



Deaths during or following police contact:

Statistics for England and Wales 2021/22

Acknowledgements

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National statistics

The UK Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*. This shows compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

This designation means that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs
- are well explained and readily accessible
- are produced according to sound methods
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest

When statistics are designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the [Code of Practice](#) is followed.

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Introduction

This report presents figures on deaths during or following police contact that happened between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022. It provides a definitive set of figures for England and Wales, and an overview of the nature and circumstances in which these deaths occurred.

This publication is the eighteenth in a series of statistical reports on this subject, published annually by the IOPC.

To produce these statistics, we examine the circumstances of all deaths referred to us. We decide whether the deaths meet the criteria for inclusion in this report under one of the following categories:

- road traffic fatalities
- fatal shootings
- deaths in or following police custody
- apparent suicides following police custody
- other deaths following police contact that were subject to an independent investigation

[Box A on page 6](#) provides a definition for each of these categories.

Please see the [guidance document](#) on the IOPC website for more detailed definitions.

Further supporting information about the report can be found in the [background note](#).

Box A

Definitions of categories of deaths during or following police contact

Please see the [guidance document](#) on our website for more detailed definitions and for information about how the death cases are categorised and recorded.

In this report the term ‘police’ includes police civilians, police officers and staff from the other organisations under IOPC jurisdiction. [See background note 2](#) for more information about this. Deaths of police personnel or incidents involving off-duty police personnel are not included in the statistics in this report.

Road traffic fatalities includes deaths of motorists, cyclists or pedestrians arising from police pursuits, police vehicles responding to emergency calls and other police traffic-related activity.

This does not include:

- deaths following a road traffic incident (RTI) where the police attended immediately after the event as an emergency service

Fatal shootings includes fatalities where police officers fired the fatal shot using a conventional firearm.

Deaths in or following police custody includes deaths that happen while a person is being arrested or taken into detention. It includes deaths of people who have been arrested or have been detained by police under the *Mental Health Act 1983*. The death may have taken place on police, private or medical premises, in a public place or in a police or other vehicle.

This includes deaths that happen:

- during or following police custody where injuries that contributed to the death happened during the period of detention
- in or on the way to hospital (or other medical premises) during or following transfer from scene of arrest or police custody
- as a result of injuries or other medical problems that are identified or that develop while a person is in custody
- while a person is in police custody having been detained under Section 136 of the *Mental Health Act 1983* or other related legislation

This does not include:

- suicides that occur after a person has been released from police custody
- deaths that happen where the police are called to help medical staff to restrain people who are not under arrest

Apparent suicides following police custody includes apparent suicides that happen within two days of release from police custody. This category also includes apparent suicides that occur beyond two days of release from custody, where the time spent in custody may be relevant to the death.

Other deaths following police contact

includes deaths that follow contact with the police, either directly or indirectly, that did not involve arrest or detention under the *Mental Health Act 1983* and were subject to an independent investigation. An independent investigation is determined by the IOPC for the most serious incidents that cause the greatest level of public concern, have the greatest potential to impact on communities, or have serious implications for the reputation of the police service. Since 2010/11, this category has included only deaths subject to an independent investigation. This is to improve consistency in the reporting of these deaths.

This may include deaths that happen:

- after the police are called to attend a domestic incident that results in a fatality
- while a person is actively attempting to avoid arrest; this includes instances where the death is self-inflicted
- when the police attend a siege situation, including where a person kills themselves or someone else
- after the police have been contacted following concerns about a person's welfare and there is concern about the nature of the police response
- where the police are called to help medical staff to restrain people who are not under arrest

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Overall findings

During 2021/22, in each category there were:

- 39 road traffic fatalities
- 2 fatal police shootings
- 11 deaths in or following police custody
- 56 apparent suicides following police custody
- 109 other deaths following police contact that were independently investigated by the IOPC

Demographic information about those who died is presented in the following chapters, along with details about the circumstances of the deaths and a summary of trend data. The appendix contains additional information, such as the age, gender and ethnicity of those who died, and information about the police force or appropriate authority¹ involved.

Some of the investigations into the deaths recorded in this report are ongoing at the time of publication. Details about the nature and circumstances of these cases are based on information available at the point of analysis.

For a large portion of 2020/21, England and Wales were in lockdown owing to the coronavirus pandemic. At this stage it is not possible to say with certainty what impact this had on the number or types of interactions that members of the public had with the police. Caution should be taken when comparing data from 2020/21 with previous and subsequent years.

Investigations

When we are told about a fatality, we consider the circumstances of the case and decide whether to investigate independently, or to direct an investigation². In some circumstances, we decide that the local police force professional standards department (PSD)³ or other equivalent department is best placed to investigate a case⁴. [Box B on page 11](#) includes a description of each type of investigation.

Table 2.1 shows the type of investigation at the time of analysis for all incidents involving a fatality recorded in 2021/22. The figures show the number of incidents; an incident leading to a single investigation can involve more than one death and so the totals for some categories may be lower than the total fatalities presented above. In total the IOPC independently investigated 145 incidents.

As all the fatalities in this report happened from April 2021 onwards, Table 2.1 no longer includes figures for supervised and managed investigations. Across all death categories, no incidents were subject to directed investigation.

¹ The appropriate authority is usually a police force's chief officer or police and crime commissioner.

² From February 2020, supervised and managed investigations were no longer available as a mode of investigation. A new mode – 'directed investigation' – was created. These take place under IOPC direction and control, but using police resources.

³ Each force has a professional standards department, which oversees complaint handling and certain conduct matters.

⁴ In these circumstances the force must send the investigation report to the IOPC for review.

Table 2.1 Incidents by type of death and investigation type, 2021/22

Type of investigation	Road traffic incident	Fatal shootings	Deaths in or following police custody	Apparent suicides following police custody	Other deaths following police contact*
Independent	29	2	10	2	102
Directed	0	0	0	0	0
Local	1	0	0	14	0
Back to force	2	0	1	40	0
Total incidents	32	2	11	56	102

Note: Investigation type as recorded on the IOPC case system at the time of analysis.

* This category includes only cases subject to an independent investigation.

Trends

The figures in Table 2.2 show the number of fatalities across the different categories since 2011/12. It would not be meaningful to produce trend analysis across all five categories. This is because of the wide variation in the circumstances and changes to how the category of 'other deaths following police contact' is defined.

