

A photograph of a diverse group of people in a community meeting. In the foreground, a woman with curly hair in a blue shirt stands looking towards a man with grey hair and a beard in a dark purple t-shirt, who is holding a coffee cup. Next to him, a man in a red long-sleeved shirt is also holding a coffee cup. In the background, an older man with white hair and a mustache sits in a chair, looking thoughtful. Other people are visible in the background, some standing and some sitting. The setting appears to be a well-lit indoor space, possibly a community center or a meeting room.

Making a difference

Impact report 2018/19

Contents

Foreword from our Director General	3
Our work and impact at a glance	5
Who we are and what we do	6
Executive summary	7
Our mission and values	10
Improving public confidence in police accountability	11
Sharing information, listening and working with others	26
Using learning to improve policing practice	34

This report covers the period 8 January 2018 to 31 March 2019, outlining our impact since the date we were established. Performance data is for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019. Future impact reports will be by financial year.

➤ Foreword

Welcome to our first annual Impact Report, which shares the difference we are making to improve public confidence in policing.

Last autumn, we published our Strategic Plan, setting out our mission ‘to improve public confidence in policing by ensuring the police are accountable for their actions and lessons are learnt’.

Maintaining public confidence in policing by independent and effective scrutiny is vital to a society where we are policed by consent. The IOPC plays a fundamental role in this. All our work, including our investigations into serious complaints and incidents involving the police, not only helps to ensure accountability, but provides invaluable insight into how policing practice can be improved.

Alongside ensuring accountability, identifying and sharing learning from our work is one of our most important functions. In every situation that we examine it’s important that we ask what can be

learned. The key question is not just ‘what happened?’ but, where something has gone wrong, ‘how can we help make sure this doesn’t happen again?’. What are the lessons to be learnt?

I hope this, our first Impact Report, provides clarity and transparency about the work we do and helps build trust and confidence. It includes many examples of how we use the learning from our work to influence changes in policing, ensure accountability and support best practice.

This report represents the beginning of our journey and I look forward to sharing future reports with you as we continue to strengthen our impact and make a real difference to policing, operationally, organisationally and culturally. While we know that we can and do make a positive difference, we recognise that there is still much more to do.

Our plans are ambitious. We are determined to bring about further improvements in our own work

and across the police complaints system. Central to this will be our continued focus on listening to feedback from those who come into contact with us and those who can provide additional insight on policing issues. This is vital in helping us achieve our mission of improving public confidence in policing by ensuring the police are accountable for their actions and lessons are learnt.

At the same time, it’s important to acknowledge that the nature of our work means that we tend to be involved in incidents that are of a level of seriousness that requires external scrutiny. This means we don’t always see a balanced picture of policing.

I am acutely aware of the impact that a serious incident or complaint can have on the lives of complainants, bereaved families and police officers and staff, as well as communities and the wider public. I remain committed to making sure that we learn continuously from our work and

what our service users tell us, to bring about improvements both in our own handling of matters and across the wider police complaints system.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of IOPC staff and non-executive directors, whose work is the foundation of this report. I’d also like to thank the various police, community groups and individuals who I have met during my first 18 months as Director General. The issues and concerns you raised with me have helped to shape and influence the direction of our work.



Michael Lockwood
Director General

Our mission and priorities

MISSION

To improve public confidence in policing by ensuring the police are accountable for their actions and lessons are learnt.



PRIORITIES

To work with others to improve the police complaints system.

To improve policing by identifying and sharing learning from our work.

To improve confidence in police accountability.

To be an efficient and effective organisation.



WHAT WE HOPE TO ACHIEVE

The police complaints system delivers impartial, fair and evidence-based outcomes in a timely way.

Our recommendations lead to improvements in policing and prevent harm to the public.

Those with low confidence in policing access and value the complaints system.

Our highly skilled, diverse workforce delivers an excellent service, which is value for money.

➤ Who we are and what we do

We are the Independent Office for Police Conduct, established in January 2018. We oversee the police complaints system in England and Wales. We investigate the most serious incidents and complaints involving the police and we deal with appeals from people who are not happy with the police's handling of their complaints. We use learning from our work to influence changes in policing. All our decisions are made independently of the police, government and interest groups.

As well as the police, our remit includes several organisations that have police-like powers, but are not police forces. This includes Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, the National Crime Agency, and the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority. We also investigate criminal allegations against police and crime commissioners (PCCs). However, our impact on the police service, and public confidence, accounts for most of our work.

Our mission is to improve public confidence in policing by ensuring the police are accountable for their actions and lessons are learnt. Our work plays a vital role in bringing about improvements in policing, promoting transparency and helping to make sure that where something has gone wrong it doesn't happen again.

Our priorities set out the areas that we focus on and show how we intend to make a difference. This includes a strong focus on ensuring lessons are learnt, whether from a single complaint or incident, or by looking at more systemic issues, such as mental health or domestic violence. In addition to holding individuals to account, our goal is to highlight and influence areas for improvement, so our impact is making a real difference to policing practice, to people's lives and to public safety.

Our work plays a vital role in bringing about improvements in policing.

➤ Our work and impact at a glance



9,565

complaints made via us

4,097

referrals from police forces



717

independent investigations completed

687

new independent investigations started

467

appeals upheld about police not recording a person's complaint¹



497

appeals upheld about how police locally investigated a person's complaint



Subject Matter Networks

established to focus on key areas of concern to the public and police

30

learning recommendations to improve policing practice



98%

said our Learning the Lessons magazine issue on mental health provided them with useful knowledge



IOPC Youth Panel

established to gather insight and enable young people to inform and influence



16m

people reached through coverage of a new domestic violence campaign



Service standards

created and published for our service users



4/5

of our investigations concluded within 12 months



82%

of our legacy cases closed²



¹ The first stage of complaint handling is for the relevant police force to decide whether to record the complaint. When a complaint is recorded, it must be dealt with according to certain rules and guidance. If the force does not record the complaint, the complainant can appeal against this decision.

² Legacy cases refers to investigations started by our predecessor body (the Independent Police Complaints Commission) and completed after we became the IOPC.

➤ Executive summary

Our mission is to improve public confidence in policing by ensuring the police are accountable for their actions and lessons are learnt. Our work plays a vital role in bringing about improvements in policing, promoting transparency and helping to make sure that where something has gone wrong it doesn't happen again.

While most of our investigations focus on individual cases, they can also have a large-scale impact and bring about changes to policing. This helps to protect both police officers and members of the public and helps to:

- prevent similar incidents where something has gone wrong
- raise awareness of gaps in policy or training
- highlight issues with equipment, systems or practices
- encourage forces to adopt good practice

Our role in handling appeals where someone isn't happy with how the police have dealt with their complaint

means that hundreds of people who otherwise would not have had their complaint recorded and dealt with under the police complaints system (and so have the accompanying legal rights), did during 2018/19.

We also considered other appeals – for example, from people who were dissatisfied with the way the police investigated their complaints, upholding these as appropriate.

We began 687 new independent investigations, ensuring independent scrutiny of some of the most serious and sensitive issues involving the police. We streamlined our investigation processes on lower-risk cases, and we've worked with professional standards departments (PSDs)³ in police forces to explore ways to further improve the process.

We are now completing our investigations more quickly than ever before and closed more investigations than we opened. Our target in 2018/19 was to complete 80 per cent of independent

investigations within 12 months. We achieved this in 79 per cent of cases, an improvement of 11 percentage points from the 68 per cent completed within this timeframe during 2017/18. If we exclude our most serious and complex cases, which are handled by our Directorate of Major Investigations, we completed 82 per cent of independent investigations within 12 months.

