

# Ex-police inspector fined Lm300

A former police inspector was yesterday fined Lm300 after being found guilty of seriously injuring a 16-year-old boy in a hit-and-run traffic accident on May 6, 2000.

Kevin Ellul Bonici was also found guilty of driving a car without insurance cover and committing a crime he was duty bound to prevent.

The court, presided by Magistrate Consuelo Scerri Herrera, noted that when Ellul Bonici learnt it had been he who had hit the boy in question he had gone to the police and assumed responsibility for his action.

The accident took place in May 2000 on the Corradino Hill, in Paola.

Ellul Bonici testified he was driving his car towards Fgura and that he saw a large number of school children outside a school in the area.

He said they were on the pavement on the side of the road where he was driving but there was also traffic on the outer lane. He said he went as close to the outer lane as possible to move away from the crowd. He said his window was open but the one on the passenger side was closed and his car stereo was on.

He said he had heard a noise when he passed by the children and looked into his rear view mirror to see what had happened. He concluded that one of the children had hit the car with a satchel so he carried on driving home.

His wife later asked him whether he had been involved in a traffic accident because the wing mirror on the passenger side was missing. He said he did not associate the missing mirror with the noise he had heard while driving past the school children.

The next day, a police officer told him there had been a hit and run case involving a 16-year-old boy in Paola and that the police had found the car`s mirror.

Ellul Bonici saw the mirror found on the scene and identified it as his. He admitted he had been the driver because all the events had fallen into place.

The court said it was clear Ellul Bonici was involved in the road accident but said that since he had been honest and demonstrated integrity in owning up to his responsibilities, and making good for civil damages, his driving licence would not be revoked.

Magistrate Carol Peralta last February had sent the case to be heard as a minimal offence after taking note of the explanation provided by the attorney general as to the seriousness of the case.

The attorney general had explained that although the boy had been seriously injured, the injury had been inflicted involuntarily and had not caused a permanent disability.

This meant that the maximum punishment was three months` imprisonment, rising up to six months if committed by a public officer.

This led Magistrate Peralta to conclude that the case should not be treated any differently to the hundreds of other collision cases and he had sent it back to be heard at the collisions sitting.

Police inspector Stephen Micallef prosecuted.