

OVERSIGHT

newsletter

Welcome to our monthly newsletter which provides updates about the work of the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC). The newsletter is for complaint handlers in forces and local policing bodies (LPBs).

PSD new starter sessions

Thank you for nominating your new colleagues to join us for our Professional Standards Departments (PSD) new starter sessions. We can now confirm that sessions will be held each quarter on the following dates:

- Wednesday 19 April 2023
- Tuesday 27 June 2023
- Wednesday 20 September 2023
- Tuesday 16 January 2024

If you have already sent us details of your new starters, we will contact them directly with an invitation. You can continue to send details of new starters to oversight@policeconduct.gov.uk throughout the year if you would like them to attend a session.

These quarterly events are for new starters in PSDs and will cover the origins of the IOPC, the work we do, tips on complaints handling and the opportunity to ask us questions on any area of our work. The sessions are hosted remotely on Microsoft Teams and will last around 60-90 minutes.

Violence against women and girls update

On the 25 November 2022, we wrote to all Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners about our thematic work on violence against women and girls. We set out the key areas of work we have planned across the business. The two areas of work that the Oversight team will deliver, together with our policing stakeholders, is as follows:

- We have gathered and cleansed the data we hold for referrals that have a theme of violence against women and girls. During February, we will begin our statistical analysis of that data to assess compliance with the mandatory referral criteria. This will also help to provide a starting point to measure referrals against going forward.
- We have drafted our proposal for the end-to-end case handling review where we will dip sample complaint and conduct files. Dip sampling is when we review a random selection of cases. The proposal explains the criteria and methodology for the dip sampling. In the next few weeks, we will share the proposal with our policing stakeholders and seek your feedback.

Recent information

Complaint handler workshops 2023

We are preparing to host our series of face-to-face workshops for PSD and LPB complaint handlers in February and March 2023. The workshops focus on reflective practice, as well as the 'Right First Time' work we are piloting. Invitations were sent on 16 January 2023 - thank you for booking your places.

More information will be shared in due course and we look forward to joining you at the events. If you have not yet told us of any reasonable adjustments or dietary requirements that you need, please contact us as soon as possible by emailing oversight@policeconduct.gov.uk

Learning the lessons – understanding impact

We published [issue 41 of Learning the Lessons](#) on call handling in November 2022. It was circulated to over 1,500 stakeholders, and work is underway to expand the reach and impact of the magazine. We continue to welcome your feedback via email at learning@policeconduct.gov.uk

Alongside the magazine, we created a [question bank](#) which contains the questions listed in each of our case studies. This document enables policy makers, managers, police officers and staff to easily lift and reflect on the questions posed in the magazine and identify opportunities to learn from real cases. Questions range from asking policy makers to check if their forces have relevant policies in place, to asking police officers to reflect on their own knowledge and experience, and how that would inform the decisions they would have taken in a case.

Issue 42 of Learning the Lessons will be on custody and is in early development, with publication due later in the year.

Impact report – survey close 14 February

Our impact report for 2021/22 titled 'Engaging, Learning and Improving' sets out our achievements during the last year and how we are working with stakeholders to make a positive difference to policing. It contains case studies about real people and includes testimonials from a range of service users and stakeholders.

Please take a moment to [read about our impact](#) and [complete this quick survey](#) to tell us your thoughts.

Update on data collection exercise involving Taser discharges on persons under 18

On 19 January 2023, we wrote to Chief Constables about the joint IOPC and NPCC data collection exercise of complaints and recordable conduct matters involving Taser discharges on a person under 18. The data collection phase of the exercise is now paused and there is no need to share these incidents with us on a voluntary basis. The usual mandatory and voluntary referral criteria continue to apply. The IOPC and NPCC are now analysing the data received to identify any trends and learning. Thank you for your cooperation with this exercise.

? Common questions from forces and LPBs

Q: A complaint was investigated over a period of 11 months and finalised with a finding of ‘practice requiring improvement’ (PRI) for the subject officer. Three months later (14 months since the complaint was made), a review was upheld because the finding of PRI was not considered reasonable and proportionate. The reviewer recommended the officer attend a misconduct hearing instead of PRI and this was accepted by the AA. Is a 12-month timeliness notification needed for this case?