The number of cases we closed within nine months improved to 58 per cent in 2018/19, while the proportion of cases we closed within six months was comparable to the previous year at 30 per cent.

We publish information from our work and raise awareness of our findings. Our annual reports on deaths during or following police contact, research into key themes highlighted by our work, investigation reports and summaries, quarterly and annual police complaints statistics and organisational learning recommendations all contribute

to learning, public confidence and police accountability.

Our aim is to deliver an impact that makes a positive difference. To do this, we have worked with the Home Office and others to support changes to the legislation that underpins the police complaints and discipline systems. We have argued for and supported changes that aim to simplify these systems, improving how complaints and incidents are handled, and enhancing the powers available to the IOPC.

Since our creation in January 2018, we have listened to both individuals and communities about their concerns. This helped us to identify key themes to focus our work on – including domestic abuse, deaths in custody, discrimination, mental health, roads policing, use of force, Taser and less lethal options, and abuse of position for sexual purposes.

During the reporting period, we established a Youth Panel to help

³ Each force has a professional standards department, whose role is to ensure that complaints are dealt with appropriately.

us understand why young people have lower levels of confidence in the police complaints system than others, are less willing to complain and less likely to have heard of the IOPC. The Panel has made a number of recommendations and we are working together to implement them.

We also commissioned the Institute of Mental Health to help us find out how people with mental health concerns experienced the police complaints system. We shared the findings with other organisations and are looking at ways to improve people's knowledge of, access to and experience of both the IOPC and the complaints system more broadly.

We have worked with other organisations to help them develop a better understanding of the police complaints system, including running sessions about our role, and producing a short guide to the police complaints system for staff working on charity helplines.

Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, we made 30 formal organisational learning recommendations on policy, systems and training.

When someone dies or is seriously injured after contact with the police, it poses a challenge to public confidence in policing. It is essential that such incidents are assessed thoroughly and independently investigated when appropriate in order to preserve and enhance public confidence. Our new 'Guidance to the police service on achieving best evidence in death or serious injury matters' was approved by the former Home Secretary. The guidance has the support of senior police officers and recommends that key policing witnesses are separated immediately after such an incident to prevent any actual or perceived conferring between those involved.

Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, we made 30 formal organisational learning recommendations⁴ on policy, systems and training. Our Learning the Lessons magazines focus on learning from investigations into complaints or incidents, supporting police forces to improve policy and practice. We recently published editions on stop and search, protecting vulnerable people and mental health. We also contributed to Government consultations on police pursuits, stop and search and use of counter terrorism legislation.

Our first campaign used learning from one of our investigations to promote the Silent Solution⁵ alert system, reaching an estimated 16 million people.

Together, the impact of this work changed local policing practice and, in some cases, national practice. Our work helped police forces understand key issues, improve the way they handle complaints

and implement good practice. Our investigations helped to hold officers to account for misconduct in the most serious matters, but also highlighted opportunities to help prevent future risks.

Sharing our learning allows our impact to be amplified to other organisations as we continue to work with others in the criminal justice system to improve timeliness and bridge gaps.

We are ambitious for the future and look forward to producing an impact report each year describing our work and the difference we make.

⁴ We use what we have learnt during our investigations and appeals work to improve policing practice, and can make recommendations to help prevent similar incidents happening again.

⁵ An automated message that prompts mobile callers who are in danger and unable to speak to press 55 when prompted.











IOPPC

Independent
Office for
Police Conduct

Our mission and values

Our mission

To improve public confidence in policing by ensuring the police are accountable for their actions and lessons are learnt.

Our priorities	What we will do	What we hope to achieve	Our values
 <p>To work with others to improve the police complaints system</p>	<p>We will work to improve all parts of the complaints system – both our own work and that carried out by others – so that it consistently delivers impartial, fair and evidence-based outcomes in a timely way.</p>	<p>The police complaints system delivers impartial, fair and evidence-based outcomes in a timely way.</p>	 <p>Seeking truth</p>
 <p>To improve policing by identifying and sharing learning from our work</p>	<p>We will focus our work on areas of concern to both the public and police and work with partners to share our learning to improve policing and protect the public from harm.</p>	<p>Our recommendations lead to improvements in policing and prevent harm to the public.</p>	 <p>Empowering people</p>
 <p>To improve confidence in police accountability</p>	<p>We will engage with a range of stakeholders and communities, focusing on those with the least confidence in policing, so they understand their right to complain and expect fair and just treatment in response to complaints and serious incidents.</p>	<p>Those with low confidence in policing access and value the complaints system.</p>	 <p>Being tenacious</p>
 <p>To be an efficient and effective organisation</p>	<p>We will attract and retain a highly skilled diverse workforce and provide them with a good working environment while continually improving to provide value for money.</p>	<p>Our highly skilled, diverse workforce delivers an excellent service, which is value for money.</p>	 <p>Making a difference</p>

**➤ Improving
confidence in police
accountability**

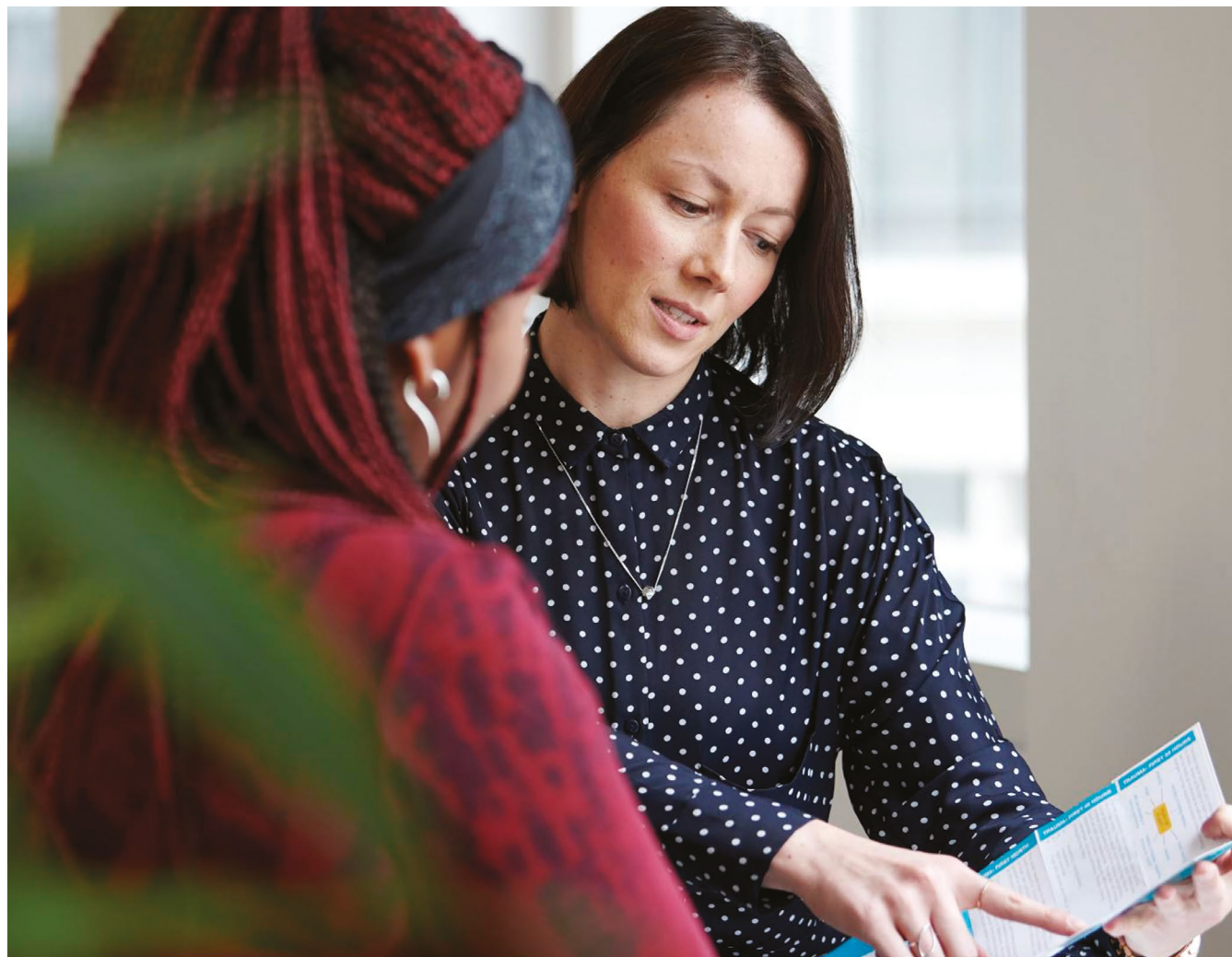
Our work on appeals

Our work provides a unique insight into how police processes and procedures are working or are perceived to be working. We use this insight to bring about change and secure public confidence in the police.

