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Quasi-diagonal  $C^*$ -algebras form a large class of  $C^*$ -algebras and arise naturally in many contexts. Dan Voiculescu has shown that quasi-diagonality is a homotopy invariant, and consequently, that the cone of a  $C^*$ -algebra is always quasi-diagonal. In this talk we discuss an extension of this result for exact continuous fields of  $C^*$ -algebras. As an application, we obtain that the group  $C^*$ -algebras of certain central group extensions are always quasi-diagonal. (Received September 20, 2011)