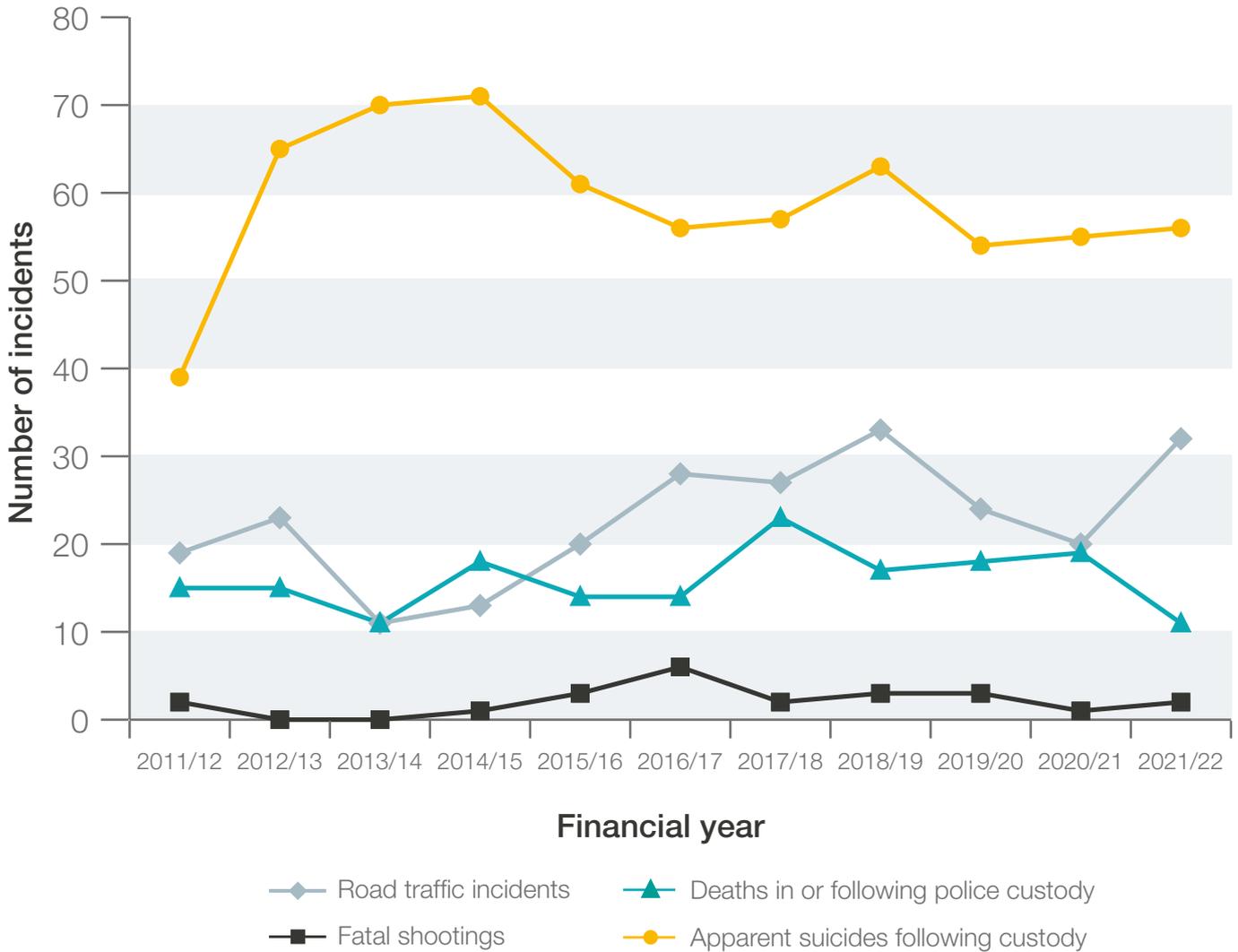
Table 2.2 Fatalities by type of death and financial year, 2011/12 to 2021/22

Category	Fatalities										
	Financial year										
	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
Road traffic fatalities	19	31	12	14	21	32	29	42	24	25	39
Fatal shootings	2	0	0	1	3	6	4	3	3	1	2
Deaths in or following police custody	15	15	11	18	14	14	23	17	18	19	11
Apparent suicides following custody	39	65	70	71	61	56	57	63	54	55~	56
Other deaths following police contact*	47	22	44	43	106**	131	178~	156	107	95~	109

*Change in definition of 'other deaths following contact' in 2010/11 to include only cases subject to an independent investigation.

** Expansion of IOPC investigative resource and capacity to carry out more independent investigations into serious and sensitive matters – this has a direct impact on the number of deaths reported in this category.

~ This table presents the most up-to-date set of figures for these categories; any changes to previously published data are indicated.

Figure 2.1 Incidents by type of death and financial year, 2011/12 to 2021/22

The number of **fatal road traffic incidents (RTIs)** has increased this year from 20 to 32. This is the fifth highest number recorded over the 18-year period since 2004/05 when these statistics were first published. It is the highest number of incidents since 2018/19, when there were 33 RTIs. These figures are subject to fluctuation and, therefore, year-on-year comparisons should be approached with caution.

This year there were two **fatal police shootings**, compared to one recorded last year. This is the third lowest figure recorded since 2004/05. The number of **deaths in or following police custody** has decreased notably over the last year from 19 to 11. Over time, there have been some fluctuations in this category, with notable increases recorded in 2010/11, 2014/15 and

2017/18. The 2021/22 figure is lower than the average over the 11-year period and is the joint lowest recorded during the time these figures have been published.

The number of recorded **apparent suicides following custody** was 56, compared to 55 fatalities recorded last year. The number of deaths in this category remains higher than the average number recorded over the years before 2012/13, when there was a notable increase. Reporting of these deaths relies on police forces making the link between someone's apparent suicide and them having been in custody recently. The overall increase in these deaths over the period since may be influenced by improved identification and referral of such cases.

The category of '**other deaths following police contact**' is not included in Figure 2.1. The inclusion of a death in this category depends on whether we decide to open an independent investigation into the circumstances surrounding it. The criteria for making this decision may vary over time – for example, in response to public and community concerns. In addition, our capacity to carry out independent investigations increased in 2015/16, which had a direct impact on the number of deaths reported on in this category⁵. This means trend analysis of deaths recorded in this category would not be meaningful.

Figures on all fatal incidents (as distinct from fatalities) are provided in Table A1 in the appendix. The appendix also includes data on:

- ethnicity
- age
- gender
- police force
- category of death

We have published annual statistics on deaths during or following police contact since 2004/05. Previous reports and time series data are [available on our website](#).

Box B

Types of investigation

Independent investigations are carried out by the IOPC's own investigators. IOPC investigators have all the powers of the police in an independent investigation.

Directed investigations are IOPC investigations that are carried out using police resources. The IOPC sets the terms of reference for the investigation and directs the course of enquiries. At the end of the investigation, the police investigator submits a report to the IOPC in order for decisions to be made about the outcome of the investigation.

Local investigations are carried out by police officers when the IOPC decides that the force has the necessary resources and experience to carry out an investigation. The force sends the report to the IOPC for review at the end of the investigation.

Referred back to force indicates cases where the IOPC has reviewed the circumstances and returned the matter back to the police force to be dealt with as it considers appropriate.

⁵ See our [Corporate plan 2015/18](#) and [Strategic plan 2018/22](#) for more information.

3

Road traffic fatalities

Demographics

In 2021/22, there were 32 fatal police-related road traffic incidents (RTIs), resulting in 39 fatalities. Of those who died, 33 were men and six were women. 28 people were White, five people were Black, four were Asian, one person was of Mixed ethnicity and the ethnicity of one person was not known at the time of publication.

Two of the people who died were under 18 years-old. A further 22 people were aged between 18 and 30 years, and five people were aged over 60 years. The eldest was 77 years-old. The average age was 34 years-old. The average age decreases to 27 years if the deceased was the driver or passenger in a pursued or fleeing vehicle. It increases to 55 years if the deceased was a pedestrian, cyclist or a driver or passenger in a vehicle hit by either the police or the pursued or fleeing vehicle.

Circumstances of death

Incidents are classified as 'pursuit-related' if they involved a pursuit, or if they involved the police driving in the same direction as a suspect vehicle. Not all these incidents will have entered an official pursuit phase as defined in the Authorised Professional Practice (APP) on police pursuits⁶.

Incidents where there was a collision involving a vehicle that had recently been pursued by the police, but where the police had lost sight of the vehicle, are included. Incidents where the police were driving in the direction of a vehicle before obtaining permission to pursue are also included as pursuit-related.

Pursuit-related

There were 26 police pursuit-related incidents, which resulted in 33 fatalities. Of these fatalities:

- 14 people were the driver of a vehicle being pursued by the police when it crashed
- 6 people were passengers in the car being pursued by the police
- 5 people were drivers or passengers of an unrelated vehicle, which was hit by the pursued car
- 3 people were pedestrians who were hit by the pursued or suspect vehicle
- 5 people were either the driver or passenger of a vehicle being pursued by the police when it crashed, but it has not been possible to confirm which

The IOPC independently investigated 25 pursuit-related incidents. The remaining incident is being dealt with locally by the police force involved.