A: No. For investigation timeliness reporting to the IOPC and LPBs, the legislation defines the ‘relevant period’ as beginning when the complaint was made and ending when the investigation report is submitted to the AA. In this example, the investigation was completed and submitted to the AA in 11 months. Although the review was upheld, no further investigative actions were recommended or taken. Therefore the ‘end date’ remains the date that the completed investigation report was submitted to the AA. Any resulting criminal or disciplinary actions are not included as part of the ‘relevant period’. If further investigative work was required as a result of the review, a 12-month timeliness report would need to be submitted retrospectively at the point the review was upheld (month 14). This is because the investigation is considered to be ongoing.

Q: Can a complainant continue to add allegations throughout an ongoing investigation?

A: A complainant can add allegations during an investigation and it will often be appropriate to include these as part of the ongoing investigation. However, a time limit may need to be introduced where additional allegations are made repeatedly, preventing completion of the investigation in a reasonable timeframe. Any additional matters can be raised after, as a new complaint, if needed.

Q: A complaint investigation confirmed that the attending officers complied with the relevant force policy. However, the investigation also identified that the policy was flawed and this impacted the officers’ decision-making during the incident complained about. Is it reasonable to conclude that the service level was acceptable, given that the officers acted in accordance with policy?

A: Service level decisions should take into account the effect and impact that force policies and procedures have on members of the public. As outlined in [Focus issue 18](#), a ‘service level not acceptable’ decision is appropriate when the service delivered by the police falls below reasonable expectations. Although there are no concerns with the individual conduct of the officers, the flaw in policy is an organisational issue which has negatively impacted the service provided to the complainant and there is an indication that the service could have been better had the policy not been flawed. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the service level was not acceptable. As part of the outcome, the PSD may engage with other departments to share the issues/learning identified and explore how to improve the policy.

Corporate news

IOPC statement following PC David Carrick's guilty pleas

IOPC regional director Sal Naseem said:

“Our thoughts are with the many women who were victims of PC David Carrick’s shocking offending and we acknowledge their tremendous courage in reporting this offending to the police. The catalogue, breadth and depth of his offending and the impact on all of the women affected cannot be underestimated.

“The conduct of PC Carrick was first referred to us in July 2021, by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) after it was advised by the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Major Crime Unit (BCH) that Carrick was being investigated for an allegation of rape and coercive behaviour of a former partner. We decided that the Major Crime Unit should continue with that investigation as it provided a level of independence.

“Since Carrick’s arrest and subsequent charge in October 2021, we received 22 further referrals from the MPS relating to his conduct, as more allegations and charges were laid against him. We decided that BCH should continue to investigate those matters.

“After David Carrick’s arrest in October 2021, the MPS notified us of concerns regarding its handling of allegations of assault and harassment made against him in 2002. Those allegations were dealt with by way of words of advice for Carrick from the MPS investigating officers and DPS was never informed. We identified that the two officers’ handling of those allegations could amount to misconduct. However, given the officers have retired and cannot now face sanction at misconduct level, we decided to take no further action.

“Given concerns over the depth and breadth of Carrick’s offending, last year we wrote to all forces who had potentially previously come into contact with Carrick requesting they review those contacts to identify whether there were any failures to investigate or prosecute him and to seek assurance that any conduct issues identified would be referred to the IOPC. All forces have since confirmed those reviews are complete and there are no issues which meet criteria for a referral to the IOPC.”

Read our [full statement on our website](#).

Latest news

Keep up to date on our investigations and other work to increase public confidence in the police complaints system. You can find our [latest IOPC news](#) on our website.

[IOPC upholds review into complaints made about Greater Manchester Police investigation](#)

[Former West Midlands constable charged with misconduct in public office for obtaining information without authority](#)

[Former Humberside officer would have been dismissed for fraudulent online gambling](#)

[Lincolnshire constable given final written warning over unauthorised pursuit before fatal collision](#)

[Appeal for witnesses after fatal road collision in Liverpool involving a police vehicle responding to an emergency call](#)

[Appeal for witnesses of a fatal road collision following a West Yorkshire Police pursuit in Bradford](#)

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If you have any questions, please get in touch with your Oversight Liaison or a member of the Oversight team.

