

POLICE USE OF FORCE: EVIDENCE FROM COMPLAINTS, INVESTIGATIONS AND PUBLIC PERCEPTION

On 8 March 2016, the IPCC published a research study looking at the police use of force. The study contained a number of recommendations addressed at police forces and other bodies. They were designed to help improve how use of force is recorded, monitored and scrutinised.

To help support work that community and voluntary sector groups and other organisations are undertaking locally, we have developed this handy prompt sheet. It contains questions that you could ask your local force to find out more about how they are responding to the findings of the study and the recommendations made. These questions would probably be most useful for meetings with Police and Crime Commissioners, Chief Constables, force leads or other senior officers.

If you have any questions about the study please email research@ipcc.gsi.gov.uk.

Awareness

Q1. What has your force done to help the public understand:

- the powers police have access to?
- how police can use force?
- how they can complain or provide feedback about their experiences?

Recording

Q2. Does your force routinely record any type of force used by a police officer during the performance of their duties?

Q3. If you record any data about how force is used, do you know:

- how many times officers used force in the last year?
- how many children and young people had force used on them?
- how many times force was used in a health setting, and why it was used?
- what context officers used most force in?
- how many times members of the public were injured as a result of officers using force?

Q4. If you don't currently record how officers use force, are you planning to change your approach in the future?

Guidance and training

Q5. What advice do you give to officers about using force on:

- children and young people?
- people with learning disabilities?
- people with mental health conditions?
- people under the influence of drugs or alcohol?

Q6. Do you give officers training on:

- recognising and dealing with unconscious bias?
- using verbal communication to help de-escalate behaviour?

Q7. Are there any opportunities for groups and organisations, or members of the public to:

- feed into the development of use of force training?
- be involved in the delivery of use of force training to officers?
- observe use of force training being given to officers?

Complaints

Q8. How many complaints did you get last year about how officers used force?

Q9. What action have you taken to ensure that complaints relating to the use of force are investigated properly?

Body worn video

Q10. Do the officers in your force use body worn video? If you do, is this routinely worn by all officers who could come into contact with any member of the public, or is its use confined to officers undertaking certain types of activity?

Q11. How do you ensure that footage relating to officers' use of force is retained in incidents when a complaint has been made, a referral to the IPCC has been sent or if there was a death or serious injury?

Q12. Do officers routinely wear body worn video when:

- working in custody suites?
- using stop and search powers?
- searching property?
- responding to domestic violence incidents?
- dealing with public order incidents?

Guidance

Q13. Does your force policy and guidance adhere to national standards set by the College of Policing in Authorised Professional Practice (APP) and in other guidance in use nationally?

Monitoring

Q14. What action have you taken to understand how officers' use of force affects people's trust and confidence in the police, and in particular, whether certain groups are more or less affected?

Q15. How do you ensure that a single officer isn't able to repeatedly misuse force?

Q16. If you collect any data can you tell how many times officers use force on:

- children or young people?
- people with learning disabilities?
- people from BME communities?
- people with mental health conditions?

Q17. What action have you taken to ensure that individuals and specific communities do not find themselves being repeatedly or disproportionately subjected to the police use of force?

Public scrutiny

Q18. Do you currently publish figures showing:

- how force is used?
- the number of use of force complaints received?

Q19. Do you currently offer independent advisory groups, community monitoring groups or members of the public with opportunities to scrutinise:

- use of force records?
- relevant complaints?
- body worn video footage?
- data relating to use of force?

Using force in healthcare settings

- Q20. Have you developed any arrangements with local NHS trusts to set out the circumstances in which you will attend hospitals, mental health units or other medical settings?**
- Q21. What advice have you given to officers about how they should deal with incidents in health settings that involve staff, patients or other members of the public?**
- Q22. Do you know how many times officers have used force when responding to incidents in healthcare settings in the force area, in the last year?**