⁶ See College of Policing (2015) Authorised Professional Practice on police pursuits. In 2011, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) issued guidance in a statutory code of practice for police pursuits. ACPO was replaced by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) in April 2015. The College of Policing now manages Authorised Professional Practice.

Emergency response-related

This category includes all incidents that involve a police vehicle responding to a request for emergency assistance. Three emergency response-related incidents occurred in 2021/22 resulting in three fatalities. All three incidents are being investigated independently.

This number has increased from the one incident and one fatality recorded last year. The figures for this year are in line with the average number of incidents and fatalities since 2004/05.

One fatality happened when a police vehicle that was responding to an emergency call collided with another vehicle. In this incident, the police were responding to a request for assistance in relation to a robbery.

Two fatalities involved police vehicles colliding with pedestrians while responding to an emergency call. The type of incidents the police were responding to included:

- a report of a disturbance
- assistance with an RTI

Other police traffic activity

This category includes RTIs that did not happen during pursuit-related activity or an emergency response. There were three incidents in 2021/22 resulting in three fatalities. One incident is being investigated independently. The remaining incidents are being dealt with locally by the police force involved.

Of these three incidents, two happened when a vehicle responded to the presence of the police:

- Officers in a marked police van were driving to an area where there had been a report of anti-social behaviour. The officers saw a motorcycle travelling in the opposite direction. Upon seeing the police vehicle, the rider appeared to react by accelerating and attempting to mount the pavement. The rider lost control and collided with a lamppost. The officers called for medical assistance, but the rider died at the scene. After considering a referral, we returned the case to the force to address as it saw fit.

- Officers in a marked police vehicle were travelling down a road when a man on an electric motorcycle pulled out of a road, crossed the police vehicle's path, and went into a junction. As the police vehicle entered the same road, the rider looked behind him and collided with a vehicle that was turning in front of the rider. After considering a referral, we returned the case to the force to address as it saw fit.

The remaining incident happened while police were on routine patrol or driving duties.

- Officers were taking part in a motorcycle escort training exercise. The exercise involved a convoy of three police cars and five motorcycles. The police motorcycles had blue lights illuminated. A member of the public and a pillion passenger were travelling on a motorcycle in the opposite direction. As the police convoy passed the traffic travelling in the opposite direction, some of the drivers braked and slowed. The motorcycle collided with the rear of the car in front of them. The motorcycle driver died at the scene. The incident was subject to an independent investigation.

Trends

This year, 39 people died in 32 separate incidents. There was a rise in fatalities this year from 25 to 39. This is the fifth highest figure recorded over the 18 years since we first published these statistics. The annual figures fluctuate, and year-on-year comparisons should be approached with caution.

Tables 3.1 and 3.2 set out the type of road traffic fatalities and incidents over the past 11 years⁷. The tables show the incidents in the three categories previously described: pursuit-related, emergency response-related, and other police traffic activity.

This year there was an increase in the number of pursuit-related incidents. The number of pursuit-related incidents is higher than the average seen over the past 11 years, and the highest since 2005/06 when there were 27 pursuit-related incidents.

There was also a notable increase in the number of pursuit-related fatalities this year, from 20 to 33. This year also saw another increase in the number of pursuit-related incidents that resulted in multiple fatalities. Five of these incidents accounted for 12 fatalities. The number of pursuit-related fatalities this year is the highest recorded since 2004/05.

This year has seen an increase in the number of emergency response-related incidents and fatalities, although the figures for this year are in line with the average number of incidents and fatalities since 2004/05.

The number of incidents resulting from other police traffic activity has decreased slightly compared to the previous year. It is the second lowest number recorded in the past 11 years and a fifth of the number recorded in 2004/05.

Table 3.1 Type of road traffic fatality, 2011/12 to 2021/22

RTI type	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
Pursuit-related	12	27	10	7	13	28	17	30	19	20	33
Emergency response-related	2	2	0	0	2	0	8	5	3	1	3
Other	5	2	2	7	6	4	4	7	2	4	3
Total fatalities	19	31	12	14	21	32	29	42	24	25	39

Table 3.2 Type of road traffic incident, 2011/12 to 2021/22

RTI type	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
Pursuit-related	12	19	9	6	12	24	17	21	19	15	26
Emergency response-related	2	2	0	0	2	0	7	5	3	1	3
Other	5	2	2	7	6	4	3	7	2	4	3
Total incidents	19	23	11	13	20	28	27	33	24	20	32

⁷ Information on fatalities and incidents from 2004/05 is available in the time series tables at policeconduct.gov.uk.

4

Fatal shootings

This year, there were two fatal shootings by police. This is the third lowest figure recorded since 2004/05. The circumstances of the fatal shootings are described below. One is subject to an ongoing independent investigation and the other is complete.

- The Metropolitan Police Service was called to reports of a man with a firearm. The man was reported to have got into a taxi. Armed officers were deployed to the location. One of the armed response vehicles (ARVs) deployed located the taxi and followed it while waiting for assistance.

The taxi came to a natural stop and the ARV stopped behind it. Three armed response officers exited their vehicle and challenged a male in his mid-20's who was inside the passenger compartment.

The man was shot at three times by two officers. The man was removed from the taxi and first aid was provided by officers while awaiting an ambulance. The man died at the scene.

- Officers from Thames Valley Police were called to a domestic incident at a flat. Reports of a child being harmed were made. The officers that attended included officers from an ARV.

The first officer to arrive was unable to gain entry to the flat and the armed officers forced entry. They immediately found a dead man. A 24 year old Black man appeared at the door and one of the officers believed that he had a knife. One of the officers discharged their Taser several times, which was ineffective.

The man moved into another room in the flat and obstructed the door with furniture.

Officers entered the flat and located the room the man was in. He was in there with a young child and noises could be heard from the room. Officers believed the man was harming the child.

The officers forced entry into the room. As they did so, the man moved towards them. The officers believed the man was still in possession of the knife. One officer fired four shots from his pistol, and another officer discharged their Taser. Medical attention was given to the man, but he was pronounced dead at the scene. A young child was found within the room.

5

Deaths in or following police custody

Demographics

In 2021/22, 11 people died in or following police custody – nine men and two women. Their ages ranged from 27 to 60 years. Ten people were White and one person was Black.

Six people had mental health concerns. The types of mental health concerns included depression, psychosis, anxiety and self-harm.

Nine people were known to have a link to alcohol and/or drugs. This meant that at the time of their arrest they had recently consumed, were intoxicated by, in possession of, or had known issues with alcohol and/or drugs. Where cause of death is reported, a pathologist recorded that alcohol or drug toxicity, or long-term abuse, was likely to be a contributing factor in the deaths of four people.

Table 5.1 shows the reasons why people were arrested or detained by the police.

Three people were arrested for drug or alcohol-related offences (excluding drink driving). One of these was also arrested for resisting a search. A further two people were arrested for failure to appear in court, and another two were arrested for breach of the peace. Two people were arrested for alleged assaults – one of these people was also arrested for criminal damage and sectioned under Section 136 of the *Mental Health Act*. Other reasons for detention included driving offences, threatening behaviour, and possession of a weapon.

Table 5.1 Deaths in or following police custody: reason for detention, 2021/22

Reason for detention	Number of fatalities
Drug / alcohol-related (excluding drink driving)	3*
Failure to appear in court	2
Breach of the peace / anti-social behaviour	2
Violence-related (non-sexual or murder)	2^
Speeding / driving offences	1
Threatening behaviour / harassment	1~
Total fatalities	11

* One person was also arrested for resisting a search.