The majority of complaints are dealt with locally by police force professional standards departments (PSDs). However, where someone isn't happy with how the police have dealt with their complaint, they have the right to appeal either to us or to the force's chief constable⁶.

When a complainant appeals to us, we carry out our own independent review of how their complaint was dealt with by the force. If we find that it wasn't dealt with properly, or we disagree with the force's findings, we can direct that appropriate action is taken.

⁶ If a complainant is unhappy about the outcome of their complaint, or about how it has been handled, they may be able to appeal. There are various grounds for appeal, explained on our website. Which organisation is responsible for dealing with an appeal is set out in legislation. All appeals about a complaint not being recorded are dealt with by the IOPC.



How we dealt with appeals



From 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019
we dealt with **2,811** valid appeals

We upheld:

467 appeals about a complaint
not being recorded

53 appeals about how police had
tried to locally resolve a complaint⁷

497 appeals about how a
complaint was investigated

⁷ Local resolution is one way for a force to resolve a complaint. It is suitable only for complaints that do not need IOPC involvement. Local resolution may involve the force providing an explanation or apology, or otherwise satisfying the complainant that it is taking appropriate action.

This meant that:

- In **467** cases, people who otherwise would not have had their complaint recorded and dealt with under the police complaints system (and so would not have had the accompanying legal rights), did.
- In **53** cases, people achieved a different outcome to the one they received when local resolution was used to deal with their complaint. In the majority of these cases, we directed that an investigation into the complaint was carried out.
- In **497** cases, people achieved a different outcome to the one they received when their complaint was initially investigated. Where we upheld these appeals, our conclusions included the following decisions:

The findings of the
police investigation
weren't appropriate

The complainant
should have been
given more information

Officers had a case to
answer for misconduct
or gross misconduct

The police should have asked the
Crown Prosecution Service to decide
if an officer should be prosecuted

The action (or lack of action) that the
police planned to take as a result of
the complaint wasn't appropriate

Our investigations

Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019 we began 687 new investigations and completed 717.

By law, the police must refer certain complaints and incidents to us. We decide whether an investigation is necessary and, if so, what level of involvement we should have in that investigation. We may choose to conduct our own independent investigation, manage or supervise a police investigation, or decide that the matter can be dealt with locally by the police.

The types of matters that we investigate are wide-ranging. They include incidents and allegations that impact on public confidence.

When we carry out an independent investigation, we use our own IOPC investigators who gather evidence to establish the circumstances of what has happened. Some of our investigations are very large.

For example, we have been investigating the police actions in the immediate aftermath of the disaster at the Hillsborough stadium in 1989, as well as a large number of related complaints. We have also been investigating the police response to non-recent allegations of child sexual abuse in Rotherham.

Sometimes we find that something went wrong because of an organisational issue or failing – for example, in relation to training, resources, policy, guidance or equipment.

Sometimes, even in cases that have had the most serious or tragic outcomes, we find that the police acted appropriately.

Sometimes we find that an individual's actions may have amounted to poor performance, misconduct or a criminal offence.

We became aware of several incidents that involved police stopping and searching members of the public, where footage of the incidents, and significant concerns about them, were being circulated on social media.

Given concerns being expressed, and the wider concerns among some communities about police use of stop and search, we used our power to 'call-in' these cases and carry out our own independent investigations into them.

Where our investigation relates to a death, we give our investigation report to the coroner so that our findings can be used at the inquest.

An inquest is a formal investigation conducted by a coroner to determine how someone died.

Where we find (either as the result of an investigation or handling an appeal), that there may have been significant wrongdoing by an individual, we also have the power to:

- refer a matter (or direct a force to refer a matter if they have carried out the investigation) to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for it to decide whether someone should be prosecuted
- recommend and, if necessary, direct that someone's actions are considered at disciplinary proceedings

Disciplinary panels and juries ultimately decide whether an officer has committed misconduct or a criminal offence, but our findings help them make those important decisions and play a key role in individuals being held to account for wrongdoing.

Improving timeliness across the system

The length of time that an investigation and any subsequent proceedings take to complete can have a significant impact on all those involved – be they a complainant, the family of someone who has died or been seriously injured, a police officer or member of police staff. It can also impact on the wider community and on public confidence in the police complaints system.

Our investigations are often complex and require external input and expertise in order to ensure a

thorough inquiry that identifies and considers all relevant evidence. We gather evidence from police and non-police witnesses, those who are the subject of the investigation and, in some cases, evidence from medical and other specialist experts.

We also often need to liaise with other organisations in relation to actual or potential related proceedings. Sometimes, there will be inquest proceedings (by a coroner), criminal proceedings (by the CPS), disciplinary proceedings (by a police force or independently chaired panel) and/or appeal proceedings (by a Police Appeals Tribunal⁸) before all final decisions on a case are reached.

We have worked with others to focus on reducing the time our investigations take, to identify where improvements can be made across the system and to minimise the impact on those affected.

⁸ The Police Appeals Tribunal hears appeals against the findings of disciplinary proceedings brought against members of the police force.

We now complete around 80 per cent of our investigations within 12 months compared to 68 per cent a year ago. Over a third are completed within six months.

So far, we have:

- introduced a new streamlined investigation process for lower-risk cases. This has helped us to reduce the average time it takes to complete our investigations
- achieved completion of around 80 per cent of our investigations within 12 months compared to 68 per cent a year ago. Over a third are completed within six months
- worked with police forces PSDs to explore ways to reduce delays and increase efficiency during our investigations, identifying several opportunities to standardise and improve processes and communication
- contributed to the Home Office's multi-agency Deaths in Custody Implementation Working Group⁹, exploring how we and other agencies can better work together to improve timeliness and the experiences of those

- affected by investigations and related proceedings
- provided the Ministerial Board on Deaths in Custody¹⁰ with our views on potential ways to improve timeliness across the end-to-end processes when someone dies during or following police contact. This served as a starting point for further work, with the Home Office arranging workshops with us, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), CPS, Chief Coroner and others to explore how to progress our ideas

⁹ A cross-departmental working groups that supports the Ministerial Board on Deaths in Custody.

¹⁰ The Ministerial Board brings together decision-makers responsible for policy and issues related to deaths in custody in the Ministry of Justice, Home Office and Department of Health.

“When a person dies or is seriously injured after contact with the police, it poses a challenge to public confidence in policing, so it’s vital that investigations into such incidents are transparent and meaningful.”

**Michael Lockwood
Director General**

Strengthening police accountability

In the past, concerns have been raised – including by the families of people who have died during or following contact with the police – about procedures surrounding the initial steps taken by the police when obtaining and preserving evidence after someone has died. In particular, there were concerns that officers were able to confer with each other before giving their initial account of an incident.

