very much open for business and tourism despite the tragic circumstances of the last few hours.

"Finally, our thoughts go out to all the family, friends and colleagues of those killed or injured in this tragedy."

End