^ One person was also arrested for criminal damage and sectioned under Section 136 of the *Mental Health Act*

~ This person was also arrested for possession of a weapon and sectioned under Section 136 of the *Mental Health Act 1983*.

The data shows that four of the 11 people who died had some force used against them by officers or members of the public before their deaths. It is important to note that the use of restraint, or other types of force, did not necessarily contribute to the deaths.

All four people were physically restrained⁸ by the police or members of the public. Three were White and one was Black. One of the incidents also involved use of leg restraints and PAVA spray. One person was restrained by members of the public only.

Circumstances of death

Cause of death according to the pathologist's report following a post-mortem⁹ is reported for seven of those who died. At an inquest, the cause of death is determined formally and may change from the cause of death listed in a pathologist's report. The IOPC is independently investigating ten of the 11 deaths.

Five people were taken ill or were identified as being unwell **in a police cell**. Two were taken to hospital where they later died. Three people died in a police cell.

These five cases are outlined below.

- One man had been arrested for drugs-related offences. On arrival at the custody suite, officers saw a bulge in the man's cheek while he was being booked in. Officers restrained the male while asking him to remove the package from his mouth. The man became unresponsive. Officers gave CPR until paramedics arrived, but the man died a short time after their arrival. His cause of death is awaited.
- One woman was arrested and taken to custody. While in a holding cell the woman stated that she was in pain. It was recorded on the custody log that the woman appeared to be under the influence of alcohol or a substance. She did not disclose any medical conditions when she was booked into custody. The next morning, the woman stated she felt hot and had a headache. She was given a consultation by a healthcare professional. After approximately 16 hours in custody the woman was found unresponsive in her cell during a routine cell check. CPR was given by custody staff before paramedics took over treatment, but the woman died a short time later. Her cause of death was reported as *Acute Pyelonephritis*.
- One man was arrested for failing to appear in court. After the man was arrested, he stated he felt unwell as he was "withdrawing". During the booking-in process, the man said he had drunk some alcohol. The man did not disclose any illnesses, but the custody sergeant recorded medical warnings on his custody record based on previous custody records. The man was seen by a healthcare professional and given medication for drug and alcohol withdrawal. Several hours later, a few minutes after a routine cell check, detention officers became concerned by how the man appeared on CCTV. Custody staff entered the man's cell and he was unresponsive. Medical aid was given before paramedics arrived and took over treatment, but the man died shortly after. His cause of death was reported as *Alcohol-related fatty liver disease*.
- Officers stopped a vehicle following reports it was being driven erratically. Officers suspected the front seat passenger had tried to conceal an item when the vehicle stopped. The passenger was handcuffed and searched at the roadside. He was then taken to a police station in a police van for a strip search. Before the search, the man had given officers an item that he told them contained heroin. The man was arrested for possession of a Class A drug. No further items were found. The man became unwell shortly after the search. Medical aid was given by officers until paramedics arrived. The man was taken

8 The term 'restraint' refers to a range of actions, including physical holds and pressure compliance. It does not include the routine use of handcuffs, unless another form of restraint was also used.

9 In a minority of cases, a post-mortem may not be carried out. In these situations, the cause of death is taken from the records of the doctor who certifies the death. If the cause of death is formally disputed at the time of the analysis, the cause of death will be recorded as 'awaited'.

to hospital by ambulance and died the next day. The man's cause of death was reported as *1a) Hypoxic Ischaemic Brain Injury due to 1b) Cardiac Arrest (resuscitated) due to 1c) Cocaine Toxicity.*

- While being booked into custody, one man disclosed his medical information. This included that he needed a pacemaker but had declined to have one fitted. Concerns about the man's mental health were also recorded. Thirteen hours into the man's detention, an entry was made on his custody record stating that he was in custody for his own welfare, and he was sectioned under Section 136 of the *Mental Health Act 1983*. The man was found to be unresponsive during a routine check a few hours later. Police officers and custody staff, supported by a health care professional, gave CPR before an ambulance arrived and took the man to hospital. The man was placed into an induced coma, and he died in hospital 10 days later. His cause of death was reported as *1(a) Hospital acquired pneumonia and hypoxic ischaemic injury of brain 1(b) Ischaemic and hypertensive heart disease.* After considering a referral, we returned the case to the force to address as it saw fit.

Two people were taken ill at the **scene of arrest**. One person was taken to hospital, where they later died. The other person died at the scene.

- Officers went to an address to arrest a woman for failure to appear in court. A few minutes after her arrest, the woman became unresponsive. An ambulance was called, and officers gave first aid until paramedics arrived. The woman was taken to hospital where she remained under arrest. The woman died three weeks later. Her cause of death was reported as *1a Multi organ failure 1b Acute respiratory distress syndrome, 1c Pneumonia, II Asthma, drug overdose.*

- Officers on patrol stopped a vehicle and detained the driver for a search. The man was taken to the ground and restrained on the floor. During the search, officers noticed the man was chewing something which he later spat out, following repeated requests by the officers. Following the search, the man was arrested for resisting a search and being concerned in the supply of Class A drugs. He was placed into the back of a police vehicle where he became unwell. Officers attempted to assist the man out of the vehicle, but he fell forward onto the pavement and hit his head. His condition deteriorated, and he became unresponsive. Officers gave CPR before paramedics arrived but the man died at the scene. His cause of death is awaited.

Two men were taken ill in a **police vehicle**. Both people were taken to hospital, where they died.

- Officers attended a disturbance. At the scene, a man was sprayed with PAVA spray and taken to the floor where handcuffs and leg restraints were applied. The man was arrested for breach of the peace and was placed into the back of a police van. While being put into the van, one officer delivered two distraction strikes to the man's chest. During the journey to custody, one of the officers travelling with the man became concerned about his breathing. The police van stopped, and officers requested an ambulance. The man's handcuffs and one set of leg restraints were removed. The decision was made for the officers to transport the man to hospital themselves. A short time into the journey to hospital, the officer that was monitoring the man believed his condition had deteriorated. Officers stopped and removed the man from the vehicle. Officers gave CPR and requested emergency assistance. An ambulance arrived and the man was taken to hospital, where he died shortly after arrival. His cause of death was reported as *Cocaine toxicity induced acute behavioural disturbance.*

- A man was arrested for driving while under the influence of alcohol. He was put into a police vehicle and officers began to take him to custody. The man became unwell during the journey to custody. Officers transported the man to hospital. The man's condition deteriorated while the officers waited with him at the accident and emergency department. The officers called for assistance and hospital staff provided medical aid. The man was taken to intensive care where he died later that day. His cause of death is awaited.

Two people died following **release from police custody**.

- Officers went to an address following a call about a man's behaviour. The caller stated they thought the man was drunk. The man was arrested for breach of the peace, removed from the address, and put into a police vehicle. A short time later one of the officers informed the control room that the man had been de-arrested and left in a location. A short time later, the police were called to a report of a man lying in the road. Officers attended and found the man dead. The man was identified as being the same person who had been de-arrested following the breach of the peace incident. His cause of death was reported as *head injuries*. The circumstances around the man's arrest and subsequent release are still subject to independent investigation.
- One man had contact with the police several times in the months before his death about reported incidents of racial harassment and threats. There were also concerns about the man's mental health. The man was involved in a physical altercation with neighbours, during which the neighbours restrained him, and he sustained a head injury. Police attended and the man was arrested for assault and criminal damage. He was taken to hospital and transferred to a mental health hospital where he was detained. The man's medical condition deteriorated, and he died in hospital five days after his arrest. His cause of death is awaited. The circumstances around the man's death, and any link to the incident following which he was arrested, are still subject to investigation.

