

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).

Violence against women and girls update

End-to-end review of case handling

On 6 February 2023 we wrote to all Heads of PSDs and LPBs to share our proposal to dip sample the handling of cases involving violence against women and girls. Thank you to all of those who took the time to consider the proposal and provide your feedback. We are considering the feedback received before we finalise our dip sampling approach. The forces selected to form part of the dip sampling exercise will be contacted shortly.

Referrals analysis

We are conducting a statistical analysis of the referrals received by the IOPC for cases related to violence against women and girls. Our analysis will look at the number of referrals received per force and make comparisons based on most similar force data. We will also calculate the percentage of referrals that involve violence against women and girls' in comparison to overall referrals made and the number of allegations per 1,000 officers. The analysis will provide us with a referrals picture and allow us to identify any concerns.

IOPC review of police handling of reports concerning former PC David Carrick before arrest

Read more about our review in the 'Corporate news' section at end of this newsletter.

IOPC learning recommendation leads to new equipment for officers

The IOPC issued a learning recommendation to Greater Manchester Police (GMP) following the investigation into a death where a person had been found hanging. The IOPC requested that officer training be updated to include information on ligature removal and that officers are taught to give CPR in all cases, unless it is absolutely confirmed that the person is deceased.

A review of this and two other investigations, also into deaths where a person was found hanging, highlighted that GMP officers did not have access to a ligature cutting device. This led to delays in the person being cut down and sometimes created further distress to the family. GMP pursued approval for an official device for all officers to use and the force has now secured an order for 700 cutting devices to be issued to front line staff to assist them in delivering their duties. A communications campaign is planned across GMP to raise awareness of the device.

Backlog of review and investigation appeals - update

On 7 March 2023 we shared with Heads of Professional Standards an update on the IOPC backlog of reviews and investigation appeals. It includes details on the progress of our turnaround plan and the action we are taking to reduce the number of cases, reduce waiting times and keep pace with rising demand. We understand the impact of these delays on you and those involved, and we assure you that we continue to work hard on the turnaround plan to improve the situation.

Should you have any questions about this update or the details in our turnaround plan, please contact your Oversight Liaison.

Keeping contact details up to date

Please continue to inform the Oversight team of any changes to the main contact details we hold for you. It is important that we receive at least two weeks' notice, wherever possible, so we have sufficient time to update our systems to avoid any communication being sent to non-operational email addresses. Please email any changes to [Oversight](#).

Recent information

PSD new starter sessions

In the January 2023 issue of our newsletter, we confirmed we will be holding quarterly new starter sessions in 2023/2024, on the following dates:

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

If you would like any PSD new starters to attend a session, and haven't already contacted us, please continue to send their names and email addresses, throughout the year, to [Oversight](#). Please include your preferred dates and we will do our best to accommodate them.

? Common questions from forces and LPBs

Q: If a review upholds either an otherwise by investigation or investigation case, can the matter go back to the same complaint handler for further handling?

A: Yes, as long as the complaint handler has the appropriate skills to pursue the further enquiries and there is no concern about a conflict of interest in the complaint handler continuing to handle the case. In most cases it can help the complaint handler to understand why the review was upheld and reflect on why further enquiries are deemed necessary.

Corporate news

IOPC review of police handling of reports concerning former PC David Carrick prior to his arrest

Our thoughts are with the many women who were victims of former Metropolitan Police (MPS) Constable David Carrick's shocking offending and we acknowledge their tremendous courage in reporting this offending to the police. The breadth and depth of his offending and the impact on all of the women affected cannot be underestimated.

In light of public concern about scale of Carrick's offending and the length of time it took to bring him to justice, we are now reviewing the responses from forces to consider whether their handling of reports concerning Carrick were appropriate on each occasion. Our review will seek to determine whether, in the initial handling of reports concerning Carrick, forces acted in accordance with the law, national and local policy and guidance.

You can read [our full statement](#) and the [terms of reference for our review](#) on our website.

Recommendations to strengthen firearms licensing controls made following IOPC investigation into Keyham shootings

We issued a series of recommendations both to Devon and Cornwall Police, and nationally, to strengthen firearms licensing controls following our investigation into the Plymouth mass shooting in August 2021.

Our national recommendations issued to the Home Office included the need for clear guidance on checks that should be conducted when assessing applications, removing any distinction between requirements for firearms and shotgun certificates, that referees must have recent knowledge of an applicant, and that interviews with family members or cohabitants should be carried out where a certificate holder is involved in a violent offence. We are continuing to consult the Home Office over implementation of the measures for the police service in England and Wales.

IOPC Regional Director David Ford said: "It is vital that meaningful change is implemented to help police personnel responsible for firearms licensing make safe and sound decisions. Those changes are aimed at reducing the risks of a tragedy like this happening again."

Read [our full media statement](#) or our [investigation summary and learning report](#) on our website.

Learning identified for West Yorkshire Police following death of Star Hobson

The IOPC identified learning for West Yorkshire Police (WYP) to improve how it responds to reports of child abuse and neglect following the death of 16-month-old Star Hobson.

We highlighted ten areas of learning for West Yorkshire Police. They cover subjects including training for officers, recording intelligence and information, ensuring all roles within the Safeguarding Unit are adequately resourced, information sharing between stakeholders, and how officers investigate and follow up all potential lines of enquiry.

IOPC Regional Director Thea Walton said: "We identified a number of recommendations which include a closer working relationship with Children's Social Care and a multi-agency approach moving forward. Read [our full media 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.

[Former West Midlands Police officer charged with misconduct in public office for inappropriate activity with a woman](#)

[Former Humberside Police officer charged with child sex offences](#)

[Gross misconduct proven against former West Midlands Police constable who struck detainee at hospital](#)

[Gross misconduct proven against former Northamptonshire constable for inappropriate communication with two women](#)

[Merseyside Police officer under investigation following death of woman in Liverpool collision](#)

[IOPC investigation finds police use of force was reasonable prior to death of Derbyshire detainee](#)

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