This year, the Home Secretary formally approved our new ‘Guidance to the police service on achieving best evidence in death or serious injury matters’. The guidance seeks to secure public confidence in the process of evidence gathering after such an event. It has the support of senior police officers and

asserts our preference that key policing witnesses are separated immediately following an incident to prevent any actual or perceived conferring from taking place. In the event that it is not possible to separate those involved, the guidance allows for robust alternative measures, such as the use of body-worn video, to monitor the post-incident processes and prevent any actual or perceived conferring.

Helping forces improve their approach to complaints, appeals and referrals

Police forces deal with the majority of complaints against police officers and police staff. Each force has a department whose role is to ensure that complaints are dealt with appropriately. Police forces must refer the most serious cases to us – whether or not someone has made a complaint.

We do a lot of work to help forces improve the way they handle public complaints. It's better for everyone if forces get complaint handling right first time. It means that complainants and those complained about know the outcome more quickly, and any learning and

improvement is identified and put into practice without delay.

We have a dedicated Oversight and Force Liaison team that supports forces, leading to improvements in how complaints and incidents are dealt with. For example, in the first quarter of 2018/19, we upheld 54 per cent of appeals against one police force's local complaint investigations. This was significantly higher than the national average (38 per cent) and the average for similar forces (46 per cent).

Working with the force's PSD, we explored the reasons. We examined what improvements could be made to the force's complaint investigations, and to the reports it provides to complainants at the end of a complaint investigation.

By the end of the third quarter of the year, the percentage of appeals we upheld against the force's complaint investigations dropped to 42 per cent. This showed that we were finding more complaints had been addressed appropriately by the force first time around.

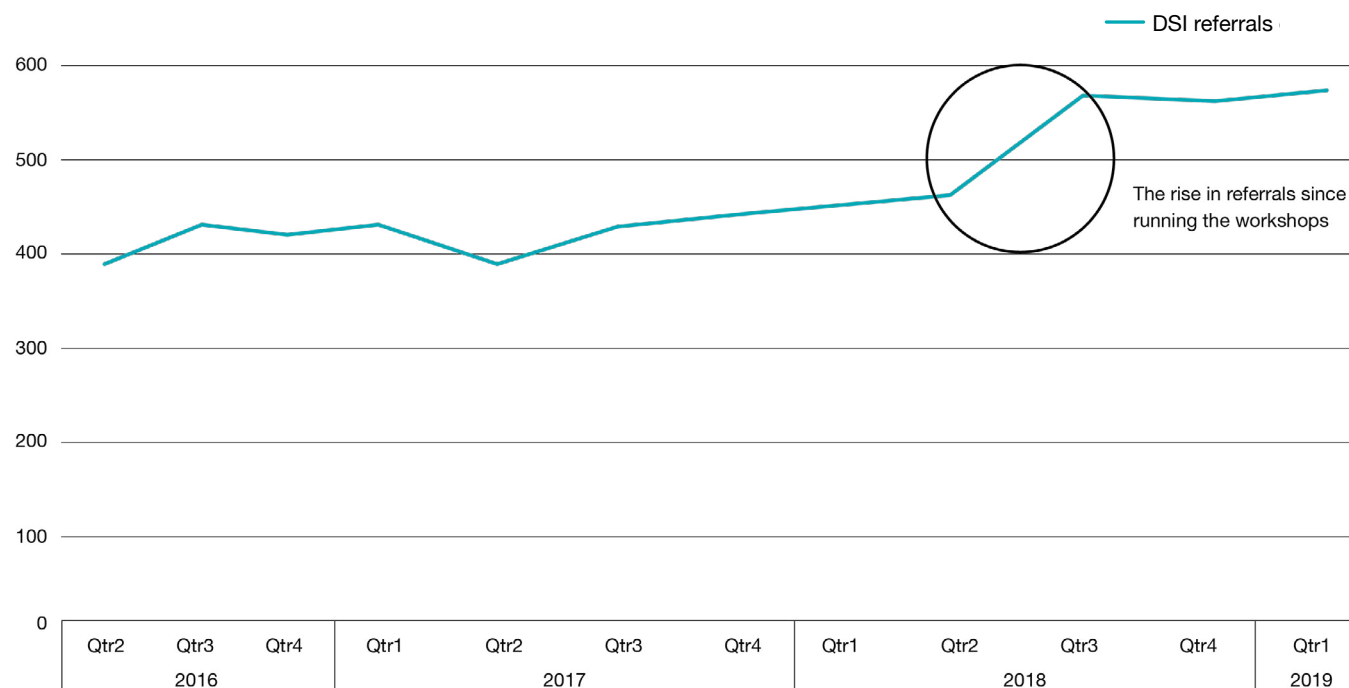
➤ Referrals to the IOPC following a death or serious injury

In 2018 we hosted a series of workshops for police forces across England and Wales to improve their understanding of matters that need to be referred to the IOPC.

We had become aware of some incidents, including where someone had died or been seriously injured during or following police contact, that had not been referred to us. This raised concerns that forces were not always correctly identifying every matter that should be referred to us.

The workshops helped ensure that forces fully understood the referral criteria, and resulted in forces better identifying incidents that they should refer.

Changes in referrals following IOPC workshops with forces



Helping forces get it ‘right first time’

Our Focus magazines provide practical guidance on dealing with complaints, conduct matters¹¹, and death or serious injury cases. Each issue looks at a specific topic and gives advice and examples.

Local resolution is one way for a force to resolve a complaint. It is suitable only for complaints that do not need IOPC involvement. Local resolution may involve the force providing an explanation or apology, or otherwise satisfying the complainant that it is taking appropriate action.

We reviewed a sample of complaints that had been dealt with by forces using local resolution. Although many of the complaints had been dealt with appropriately, in more than a quarter of the cases we reviewed, the person who assessed the complaint had failed to realise it was too serious to be dealt with by local resolution and should have been investigated.

¹¹ This refers to an incident about which no complaint has been received, but where there is an indication that a person serving with the police may have committed a criminal offence or behaved in a manner that would justify disciplinary proceedings.

IOPC Independent Office for Police Conduct

FOCUS

Focus gives police force professional standards departments (PSDs) and local policing bodies practical guidance on dealing with complaints, conduct matters, and death or serious injury cases. It supports them to handle complaints appropriately and improves standards.

www.policeconduct.gov.uk/focus

ISSUE ELEVEN

Quick links: inside this issue

Applying the local resolution suitability test	2
When is a complaint suitable for local resolution?	2
Gathering information to decide whether to use local resolution	3
Initial scoping	3
Establishing early communication with the complainant	4
Multiple complaints	4
Article 3	6
Excessive force and assault	7
Dealing with allegations about treatment in custody	8
Can discrimination allegations be dealt with using local resolution?	9
Do some allegations of incivility require investigation?	10
Allegations of failure to investigate after someone reports a matter to police	10
Complaints about neglect or failure of duties and responsibilities	11

➤ IOPC service standards

We also look at how we can make improvements in our own handling of cases to ensure the people who come into contact with us always receive a high level of service.

We listened to all our service users – including complainants, those subject to investigation, families and witnesses. After hearing what was important to them, we used this to develop a set of service standards outlining what our service users can expect from us.