Trends

Between 2004/05 and 2008/09, there was a year-on-year reduction in the number of deaths in or following police custody. These deaths reduced from 36 in 2004/05 to 15 deaths in 2008/09. Over the next two years, the number of deaths in custody increased to 21 in 2010/11, before reducing to 15 in 2011/12 and 2012/13. There was a further reduction in 2013/14 to 11.

In 2014/15, the number rose again to 18 and then declined and remained stable at 14 in 2015/16 and 2016/17. In 2017/18 there were 23 fatalities, the highest number recorded for 10 years. This number fell to 17 fatalities in 2018/19 and increased slightly to 18 in 2019/20. In 2020/21 the number increased slightly again to 19. This year, the number of deaths in or following police custody dropped notably, to 11. This is the joint lowest number recorded since figures began in 2004/05.

This year, no one died after making an apparent suicide attempt while in a police custody suite. The last incident of this kind was in 2016/17. Before that, there was one incident in 2014/15 and one in 2008/09. Since 2004/05, seven people are known to have died as a result of self-inflicted acts while in a police cell.

This year three people were pronounced dead in a police cell, the same figure as in 2020/21. In 2019/20 one person died in a police cell. In 2018/19 no one died in a police cell and in 2017/18 there were three such deaths.

6

Apparent suicides following police custody

Apparent suicides following time in police custody are included if they occur within two days of the person's release from custody. They are also included if experiences in custody may have been relevant to the death, and the death has been referred to us. The police may not always be told about an apparent suicide that happens after detention in custody, as the association may not be clear. Therefore, there may have been more deaths in these circumstances than are reported here.

The term 'suicide' does not necessarily relate to a coroner's verdict because, in most cases, verdicts are still pending. We include these cases only after considering the nature of death and whether the circumstances suggest that it was an intentional, self-inflicted act – for example, a hanging, or where there was some evidence of 'suicidal ideation', such as a suicide note.

Demographics

There were 56 apparent suicides following police custody in 2021/22 – 55 men and one woman. The average age of those who died was 42 years. The most common age was between 31 and 40 years (16 people), followed by 41 to 50 years (12 people), and 51 to 60 years (12 people). The youngest person was 20 years. 52 of those who died were White. Two people were from a Mixed ethnic group, one person was Black and one person was Asian.

Over three quarters of the people (44) had known mental health concerns. Of these, two had

been detained under Section 136 of the *Mental Health Act 1983*. Other mental health concerns included depression, personality disorder, bipolar, psychosis, schizophrenia, post-traumatic stress disorder, previous thoughts or incidents of suicide attempts, and self-harm.

Almost half of the people (27) were reported to be intoxicated with drugs and/or alcohol at the time of their arrest (or drugs and/or alcohol featured heavily in their lifestyle). 21 related to alcohol and 16 to drugs.

Circumstances of death

Thirteen apparent suicides happened the same day the person was released from police custody. 35 happened one day after release, and eight happened two days after release. There were no cases where the apparent suicide took place more than two days after release.

Table 6.1 shows the reasons why these people were detained by the police. Thirty of those who died had been arrested for a sexual offence. Of these, 27 related to sexual offences or indecent images involving children. Fourteen detentions were for violence-related offences. Nine detentions were for harassment and threatening behaviour. Other common reasons for detention were driving offences (seven), drug/drink-related offences (six), and criminal damage (four).

Table 6.1 Apparent suicides following police custody: reason for detention, 2021/22

Reason for detention	Number of detentions
Sexual offences	30
Violence related (non-sexual or murder)	14
Threatening behaviour / harassment	9
Driving offences (including drink / drug driving)	7
Drug / drink related	6
Criminal damage	4
<i>Mental Health Act 1983</i>	2
Theft / burglary	2
Recall to prison	2
Trespassing on the railway	1
Possession of a weapon	1
Attempted murder	1
Publishing an obscene article	1
Taking a vehicle without consent	1
Total number of reasons for detention	81
Total fatalities	56

Twenty people were detained for multiple reasons compared with nine last year.

The majority of recorded apparent suicides following police custody were dealt with locally by the police force involved (54). Two are being investigated independently. In these cases, the matters being considered by the investigations include:

- the plan police put in place for an individual while they were in custody, and the recording of information about that individual
- the steps the police took to protect someone's welfare, including consideration of their wellbeing

Trends

The number of apparent suicides following time in police custody is higher than the 55 recorded in 2020/21. It is the seventh highest number recorded over the 18-year period since 2004/05. Reporting of these deaths relies on police forces making the link between an apparent suicide and someone having spent time in custody recently. Increases in these deaths may therefore be influenced by improved identification and referral of such cases.

This year, for 54% of fatalities, the reason for detention related to alleged sexual offences. The proportion of fatalities involving an arrest related to sexual offences or indecent images involving children was 48%. These proportions are higher than the figures recorded last year (48% and 39% respectively) and higher than average figures. The average proportions for these alleged offences since 2004/05 are 34% and 27% respectively.

7

Other deaths following police contact: independent investigations only

In 2010/11 a change was made to the definition of this category. It now includes only those deaths following police contact investigated independently by the IOPC, previously the IPCC¹⁰.

Any increase in this category does not, therefore, necessarily indicate an increase in the number of people who have died following some form of contact with the police.

In 2018/19, the IOPC began a phased move to thematic case selection. The thematic areas include domestic abuse, RTIs, abuse of authority for sexual or financial gain, mental health and discrimination. Thematic case selection involves independently investigating more cases where these themes may be a factor. This enables us to develop a body of evidence for learning and prevention work. The move to thematic case selection may have an impact on the number and proportion of cases involving particular circumstances of death – such as concerns for welfare based on mental health, or domestic-related incidents.

Overall demographics

We independently investigated the deaths of 109 people who died during or following other contact with the police during 2021/22. Of these deaths:

- 77 were men and 32 were women
- 92 people were White, 6 were Black, 5 were Asian, two people were Mixed ethnicity and one person was from an Other ethnic group. The ethnicity of three people was not known at the time of publication
- Six people were aged under 18 years, and 29 people were young adults aged between 18 and 30 years. Seven people were aged over 60. The average age was 40 years old
- Almost half of those who died (54) were reported to be intoxicated by drugs and/or alcohol at the time of the incident, or drugs and/or alcohol featured heavily in their lifestyle. Sixty percent of the people who died (66) were reported to have mental health concerns

¹⁰ During 2014/15, the IPCC started a significant period of change and expansion in response to the then Home Secretary's announcement there should be more independent investigations into serious and sensitive matters. This had a direct impact on the number of deaths we recorded in the 'other deaths following police contact' category because inclusion of this type of case in the annual report is based on them being independently investigated.

Table 7.1 Other deaths following police contact: reason for contact, 2021/22

	Reason for contact	Number of fatalities
Concern for welfare	Missing person	13
	Health / injuries / intoxication / general	29
	Self-harm / suicide risk / mental health	26
	Domestic related	25
	Threatening behaviour / harassment	5
	Subtotal	98
Other contact	Attending a disturbance	3
	Avoiding contact / arrest	3
	Execute search / arrest warrant / investigation enquiries	1
	Other	4
	Subtotal	11
Total fatalities		109

Circumstances of death

The deaths recorded in this category involve a range of circumstances. The police contact may not have been directly with the person who died, but with a third party, as illustrated by some of the case examples. Where we have included the cause of death, this is taken from the pathologist's report following a post-mortem¹¹.

As shown in Table 7.1, the most common reason for contact with the police related to **a concern for welfare**. 98 people died after concerns were raised with the police, either directly or indirectly, about their safety or well-being before their death. A further eleven fatalities were recorded that relate to **other types of contact** with the police.

