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British Policewoman Elected President of International Police Network

A senior British policewoman has been chosen to champion the interests of female police officers throughout the world.

Chief Inspector Jane Townsley was elected president of the International Association of Women Police (IAWP) at the organisation's conference in Seattle, USA.

Chief Insp Townsley, who has 24 years' experience as a police officer, said she was delighted and honoured to be IAWP president.

She said: "My priorities over the next three years will be to further promote the work of the IAWP. It is a fantastic, fast-growing organisation which recognises the unique and invaluable skills women bring to law enforcement. We bring together officers of all ranks and from all corners of the globe to share experiences and learn from one another. We have a lot of important work ahead of us in ensuring our members are represented and receive training, mentoring and networking opportunities.

"We are fortunate in this country that women can expect equal treatment, but that is not the case everywhere in the world. Over the next three years, my priority will be to promote women in policing and to ensure the invaluable qualities women bring to law enforcement, wherever they may be, are valued and respected so that women can succeed to the highest levels."

Chief Insp Townsley is a British Transport Police chief inspector of operations based in Leeds. Throughout her police career Chief Insp Townsley has been involved in issues that particularly affect women within the police service and has represented the female perspective on various committees both within her own police force and nationally on behalf of the British Association for Women in Policing (BAWP), of which she is a national committee member. In 2003 she initiated setting up a female network within British Transport Police specifically to progress the Gender Agenda in the Force.

She joined the IAWP in 1996 and became a member of the Board of Directors as the Region 13 (Europe) Coordinator four years later. She remained in that position for two terms during which time she was the conference coordinator for the 43rd Annual training conference in 2005 in Leeds, England.

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The IAWP has members in 58 countries throughout the world and its aim is to strengthen, unite and raise the profile of women working in the criminal justice system. The organisation is committed to further enhancing its members' skills through professional development, training, recognition, mentoring, networking and peer support.

For further information about the IAWP please visit the website www.iawp.org

For further information or to arrange an interview with Chief Insp Jane Townsley please contact Melanie Hill at Integrity PR on 07527 847423 or email mel@integritypr.co.uk

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