We will:

- **make sure we understand your circumstances and needs. We will tell you what we can and can't do, and the reasons why.**
- **tell you about other organisations that may be able to help you if we can't.**
- **have a clear and transparent process to handle any complaints or feedback you have about our service.**
- **always treat you with respect and courtesy.**
- **make sure our service is accessible and meets your needs.**
- **ask you how you want to be kept informed about the progress of our work, and how often you want to be contacted.**
- **be open and honest with you about how long we think our work will take. If we think we will take longer than anticipated, we will let you know and explain why.**
- **explain our processes to you and what you can expect from us at every stage of our work.**
- **tell you our finding(s) in relation to your case, which will be independent and based on all the evidence that is available to us.**
- **keep any information we have about you safe and secure, and will use it only as described in our privacy notice.**

Reforming the police complaints system

The current police complaints system can be complex and confusing and we know that people can find it difficult to understand and access. Many have argued for the system to be simplified. While there are some changes that can be made to improve people's experiences of the current police complaints system, other improvements can happen only after changes to the law.

Following longstanding calls for reforms to the police complaints and disciplinary systems – including from our predecessor organisation, the Independent Police Complaints Commission – we have worked with the Home Office and others to support changes to legislation with

the goal of simplifying systems and processes.

We:

- argued for and supported changes to simplify the systems, improve how complaints and incidents are handled, and enhance the powers available to the IOPC
- used our experience and the learning from our cases – as well as feedback from complainants, service users, and community and voluntary organisations – to help shape legislation
- fed into ongoing discussions with a large number of stakeholders
- worked with forces and PCCs' offices to help them understand and be ready for the changes to the system

An insight into our investigations

This section provides a brief snapshot of some of our investigations. You can read more about our investigations on our website – www.policeconduct.gov.uk

Case 1

Three officers were given **final written warnings** after our investigation into how they dealt with a domestic dispute between a woman and her ex-partner before he murdered her.

The woman had made a number of phone calls to police in the week before her murder.

A disciplinary panel found all three officers, one of whom had lied to the IOPC during our investigation, had committed misconduct.

Case 2

A serving officer and a former officer were convicted of misconduct in public office following a large-scale investigation. We directed a police force PSD to

carry out an investigation, under our control. The officers were convicted of falsifying a document purportedly from the CPS, manipulating CPS advice on their systems and destroying evidence during child abuse investigations. **Both officers received a custodial sentence** – one of 18 months and the other of two years.

Case 3

Officers were **commended for their courage** and resourcefulness in responding to a fatal dog attack on a member of the public. Our investigation looked at the police's response to the attack and at an earlier decision to remove and then return the dog to its owner.

We found one of the officers who attended the incident had used a fire extinguisher to successfully force the dog away. The other officer had searched for the dog in an effort to stop it harming anyone else.

We found the decision to return the dog to its owner had been carried out correctly.

Although the force provided training for officers in protecting themselves from dog attacks, **we recommended additional training** in how to handle dogs attacking members of the public.

We also recommended a more formal procedure to communicate with local authorities requesting checks on possible banned dog breeds.

Case 4

A police officer was **dismissed for gross misconduct** after an IOPC investigation found that he had filmed several videos while on duty ridiculing a vulnerable woman. He shared them via the Snapchat messaging app.



Case 5

Our investigation into the fatal shooting of a man found that the **officers involved had responded quickly and effectively** to an extremely challenging situation where there was a significant threat to a member of public and themselves. We found that the officers made efforts to de-escalate the confrontation with the man and that a police firearm was discharged as a final resort after a Taser had proved to be ineffective.

Case 6

One officer received a **final written warning**, and another received management action¹² following our investigation into a road traffic incident involving police.

A disciplinary panel ruled that the first officer, who had been in an unmarked police car, had committed gross misconduct when he carried out an unauthorised pursuit, entered a one-way street the wrong way and used his car to ram a fleeing vehicle.

The panel ruled that the second

officer who had also been in an unmarked vehicle, had committed misconduct. He had not been trained to take part in a pursuit, had not sought authorisation to be involved in it, mounted the pavement with his vehicle and ignored a no-entry traffic sign.

Case 7

Our investigation into a fatal collision concluded that a police pursuit that preceded it had been carried out appropriately and **in accordance with force policies**.

The police officer, an advanced-level driver trained in pursuit management, saw a car travelling at speed drive through a red light. The officer reported to the control room that the car was failing to stop and overtaking vehicles on the wrong side of the road. The car crashed into a wall, killing the passenger.

The driver of the car being pursued admitted causing death by dangerous driving and was jailed for six years.

Case 8

A police community support officer who punched a man who had been detained under the Mental Health Act after requesting assistance from the emergency services was **dismissed for gross misconduct** following our investigation into the incident.

The officer had arrested and handcuffed the man and placed him in the back of an ambulance. While in the ambulance, he had struck the man in the stomach three times. He also misrepresented the altercation during a debrief held shortly afterwards and lied about what had happened. The incident was referred to the IOPC when fellow officers reported concerns about his behaviour.

We sent our investigation report to the CPS to assess if the officer should be charged with a criminal offence. The CPS decided to take no further action.

¹² This is where a manager deals with the way someone has behaved. It can include: showing the police officer or member of staff how their behaviour fell short of expectations set out in the Standards of Professional Behaviour; identifying expectations for future conduct; or addressing any underlying causes of misconduct.

**➤ Sharing information,
listening and working
with others**

Sharing information

We work with, listen to and share information with a wide range of people, including complainants, families, police officers and staff, and community and voluntary groups. We also work with government and other organisations that play a role in the criminal justice system to identify where individually and collectively we can make a real change.

Ultimately, changes made as a result of this learning will improve the police service for everyone and contribute to protecting the public.

Our commitment to making information available

Publishing information from our work, and raising awareness of our findings, plays an important role in relation to learning, public confidence and police accountability.

It helps to ensure that there's transparency around the most serious complaints and incidents, and that forces can learn from them.

It also means that members of the public can see what issues are arising in relation to their local force and policing more generally, how they are being dealt with, and how their police force compares to others.

The information we publish includes:

- **annual reports on deaths during or following police contact**
Each year, we publish data on how many people have died during or following contact with the police in England and Wales. This important report ensures transparency, providing an overview of the nature and circumstances of each death.
- **research into themes identified in our work**
We publish our own research as well as research that we commission others to conduct into specific issues relating to policing and the police complaints system.
- **quarterly and annual police complaints statistics**
We publish quarterly and annual statistics on police complaints,

at both force and national level. This includes information on the number of complaints, types of allegation and how they were dealt with, and numbers and types of appeals and their outcomes.

- **investigation reports and summaries**
Unless there are specific reasons why we cannot, we publish our investigation reports or summaries on our website.
- **organisational learning recommendations**
We use what we have learnt during our investigations and appeals work to improve policing practice. We publish our learning recommendations, together with the recipient's response, on our website.

We proactively provide information about cases to the media and publish news releases on our website and social media channels.

There is often a lot of media and public interest in the matters we deal with. Media coverage helps us raise awareness of our work and can contribute to public confidence in effective police oversight. Media coverage can have a significant impact on the individuals involved, their loved ones, communities and wider confidence in the police.

Following the fatal police shooting of a man, rumours began to circulate on social media that he had been shot in the back. This was also picked up by mainstream media.

That day, we issued a Tweet and media information confirming that contrary to reports being circulated, based on the evidence we had

gathered so far (including body-worn video), there was no indication that the man had been shot in the back.

We also reminded the media that speculating about the circumstances of the incident was unhelpful and potentially upsetting for those affected.

The incorrect information was removed from a mainstream online news website within an hour. A number of people responded positively on Twitter:

'Thank you; an important and timely clarification...'

'Respect for this early position statement. Too much officer stress is involved in the post-incident procedure, and early statements are welcome.'

In another example, the police issued a statement following a fatal road traffic incident that resulted in the deaths of two young people, including a pregnant woman.

The statement could have been interpreted that the young people had been involved in an aggravated burglary prior to the accident. Media outlets followed this interpretation and labelled the couple as violent criminals in their coverage, causing significant distress to their grieving families.