A total of seven people who died following police contact had force used against them. Five people were White, one was Black and one was Asian. Seven were restrained by police officers or by members of the public. This does not necessarily mean that the force used contributed to the death. All seven people were known to have been restrained by police officers. Of these, one woman was Tasered and one man had leg restraints, PAVA and a spit hood used on him.

One person was restrained by members of the public in addition to police.

Concern for welfare

Of the 98 fatalities that followed contact with the police about a concern for welfare, 13 people died following a report of a **missing person**. The police generally did not have direct contact with the deceased in these cases. Of these 13 people, ten were also identified as being at risk of self-harm or suicide.

Of these ten:

- eight were men and two were female
- nine were White and one was Black
- the ages of those included in this category ranged from 22 to 62 years. The most common age group was 21 to 25 (four people). The average age was 37 years
- five people were reported to be intoxicated by drugs and/or alcohol at the time of the incident, or drugs and/or alcohol featured heavily in their lifestyle. All ten people

¹¹ In a minority of cases, a post-mortem may not be carried out. In this situation, the cause of death is taken from the records of the doctor who certified the death. If the cause of death is formally disputed at the time of the analysis, the cause of death will be recorded as 'awaited'.

who died were known to have mental health concerns

- in eight incidents, the person's death was caused by an apparent self-inflicted act

For the remaining three people **reported missing** to the police, there were no specific risks of self-harm or suicide. In these cases:

- all were men, and all were White
- the ages of the people in this category ranged from 15 to 43 years
- for one person, alcohol and/or drugs featured heavily in their lifestyle. Two people were known to have mental health concerns
- one death was from natural causes. Two classifications are not known at this time

Twenty-nine fatalities related to the person's **health, possible injuries, intoxication, or general well-being**. In most incidents, a third party contacted the police to raise concern. In this category:

- 25 people were men and four were women
- 22 were White, 1 was Black, 3 were Asian, one person was of Mixed ethnicity and the ethnicity of two people was unknown
- the majority of people (8) were aged between 21 and 30 years. The average age was 47 years
- almost two-thirds of those who died (18) were reported to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs at the time of the incident, or these featured heavily in their lifestyle
- the most common form of death classification was accidental (12 people). Four deaths were due to an alleged murder and five were due to an accidental overdose

Three incidents involved use of force:

- Police went to an address following multiple calls about a man in need of medical assistance and reports of a disturbance. Police attended, followed shortly by medics, but the man refused medical treatment. At one point, while police officers attempted to

engage with the man, he left the address with a knife in his hand, which he threw towards police. The man eventually left the address and ran down the street where officers used PAVA spray to restrain the man on the ground. Handcuffs and leg restraints were applied and a spit hood was also briefly used. Officers and medics provided treatment, before the man was placed in an ambulance and given CPR. The man was taken to hospital, where he died shortly after arrival. His cause of death was reported as *1a Acute cocaine toxicity // Coronary artery atheroma*.

- Police were called to reports of a man acting strangely. Police officers arrived and found a 49 year-old Black man who appeared to be in distress. He told the officers he had been stabbed. The officers tried to interact with him and check for injuries. The man struggled. He was handcuffed on one wrist and kept on the floor so the officers could check him. While the officers were talking to the man, he appeared to have a seizure. The handcuff was removed, and the man became unresponsive. The officers began CPR before an ambulance arrived. The man was taken to hospital where he died shortly after arrival. His cause of death was reported as *1a) Cardiorespiratory arrest, due to 1b toxic effects of cocaine, in an individual experiencing signs of acute behavioural disturbance whilst handcuffed*.
- Officers responded to reports of a man outside a block of flats who was calling for help. It was thought the man had been stabbed. On arrival, officers spoke to the man, aged 30, and found out he had not been stabbed. The man disclosed he had taken drugs. Officers assisted the man to his feet, and as they engaged with him he dropped to the floor where he began to move around erratically. Officers restrained the man and applied handcuffs and called an ambulance. The man's condition deteriorated, and officers provided first aid until paramedics arrived and took over treatment. The man died at the scene. His cause of death was reported as *Cocaine toxicity*.

Twenty-six fatalities related to a concern about a person's **risk of self-harm, risk of suicide, or their mental health**. In such cases, the concerns are usually raised with the police by a third party, about a person with known mental health concerns. For example, the person may have failed to attend an appointment or welfare check, or showed signs of being at risk of self-harm or suicide. The person is not reported or considered missing. Of these:

- 20 people were men and six were women
- 24 were White and one was Asian. The ethnicity of one person was not known
- the ages of the people ranged from 19 to 57 years. The majority were aged between 31 and 50 years (17 people). The average age was 39 years
- death by self-inflicted means was the most common classification (22 people)
- 17 people were reported to be intoxicated by drugs and/or alcohol at the time of the incident, or drugs and/or alcohol featured heavily in their lifestyle

Two incidents involved use of force:

- Police responded to calls about the welfare of a 36 year-old Asian woman who was believed to be experiencing a mental health crisis. Paramedics were asked to go to her address but could not gain access. They requested police attendance. Police decided to force entry after a period of communication with the occupants in the address. Body worn video appears to show that on entry the woman was holding a knife and trying to injure herself. The woman was Tasered, restrained on the floor and handcuffed. Paramedics gave medical care before taking the woman to hospital. During the journey the woman was restrained again after removing her hand from the handcuffs. The woman died shortly after arriving at hospital. Her cause of death was reported as *Multiple incised (stab) wounds to the abdomen*.

- Police were called to an incident involving concern for a 57 year-old man's mental health. When officers arrived, the man was agitated and began to hit his head with his hands. Officers restrained the man and handcuffed him. The officers stated that once they were satisfied that the man would not cause any more harm to himself, the handcuffs were removed. The man was taken to hospital in an ambulance, where he remained in a waiting room in the company of police officers. He tried to leave the room twice and was restrained by officers to stop him leaving. After several hours and following a psychiatric assessment on the man, the officers left the hospital, stating they had no legal power to remain. The man was left in the company of his partner, and officers stated that they had provided a handover to hospital security. A couple of hours later the man left the hospital and walked into the road into the path of a vehicle. Hospital staff and ambulance crew attended but the man died at the scene. His cause of death was reported as *Fatal head injuries*.

Twenty-five fatalities were **domestic-related**. This means the police were responding to a domestic incident, or the circumstances of the contact involved a history of domestic violence, or threats made against the deceased and/or family members. In this category:

- 17 of those who died were women and eight were men. Women were a higher proportion in this category than in all the other independently investigated deaths following police contact
- 20 people were White, 3 were Black, one person was Mixed ethnicity and one person was Asian
- the most common age range was 31 to 40 years (seven people). The average age was 41 years. The youngest was 3 years
- in 15 instances, the deaths were classified as alleged murder. All but three of those who were allegedly murdered were women. Five deaths were self-inflicted

Five people died following concern about **threatening behaviour**. These incidents involve threatening behaviour or harassment among people in non-domestic situations, such as between neighbours or strangers. In this category:

- three people were men and two were women.
- all five people were White
- three classifications of death were alleged murder. One death was self-inflicted and one was due to natural causes.

Other contact

The eleven deaths recorded as relating to other types of contact took place in the following circumstances.

Three people died after police officers received a **report of a disturbance**.

