# Man in Co Down charged after prank impersonating police with flashing lights amid rising UK and US offences



A man from Co Down is facing serious charges for allegedly impersonating a police officer in a peculiar incident where he employed flashing lights to flag down another driver. Charlie Ward, who claims the act was merely a 'prank', now finds himself under legal scrutiny, as his actions have raised significant concerns about public safety and the authority of law enforcement.

This incident is not isolated; there is a troubling pattern across various locations, where individuals have similarly attempted to impersonate police officers or other authority figures. In December 2021, Thomas Cox faced charges for using red and blue lights while driving in Bristol. Although his case was later dropped, it highlighted how such behaviour can escalate into serious legal consequences, particularly given that Cox also had a history of driving offences, having pleaded guilty to driving while disqualified.

More recently, in July 2023, Byron J. Boisseau was arrested near Revere Beach for forcing vehicles off the road while impersonating a police officer. He drove a white Crown Victoria equipped with flashing yellow lights, a vehicle type not typically associated with law enforcement. Boisseau's case illustrates that impersonating law enforcement can pose direct threats to motorists and raise fears within communities.

Similarly, Luciano Amador Velazquez in February 2024 was arrested in Texas for using lights to pull over another vehicle, attempting to justify his actions by claiming he wanted to encourage better driving behaviour. His bold assertion did little to assuage the concern, as he was charged with felony impersonation of a public servant.

Such incidents collectively reveal a concerning trend. In California, Hector Francisco Ponce was apprehended in October 2023 while impersonating an FBI agent, a situation compounded by his display of fraudulent credentials. The legal implications of these actions are severe, often leading to multiple charges, as in the case of Michael Saulsberry, who in August 2024 was arrested for using flashing lights to stop vehicles while armed.

The case of Charlie Ward serves as a reminder that attempts to mimic authority figures can quickly spiral out of control, resulting in significant legal repercussions. Impersonating a police officer is not merely a light-hearted prank; it carries substantial weight that can endanger public safety and undermine trust in law enforcement. As authorities investigate Ward’s case, it underscores the ongoing need for vigilance and accountability among those who engage in such reckless behaviour.

This pattern of impersonation is alarming, prompting law enforcement agencies to issue warnings about the risks of such actions, both to the impersonators and to the public they potentially endanger. As these cases unfold, they serve as a cautionary tale about the fine line between humour and criminality in the realm of public safety.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: Source [[1]](https://m.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/courts/man-accused-of-posing-as-cop-and-using-flashing-lights-to-flag-down-driver-says-it-was-just-a-prank/a1267473915.html)
2. Paragraph 2: Source [[2]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-somerset-60609021)
3. Paragraph 3: Source [[3]](https://www.boston25news.com/news/local/police-man-caught-impersonating-officer-near-revere-beach-forced-drivers-off-road-with-fake-cop-car/YLQZJXVBR5HIRMQHFU7BMRT76A/)
4. Paragraph 4: Source [[4]](https://www.fox4news.com/news/impersonating-officer-fake-lights-parker-county)
5. Paragraph 5: Source [[5]](https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/man-with-red-and-blue-flashing-lights-on-suv-accused-of-impersonating-fbi-agent/3254866/)
6. Paragraph 6: Source [[6]](https://www.click2houston.com/news/local/2024/08/05/man-arrested-by-harris-county-deputies-for-posing-as-cop-by-using-red-and-blue-lights-to-stop-vehicles/)
7. Paragraph 7: Source [[7]](https://www.daytondailynews.com/news/man-allegedly-impersonates-police-officer-pulls-someone-over-using-lights-and-fake-badge/PZQPZ64AIVG3ZAABO5ARP64X2Y/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://m.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/courts/man-accused-of-posing-as-cop-and-using-flashing-lights-to-flag-down-driver-says-it-was-just-a-prank/a1267473915.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-somerset-60609021> - In December 2021, Thomas Cox was charged with impersonating a police officer after driving a car equipped with red and blue flashing lights along Fishponds Road in Bristol. The charge was later dropped, but Cox pleaded guilty to driving while disqualified and without insurance. He was scheduled for sentencing in April 2022. The prosecutor described the lights as 'strobe lighting'.
3. <https://www.boston25news.com/news/local/police-man-caught-impersonating-officer-near-revere-beach-forced-drivers-off-road-with-fake-cop-car/YLQZJXVBR5HIRMQHFU7BMRT76A/> - In July 2023, Byron J. Boisseau, 43, was arrested near Revere Beach for impersonating a police officer. He was driving an unmarked white Crown Victoria with flashing yellow lights and was forcing other vehicles off the road. Boisseau was charged with multiple offenses, including impersonating a police officer and carrying a dangerous weapon. He pleaded not guilty to the charges.
4. <https://www.fox4news.com/news/impersonating-officer-fake-lights-parker-county> - In February 2024, Luciano Amador Velazquez, 42, was arrested in Parker County, Texas, for impersonating a police officer. He was driving a blue Dodge pickup with blue and red emergency lights on the dashboard and attempted to pull over another vehicle. Velazquez claimed he used the lights to 'make people drive better'. He was charged with impersonation of a public servant, a felony.
5. <https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/man-with-red-and-blue-flashing-lights-on-suv-accused-of-impersonating-fbi-agent/3254866/> - In October 2023, Hector Francisco Ponce, 40, was arrested in Riverside County, California, for impersonating an FBI agent. He was found standing next to an SUV with red and blue flashing lights in a Banning parking lot and showed officers fraudulent credentials. Ponce was arrested on suspicion of impersonating a peace officer and resisting a peace officer.
6. <https://www.click2houston.com/news/local/2024/08/05/man-arrested-by-harris-county-deputies-for-posing-as-cop-by-using-red-and-blue-lights-to-stop-vehicles/> - In August 2024, Michael Saulsberry, 21, was arrested in Houston for impersonating a police officer. He was using red and blue lights on his vehicle to signal other drivers to yield on I-10 westbound near Washington Avenue. Deputies found a handgun and body armor inside his car. Saulsberry was arrested for impersonation of a public servant and unlawful carrying of a weapon.
7. <https://www.daytondailynews.com/news/man-allegedly-impersonates-police-officer-pulls-someone-over-using-lights-and-fake-badge/PZQPZ64AIVG3ZAABO5ARP64X2Y/> - In October 2022, Thomas Charles Williams, 44, was arrested in Warren County, Ohio, for impersonating a police officer. He was driving a vehicle with flashing red and blue lights and a forged temporary license plate. Williams identified himself as a 'constituent' and showed a badge from New York with the word 'constituent' on it. He was indicted for forgery and impersonation of a peace officer.