Once we had established that the pair had not been involved in the burglary, we issued a media release announcing our involvement and correcting the mistake.

Working with others

We cannot deliver positive impact without working closely with other organisations and listening to our service users.

Working with young people

We know from research that young people have lower levels of confidence in the police complaints system than others, are less willing to complain and are less likely to have heard of the IOPC. So, working with Leaders Unlocked¹³, we established a Youth Panel to help us understand the reasons for this and to explore how we can increase young people's confidence in the system.

We asked the panel what they felt the issues were and what we should do about them. The panel engaged with over 800 young people across England and Wales, helping raise awareness of the police complaints system and the role of the IOPC, as well as giving young people a voice.

This work has helped improve our understanding of young people's views and concerns, particularly those from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities.

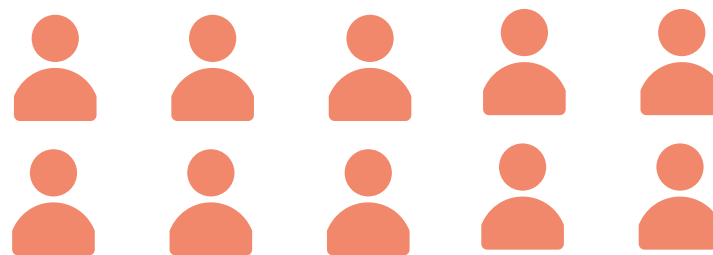
The panel is now helping us to implement a range of recommendations, which it presented to a large number of stakeholders.

“Our goal is for young people to have the confidence in the complaints system and receive the support they need. I really feel that my voice and opinions are valued and that I am making a positive difference to many young people throughout England and Wales.”

Imran, Youth Panel member

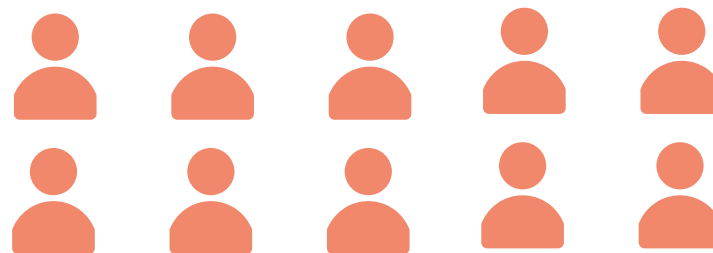
Our peer-led Youth Panel

30 young people,
aged 16-24



Male, female
and non binary

From across
England and Wales



Roughly two thirds
BME

Roughly a third with
lived experience of the
criminal justice system

Roughly one in ten
LGBT+

¹³ Leaders Unlocked provides young people with a stronger voice on issues that affect their lives. Find out more on their website: www.leaders-unlocked.org

Understanding the experiences of people with mental health concerns

Every day, the police have many interactions with people who have mental health concerns. A significant number of the cases we deal with also involve issues relating to mental health. We wanted to learn more about their awareness and experiences of the police complaints system, and about any challenges that they have faced when trying to access it.

We commissioned the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) to conduct research for us, working with people across England and Wales. The IMH's research found that people with mental health concerns often find it particularly challenging to make a complaint against the police. Participants described a number of negative experiences that could have led to them making a complaint against the police.

However, most reported that they had not, in fact, made a complaint.

They gave a number of reasons for this, including: not being aware of the complaints system or what they could complain about; a feeling that their complaint did not match the high-profile cases they associated with the IOPC; a lack of trust in the police complaints system; and a worry that there would be a long, uncertain and complicated process involved in making a complaint, which would harm their mental health. Nearly half of the participants said that they were unlikely to complain even if they had grounds to. Many were also fearful of the consequences of making a complaint and believed that it could lead to harassment or victimisation.

The IMH's recommendations focused on three main areas:

- improving knowledge of the IOPC and the police complaints system
- improving access to, and support with, the police complaints system
- improving the experience of the police complaints system

We shared the findings with the leads for mental health at both the NPCC and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) to identify collectively how to implement improvements and then monitor their effectiveness. HMICFRS is considering how it can use the research to help inform its inspections of the police.

We also raised awareness of the findings by:

- presenting them, with the IMH, to all force mental health leads at the NPCC's continuing professional development event for police officers and staff
- inviting the IMH to present the findings to our External Stakeholder Reference Group, which includes representatives from government, policing, PCCs, the CPS, academia and various community and voluntary -sector organisations



“For many people in society, making a complaint about their experiences of contact with the police is challenging enough. When overlaid by sometimes debilitating mental health concerns, complex lives, and feeling personally overwhelmed, the challenge becomes magnified and often defeating.”

Professor Eddie Kane, Director for Health and Justice at the Institute of Mental Health

(extracted from Learning the Lessons magazine, February 2019)

Working with those who support victims of stalking and domestic violence

Some organisations that support victims of stalking and domestic violence told us that they found it difficult to explain the police complaints system and the role of the IOPC when people contacted them by phone.

In response to this feedback, we ran helpline awareness sessions with staff from our own Customer Contact Centre, and from the National Stalking Helpline at the Suzy Lamplugh Trust and the National Domestic Violence Helpline at Women's Aid.

These sessions:

- supported helpline staff to better understand the police complaints system and the role of the IOPC, and be in a better position to advise vulnerable service users and other members of the public who contact them
- helped staff from our Customer Contact Centre better understand issues around domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, and how best to deal with calls relating to these issues

We also produced a 'quick-reference guide' to the police complaints system. The guide provides helpline staff with information to refer to when taking calls from people who may wish to make a complaint about the police.

We ran a similar session with staff at Action on Elder Abuse, an organisation that works to protect and prevent the abuse of vulnerable older adults. Feedback from the sessions was positive.

We also plan to run further sessions, including with organisations that support members of the LGBT+ community and others that provide more generalised advice services.

Feedback on our helpline awareness sessions

“I’ve got a better understanding of the different aspects of domestic abuse and the ways in which help is provided to the victims, also the barriers that stop people seeking help.”

“It was very enlightening and enjoyable and I left the session feeling confident about dealing with people who are victims of stalking and assisting them with more knowledge on this topic now.”

“It’s very helpful to be able to meet some of the team and know the scope and remit of the IOPC – this means we can more accurately advise clients and be able to manage their expectations.”

“We receive many calls from survivors who deal with the police and receive poor responses. We can now signpost to the IOPC fully informed on what a caller can expect when contacting your service.”

➤ Using learning to improve policing practice

Our work aims to make the greatest impact on public confidence in policing by helping to establish a culture of learning and development, identifying lessons that can be learnt from all types of incidents and investigations. We use the information from investigations, appeals, research and engagement with stakeholders to identify learning in order to improve operational effectiveness and the service police deliver to the public.

What do people want to happen when they make a complaint?

Our research¹⁴ shows consistently that members of the public who make a complaint about the police want those involved, and the wider police service, to learn from it. This is one of many reasons why it is critical that the IOPC and police forces support a culture of learning and continuous improvement, so that the public can have confidence not only that their complaint has been responded to, but that the lessons learnt from it will have a long-term impact.

¹⁴ Since 2017, we have commissioned an external research specialist to produce a public perceptions tracker. The tracker provides a routine measure of public confidence throughout the year.

Q. If you made a complaint about the police, how important or unimportant would it be to you for each of the following to happen as a result?



*April 2019 data from our public perceptions tracker.

How we use learning from our work



Organisational learning recommendations

While most complaints, investigations and appeals focus on individual cases, they can also have a large-scale impact where we find that learning or improvement is needed at an organisational level. For example, we may recommend a change to local or national police policy, practice, training or guidance.