- Police went to a report of a disturbance at an address, where they found a man in an agitated state. He was being restrained by a family member. Officers assisted the person in restraining the man, requested an ambulance, and handcuffed him. The man was repositioned to be laid on his side. An ambulance arrived and the man's handcuffs were removed. Paramedics provided medical assistance. The man, aged 25, was taken to hospital where he died later that day. His cause of death was reported as *Cardio-respiratory arrest*.
 - A man contacted police reporting issues arising with the owner of a property in which he was staying. The man reported a private security company was breaking into his property. Officers attended the address and spoke to the man and two security officers, who were at the property. The security officers and the police officers left the property. The man called the police again to report the security officers had returned. Officers attended and one of the security officers, a Black man aged 27, was found to have been stabbed. He was taken to hospital where he died the next day. His cause of death is awaited.
 - Police received reports of a disturbance taking place outside a residential address. The incident reportedly involved people who were in possession of weapons. Later that day, police were informed that a man had been stabbed near the address. Police attended and the man, aged 25, died at the scene. His cause of death was reported as *Stab wound to the back of the chest*.
- Three men died in an attempt to **avoid police contact or arrest**.
- Police attended reports of people acting suspiciously in a boat and damaging security lights near a river. Officers searched the area and located two 15-year-old boys who they attempted to detain. According to the statements of those present at the time, one of the boys pulled away from the officers and entered the river. The boy was found approximately 38 hours later, following a multi-agency search and missing person investigation. His cause of death was reported as *drowning*.
 - Officers attempted to stop a vehicle, which included an initial pursuit. The driver of the suspect vehicle, a man of Other ethnicity aged 32, exited the car. He ran into a train station and jumped down onto the railway tracks where he made contact with a live electrified line. The man died at the scene. His cause of death was reported as *electrocution*.
 - Police attended reports of a possible burglary in progress. On arrival one man ran from police and a short foot chase ensued. The man, aged 45, was then handcuffed and searched. During this search a wrap package was located from the man's pocket and this was handed to another officer. While the man was stood with the officer, body worn video evidence shows he grabbed the wrap package from him and made attempts to swallow this, however, it became lodged in his throat. Officers asked the man to spit it out and attempted first aid. The man became unresponsive and officers gave CPR. Paramedics arrived and took over treatment, and the package was removed from the man's mouth. The man was taken to hospital,

where he died shortly after arrival. His cause of death was reported as *Obstruction of the internal airways by some foreign object*.

Four people died following **other contact** with the police:

- An on-duty police officer was driving an unmarked police vehicle, but was not responding to an emergency incident or conducting other police traffic-related activity. Two pedestrians were present in the road. The first, a woman, who was stood on the path next to her parked vehicle, the second, a man, who was stood in the road, between his parked vehicle and the vehicle belonging to the woman. The police vehicle hit the back of the woman's vehicle, which was sent into the centre of the road. The officer's vehicle continued travelling and struck the woman and then the man and his vehicle, trapping him between the two vehicles. The male pedestrian, aged 50, died at the scene.
- Police received a report of a person lying in the carriageway of a motorway, under a bridge. A roads policing officer responded in a police vehicle. The evidence indicated that at least two vehicles driven by members of the public collided with the man before the police attended. The police officer's vehicle then also collided with the man. The man, aged 47, was pronounced dead at the scene.
- Two fatalities relate to an investigation into a person's possession of a shotgun and shotgun certificate.

One man died after contact with the police who were **executing a search, or an arrest warrant, or conducting investigation enquiries**.

- Officers went to an address to arrest a man, aged 23, on suspicion of offences under the *Misuse of Drugs Act 2003*. When the officers arrived, they entered the property and located the man. The man was in possession of an unknown substance which he placed inside his mouth. A struggle ensued with the officers, who tried to prevent him from swallowing the substance. The man was taken to the ground during the struggle and

handcuffs were used. The man became unwell, and an ambulance was requested by police. Police gave CPR before paramedics arrived and treated the man. The man was taken to hospital, where he died shortly after arrival. His cause of death was recorded as *The effects of cocaine*.

Trends

In 2010/11, a change was made to the definition of this category. It now includes only those deaths following other police contact investigated independently by the IOPC, formerly the IPCC. The number of cases recorded in this category is directly linked to the number of cases independently investigated. It would not be meaningful to provide any trend analysis for this category. The deaths included in this category happen in a range of circumstances, which makes it difficult to identify a specific set of events that accounts for changes in the number of fatalities. The overall proportion of cases relating to a concern for welfare made up 90% of the deaths following police contact that were independently investigated – a slightly lower proportion than the 94% in 2020/21.

During 2021/22, just under a quarter of investigations into deaths following police contact related to reports of concerns about a person's risk of self-harm, risk of suicide, or mental health. Just over a fifth of the deaths following police contact were domestic-related. These types of concern for welfare link to current areas of thematic work for the IOPC. This may result in the number of these types of investigations increasing and/or forming a larger proportion of the 'other contact' deaths that the IOPC investigates independently.

8

Background note

1. Under the *Police Reform Act 2002*, forces in England and Wales have a statutory duty to refer to the IOPC all deaths during or following police contact where there is an allegation or indication that police contact, directly or indirectly, contributed to the death. We consider the circumstances of all referrals and decide whether to investigate.
2. Since April 2006, the IOPC, previously the IPCC, has also received mandatory referrals for cases where someone has died during or following contact with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)¹²; the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA)¹³, and the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA).

Since October 2013, we have also received mandatory referrals from SOCA's replacement, the National Crime Agency (NCA). Up until March 2013, we received cases from the UK Border Agency (UKBA)¹⁴, when UKBA's executive agency status was ended and its functions were brought back into the Home Office as UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI); UK Immigration Enforcement (UKIE); and UK Border Force (UKBF). The IOPC continues to have jurisdiction over these officials and contractors. Therefore, this report includes deaths during or following contact with staff from these organisations.

3. We became the IOPC in January 2018. This change was set out in the *Policing and Crime Act 2017*. Before this, we were the IPCC.

Changes and revisions

4. In 2010/11, a change was made to the definition of the 'other deaths following police contact' category. It now includes only those deaths following police contact that were investigated independently by the IOPC (or previously by the IPCC). As a result, we have changed the approach to how this category is presented in this report. You can find out more in our [guidance document](#). No other changes have been made to the definitions of the death categories.
5. In 2007, the IPCC issued an operational advice note to forces to address inconsistencies in the referral of 'apparent suicides following release from police custody'. Forces were asked to refer any suicides that happened within two days of release from police custody, or apparent suicides that happened more than two days after release, but where there was a possible link between the time the person spent in custody and their death.

¹² Regulation 34 of the *Revenue and Customs (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2005*.

¹³ Regulation 36 of the *Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2017*.

¹⁴ Regulation 25 of the *UK Border Agency (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2010*.

6. This report presents the most up-to-date set of figures for each death category. In this release, three fatalities have been added to previous year's figures. The following adjustments have been made to the trend figures:
- For 2020/21, three deaths have been added to the 'other deaths following police contact' figure and one death has been added to the apparent suicides following police custody figure.
 - For 2017/18, one death has been added to the 'other deaths following police contact' figure.

These are cases that were either not subject to an independent investigation or had not been referred to us when the report for that financial year was released. In line with our revisions policy, in these instances the figures for the published annual report were not amended.

7. Table 6.1 sets out the reasons for detention for apparent suicides following police custody. In previous years, this table has shown the number of fatalities with footnotes to highlight where there were additional reasons for detention. Due to the high volume of fatalities with multiple reasons for detention in 2021/22, the figures shown in Table 6.1 are the total number of different reasons for detention. We also took this approach in our 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 reports.

Methods and definitions

8. See [our guidance document for](#) more detailed definitions and for information about how the death cases are categorised and recorded. This document also provides suggestions for further reading.

Policies and statements

9. We produce a number of policies and statements in connection with this report. These are available on our website. They include information about:
- confidentiality and security of data
 - statement of administrative sources
 - revisions policies
 - announcing changes to methods
 - quality assurance
 - pre-release access
 - user engagement strategy
 - pricing policy

Users, uses and engagement

10. Information about key users of the data contained in this report, and how it has been used, can be found in the [user engagement feedback document](#). This also summarises any feedback received on the annual deaths report, our response to it, and any impact this may have on either the information contained in the report or the data collection process.
11. This report provides data and information about a highly sensitive topic area. It is used to promote and inform debate and discussion among police forces and other stakeholders and interested parties. It provides users with an opportunity to learn from the cases that appear in the report and to identify, take action, and/or review policy to help prevent such deaths from happening again where possible.
12. We also produce [in-depth studies](#) and [learning publications](#) to support learning.

13. Users of these statistics should take care when looking at the time series of the data. There may be discontinuities owing to changes in category definition and the varied nature of the circumstances of the cases. The small numbers involved also mean readers should be cautious about drawing conclusions from trend analysis as variances can be large.

We make every effort to make sure that all relevant deaths are included in this report through an extensive validation exercise with internal colleagues and police forces. However, at times, a case may come to light after the report has been published. Read [our revision policies](#) for information about how we manage routine amendments and errors to published data.

While comparisons to other countries and jurisdictions can be made, care needs to be taken, because the data is unlikely to be directly comparable. This is because of differences in death classifications, or how other details have been collated.

14. The user engagement strategy is found in section eight of the [policies and statements document](#).

Further information

15. [All our annual reports on deaths in or following police contact](#) are available on our website.
16. Electronic versions of the tables in this report are available on our website. In addition, time series tables are available. These look at the ethnicity, age, and gender of the people who died, and the forces involved. The [time series tables](#) are arranged by the category of death, from 2004/05 up to the current reporting year.
17. In addition to our annual reports on deaths, we also periodically produce research studies that examine in more detail some of the issues associated with these cases. These studies are available on [the research and information pages](#) of our website.
18. Following a recommendation by the National Statistician in 2012, this annual report was assessed by [the UK Statistics Authority](#) and granted National Statistics designation.
19. Email research@policeconduct.gov.uk if you have any questions or comments about our annual death reports.
20. Estimated publication date for our next report covering data for 2022/23: July 2023.

A

Appendix A: Additional tables

Table A1 Incidents by type of death and financial year, 2011/12 to 2021/22

Category	Incidents										
	Financial year										
	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
Road traffic incident	19	23	11	13	20	28	27	33	24	20	32
Fatal shootings	2	0	0	1	3	6	2	3	3	1	2
Deaths in or following police custody	15	15	11	18	14	14	23	17	18	19	11
Apparent suicides following custody [^]	39	65	70	71	61	56	57	63	54	55~	56
Other deaths following police contact [*]	37	20	41	43	103 ^{**}	128	171~	151	104~	94~	102

[^] Operational advice note issued in 2007 on the referral of these deaths.

^{*} Change in definition of 'other deaths following contact' in 2010/11 to include only cases subject to an independent investigation.

^{**} Expansion of our investigative resource and capacity to conduct more independent investigations into serious and sensitive matters – this has a direct impact on the number of other contact deaths that are reported.

~ This table presents the most up-to-date set of figures for these categories; any additions to previously published data are indicated.

Table A2 Type of death by gender, 2021/22

Gender	Road traffic incident	Fatal shootings	Deaths in or following police custody	Apparent suicides following custody	Other deaths following police contact*
Male	33	2	9	55	77
Female	6	0	2	1	32
Total fatalities	39	2	11	56	109

* This category includes only cases subject to an independent investigation.

Table A3 Type of death by age group, 2021/22

Age group	Road traffic incident	Fatal shootings	Deaths in or following police custody	Apparent suicides following custody	Other deaths following police contact*
Under 18	2	0	0	0	6
18 - 20	4	0	0	1	2
21 - 30	18	2	1	11	27
31 - 40	6	0	4	16	22
41 - 50	1	0	4	12	28
51 - 60	3	0	2	12	17
61 and over	5	0	0	4	7
Total fatalities	39	2	11	56	109

* This category includes only cases subject to an independent investigation.

** The age group of one person was unknown at the time of analysis.

Table A4 Type of death by ethnicity, 2021/22

Ethnicity group	Road traffic incident	Fatal shootings	Deaths in or following police custody	Apparent suicides following custody	Other deaths following police contact*
White	28	0	10	52	92
Black	5	1	1	1	6
Asian [^]	4	0	0	1	5
Mixed	1	0	0	2	2
Other	0	0	0	0	1
Not known	1	1	0	0	3
Total fatalities	39	2	11	56	109

* This category includes only cases subject to an independent investigation.

[^] Following changes to ethnicity classification by the Office for National Statistics, since 2015/16 the Asian ethnic group now includes Chinese. This was previously recorded under the 'Other' ethnic group.

Table A5 Type of death by appropriate authority, 2021/22

Appropriate authority	Road traffic incident	Fatal shootings	Deaths in or following police custody	Apparent suicides following custody	Other deaths following police contact*
Avon & Somerset	2	0	0	0	8
Bedfordshire	0	0	0	1	1
Cambridgeshire	0	0	0	0	0
Cheshire	1	0	1	0	2
City of London	0	0	0	0	0
Cleveland	1	0	0	2	5
Cumbria	1	0	0	0	0
Derbyshire	0	0	0	2	4
Devon & Cornwall	0	0	0	5	5
Dorset	0	0	0	0	2
Durham	0	0	0	0	1
Dyfed Powys	0	0	0	0	1
Essex	1	0	0	2	1
Gloucestershire	0	0	0	0	4
Greater Manchester	7	0	2	1	14
Gwent	0	0	0	2	1
Hampshire	0	0	1	0	1
Hertfordshire	0	0	1	0	0
Humberside	5	0	0	0	1
Kent	0	0	1	3	1
Lancashire	1	0	0	2	2
Leicestershire	0	0	0	3	1
Lincolnshire	1	0	1	2	1
Merseyside	1	0	0	0	5
Metropolitan	3	1	2	4	14
Norfolk	0	0	0	0	1
North Wales	0	0	0	0	1
North Yorkshire	1	0	0	1	1
Northamptonshire	0	0	0	0	2
Northumbria	2	0	0	2	1
Nottinghamshire	0	0	0	1	1
South Wales	1	0	0	2	5
South Yorkshire	1	0	0	1	0

Appropriate authority	Road traffic incident	Fatal shootings	Deaths in or following police custody	Apparent suicides following custody	Other deaths following police contact*
Staffordshire	3	0	0	4	0
Suffolk	0	0	1	0	0
Surrey	0	0	0	0	1
Sussex	1	0	0	3	1
Thames Valley	2	1	1	1	1
Warwickshire	0	0	0	0	0
West Mercia	1	0	0	3	0
West Midlands	0	0	0	0	8
West Yorkshire	2	0	0	4	3
Wiltshire	0	0	0	2	1
Bedfordshire and Thames Valley	0	0	0	1	0
Cumbria, Avon & Somerset and Devon & Cornwall	0	0	0	0	1
Hampshire and Thames Valley	1	0	0	0	0
Lancashire and Cumbria	0	0	0	0	1
Lancashire, Merseyside and Cumbria	0	0	0	0	1
South Wales and Devon & Cornwall	0	0	0	0	1
Warwickshire and Dorset	0	0	0	0	2
Warwickshire and West Midlands	0	0	0	0	1
British Transport Police	0	0	0	1	0
Home Office [†]	0	0	0	0	0
HMRC	0	0	0	0	0
Ministry of Defence	0	0	0	0	0
National Crime Agency	0	0	0	1	0
Total fatalities	39	2	11	56	109

This category includes only cases subject to an independent investigation.

[†] This includes UKBF, UKIE and UKVI.

To find out more about our work or to request this report in an alternative format, you can contact us in a number of ways:

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