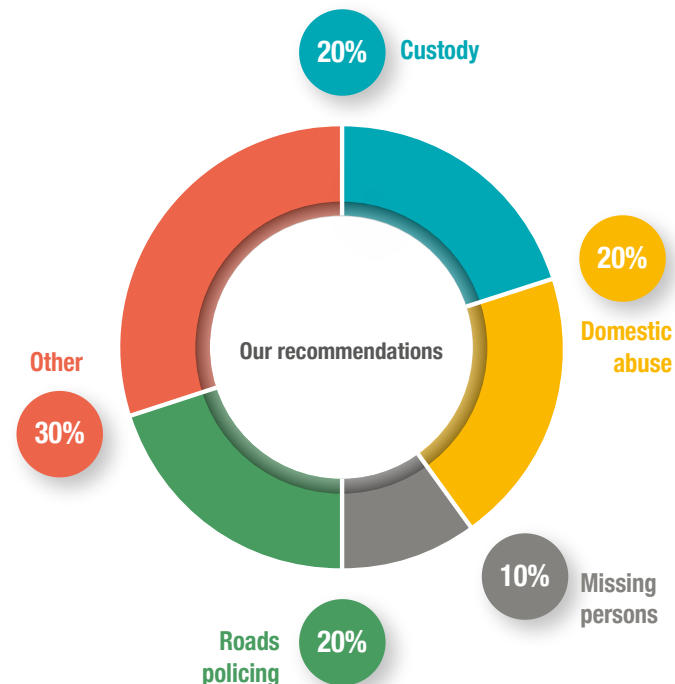
These recommendations are mostly made to police forces or other policing bodies, such as the NPCC or the College of Policing (CoP). However, we can also make recommendations to other organisations where we identify relevant issues (for example, to the ambulance service, NHS or other healthcare providers).

Our recommendations can help bring about changes to policing and protect both members of the public and police officers by:

- preventing similar incidents where something has gone wrong
- raising awareness of gaps in policy or training
- highlighting issues with equipment, systems or practices
- encouraging forces to adopt good practice

From 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, we made 30 formal organisational learning recommendations.

Learning recommendations by theme



Across all the different themes, 54% of the recommendations we made related to police policy or guidance.

'Other' included recommendations relating to:

- use of force
- call handling

- investigation of child sexual exploitation
- handling of a death or serious injury matter
- warning markers on police systems
- training for PCSOs
- risk assessments for voluntary interviews

An insight into our learning recommendations

Making custody suites safer

We reviewed an investigation carried out by a force into an incident in which a man was found unconscious in a police custody cell. He had taken an alarm cord from a disabled toilet, concealed it and then used it as a ligature in his cell.

Following the incident, the police force concerned removed all cords from its disabled toilets and replaced them with different equipment that couldn't be used in the same way. To avoid the risk of a similar injury or even a death happening as a result of a similar incident in another force area, we made a formal recommendation to the NPCC that:

- all forces should be made aware of this risk and the injury caused in this case

- all forces should be advised to review their own custody facilities as a matter of urgency to ensure that any cords that could present a similar risk were replaced with alternative means of raising alarm
- this measure should be incorporated into guidance for any new facilities or refurbishments

As a result, all forces in England and Wales were advised to review their own facilities urgently. We also informed HMICFRS and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) so that their inspections of police custody settings could confirm whether any forces still had the fittings.

Improving handling of domestic abuse investigations

We investigated a police force's contact with a man and his former partner prior to their deaths. The man had been arrested in relation to offences against his former partner. He had assaulted her in the past and been convicted of this. Two days after his arrest, the man was reported to have breached his bail conditions by contacting his former partner and attending her address. When the man later answered bail, instead of being charged, he was re-bailed by the police. The next day, he killed his former partner and then took his own life.

Our investigation identified a number of failings by the police. This resulted in three officers facing disciplinary proceedings. Those proceedings found that two of the

officers had breached standards of professional behaviour in how they investigated the allegations and dealt with breaches of bail conditions. One officer was given a written warning and the other received management advice.

We also identified ways in which the force could improve its handling of domestic abuse investigations. Our recommendations related to:

- improving access for officers to all relevant systems and documents when dealing with a domestic abuse investigation
- conducting risk assessments when a person breaches their bail conditions
- recording the rationale for any change in risk assessment
- keeping the victim's safety plan under review
- the role of different teams in deciding whether to bail a suspect

The force has made improvements to ensure:

- all staff in its Domestic Abuse Investigation and Safeguarding Unit follow an accredited training programme
- only staff who are trained and familiar with the unit's operating procedures can be accepted into it
- the custody officer is the decision maker for all bail decisions, but receives a recommendation from the Domestic Abuse Investigation and Safeguarding Unit
- all risk assessments are accessible to all staff in the unit
- rationales for all risk assessments are captured

Strengthening safeguards for those attending voluntary interviews

We investigated the circumstances surrounding the death of a man who killed himself after being invited to attend a police interview about an alleged sexual offence. The man agreed to attend the interview voluntarily, but then failed to do so. Some days later, he was reported missing and was discovered dead at his home.

Our investigation found that there was no guidance for officers on conducting risk assessments when inviting a suspect to attend an interview voluntarily in relation to serious allegations, such as sexual assaults. It also found that there was no guidance on what officers should do if the suspect failed to attend as arranged.

Following a recommendation we made, the force reviewed its policies and introduced risk assessments for those asked to attend interviews voluntarily – covering the periods before interview, during interview, after interview and prior to release.

New guidance under development after ad hoc modifications to lighting on police cars

We investigated a road traffic incident in which a police officer was seriously injured. Our investigation found that the emergency lighting on the unmarked car he had been driving had been covered with nylon mesh to prevent members of the public identifying it as a police vehicle when the lights were not in use. Concealing the lights in this way had significantly reduced

their effectiveness and made it difficult for the other driver involved in the collision to see that the vehicle was a police car responding to an incident.

Our investigation discovered that there was no national standardisation for covering lights and that, as a result, a number of police forces were using various methods, including nylon mesh. We therefore recommended that:

- the NPCC introduce national guidance and/or policy on any potential modifications to cover lights on unmarked police vehicles
- any such guidance and/or policy should be based on formal research and analysis of any proposed method

As a result:

- all forces have been instructed to stop the practice of using nylon mesh to cover lights
- a national working group has been established to produce new national guidelines
- the working group will use formal research from academia and the expertise of police forces' fleet personnel, subject matter experts from industry and the Defence, Science and Technology Laboratory

“No investigation can go forward in isolation. It impacts on the people affected and along the way, it is liable to identify recommendations that should be actioned even before the final investigation is completed.”

Chief Constable Matt Jukes, South Wales Police, speaking about the recommendations we made to his force after an investigation into its response to reports, information and intelligence about the alleged criminal conduct of a suspect.

Learning the Lessons magazines

Our Learning the Lessons magazines support police forces to improve police policy and practice. Short, anonymised case studies and questions about real-life cases help readers to consider whether they need to make any changes in their own force.

Readers tell us they value the magazine's practical examples and guidance.

Each edition of the magazine usually focuses on a specific theme. For example, we published an issue on use of stop and search. Our evidence showed that where stop and search powers were used, there continued to be inconsistencies with the quality of the exchange between the officer and the person stopped. To bring this to life, this edition provided insight into the perspectives of service users and stakeholders, including members of our Youth Panel, who shared their personal experiences and issues they felt

officers should consider when stopping and searching young people.

Other editions have focused on protecting vulnerable people and working with people with a mental health concern.

In November 2018, we launched a new panel bringing together a range of stakeholders to support us in developing new editions of the magazine. We have representatives from policing, the community and voluntary sector and academia who help by reviewing and commenting on the content.

The way the magazines are used is impacting on policing on the ground. One issue included a case study where a person involved in a road traffic incident had been thrown some distance from their vehicle. They remained undiscovered by the police officers initially dealing with the incident.

Prompted by the case in the magazine, an officer told us that when she attended a road accident having read about this incident,

she questioned the driver at the scene carefully and carried out a wider search of the area. Some distance away she discovered another person who had been in the vehicle and who needed medical assistance. She arranged for them to be taken to hospital.

Feedback on the magazine*

98% of respondents said the magazine provided useful knowledge to supplement information they receive from training, briefings or practical experience.

78% said they intend to share the issue with colleagues to help share the learning it contains.

67% said they will think differently about how they communicate with people where concerns about their mental health have been identified.

61% said they will consider making changes to any policy, guidance or training they are responsible for to reflect any learning from the issue.

“[Learning the Lessons magazine]... made me think deeper at the scene of the road traffic accident and resulted in a third male being found. I’m not sure what would have happened if we hadn’t found him. He certainly wouldn’t have been found for a very long time.”

Jackie, Police Officer

*Mental health edition, 65 respondents

Influencing the bigger picture

Contributing to inquiries and consultations helps us to share and maximise the learning from our work.

This can help inform and influence changes not only to policing, but across the criminal justice system and other sectors.

We used our experience and the learning from our work to help inform:

- The Macpherson Report: Twenty Years On parliamentary inquiry
- Home Office consultations on police pursuits, stop and search, and use of counter terrorism legislation
- Ministry of Justice consultations on legal representation for families at inquests, establishing an Independent Public Advocate and responding to domestic abuse

- policing inspection programmes
- the Commission on Justice in Wales call for evidence on the working and future of the justice system in Wales
- the Law Commission's consultation on search warrants
- the CoP's consultation on police procedures following deaths and serious injuries

What we said in our submissions

The IOPC believes that it is not enough for the exercise of stop and search powers to simply be within the law. When they are used by the police to search a person or vehicle, they should be used in a way that is demonstrably fair and effective... Police must be transparent and accountable when using their stop and search powers. Transparency is crucial to public trust and confidence because it enables people to see how and why stop and search powers are used and, therefore, to assess what impact they might have had.

Our response to a Government consultation regarding stop and search

Any change to legislation must not have the unintended consequence of reducing public safety or undermine the ability to hold the police to account effectively... We believe that the expert training and experience of police drivers undertaking pursuits or responding to emergencies should be taken into account.

Our response to a Government consultation on the law, guidance and training governing police pursuits

We support the availability of non-means tested legal aid as it would guarantee that families are supported from the outset and reduce the burden of what many see as a lengthy and challenging application process. We also support more generally free legal representation for families where there has been a death following police contact to allow them to participate meaningfully in the inquest process.

Our response to a Government review of legal aid for inquests.

Raising awareness so victims get the right help

In early 2019, we developed our first campaign to share learning and raise public awareness of a key issue identified through our work.

During our investigation into police contact with Kerry Power before she was murdered by her former partner, we found that Kerry had believed that if she made a 999 call and could not speak or make a noise, police would still send assistance. Sadly, her call was terminated and was not put through to the police control room. Kerry was unaware of the Silent Solution system – an automated message that prompts mobile callers who are in danger and unable to speak to press 55 when prompted. This lets the police know the call is a genuine emergency. The system is well-established in the UK, but is only effective if the public know and understand how it works.

We felt this highlighted an important issue and developed a national campaign to raise awareness of the Silent Solution system.

The campaign was supported by a range of stakeholders, which helped us reach over 16 million people through on and offline media. We provided police forces with materials and 39 out of 43 forces supported the campaign using these. Over 6,000 copies of our campaign poster were downloaded over an eight-week period.

Our thanks go to Kerry Power's family for allowing us to share her story again in order to increase awareness of this potentially life-saving information. We would also like to thank Women's Aid and the NPCC for their input and expertise in this subject area, and for assistance with fact-checking and sharing our materials.

“...my team have already started planning for Stalking Awareness Week and had already incorporated the ‘Make Yourself Heard’ messaging into the media campaign. Support for the campaign will be provided on the South Wales Police Twitter and Facebook pages, and also on my Commissioner Twitter and Facebook page. As this is being linked with Stalking Awareness Week there will also be internal awareness raising for officers and staff so that they are better able to inform the communities that they serve.”

**Rt Hon Alun Michael, JP OSTJ FRSA
Police and Crime Commissioner
for South Wales**

Some examples of our Silent Solution campaign

What to do if you need urgent police help through the 999 service, but can't speak



OPC Independent Office for Police Conduct

If you're in an emergency situation and need police help, but can't speak, Make Yourself Heard and let the 999 operator know your call is genuine.

WHEN YOU CALL 999

All 999 calls are directed to call centres and will be answered by BT operators. They will ask which service you need. If no service is requested but anything suspicious is heard throughout the process, BT operators will connect you to a police call handler.

IF YOU CALL 999 FROM A MOBILE

It is always best to speak to the operator if you can, even by whispering. You may also be asked to cough or tap the keys on your phone in response to questions.

If making a sound would put you or someone else in danger and the BT operator cannot decide whether an emergency service is needed, your call will be transferred to the Silent Solution system.

The Silent Solution is a police system used to filter out large numbers of accidental or hoax 999 calls. It also exists to help people who are unable to speak, but who genuinely need police assistance. You will hear an automated police message, which lasts for 20

seconds and begins with 'you are through to the police'. It will ask you to press 55 to be put through to police call management. The BT operator will remain on the line and listen. If you press 55, they will be notified and transfer the call to the police. If you don't press 55, the call will be terminated. Pressing 55 does not allow police to track your location.

WHAT THEN?

When transferred to your local police force, the police call handler will attempt to communicate with you by asking simple yes or no questions. If you are not able to speak, listen carefully to the questions and instructions from the call handler so they can assess your call and arrange help if needed.

IF YOU CALL 999 FROM A LANDLINE

Because it's less likely that 999 calls are made by accident from landlines, the Silent Solution system is not used.

If, when an emergency call on a landline is received:
- there is no request for an emergency
- the caller does not answer questions
- only background noise can be heard and BT operators cannot decide whether an emergency service is needed, then you will be connected to a police call handler as doubt exists.

If you replace the handset, the landline may remain connected for 45 seconds in case you pick it up again.

If you pick up again during this 45 seconds and the BT operator is concerned for your safety, the call will be connected to police.

When 999 calls are made from landlines, information about where you're calling from should be automatically available to the call handlers to help provide a response.

#MakeYourselfHeard
#SilentSolution

www.policeconduct.gov.uk



women's aid
until women & children are safe

Make Yourself Heard

In danger, need the police, but can't speak?

- 1 Dial 999
- 2 Listen to the questions from the 999 operator
- 3 Respond by coughing or tapping the handset if you can
- 4 If prompted, **press 55** this lets the 999 call operator know it's a genuine emergency and you'll be put through to the police



Led by

OPC Independent Office for Police Conduct

Supported by

women's aid
until women & children are safe



Wales Stakeholder Forum

Tackling domestic abuse was the first theme of the new-look Wales Stakeholder Forum, which we hosted in May 2018.

All four Welsh police forces were represented, together with non-governmental organisations, sharing experiences and best practice in policing across Wales.

The Forum will meet twice a year and intends to discuss policing challenges surrounding mental health and young people over the coming year.

Subject Matter Networks

To better draw together what we learn from our work, we have developed internal Subject Matter Networks. We want to make sure that we take every opportunity to identify learning, maximise its impact and promote improvement.

Our Subject Matter Networks focus on the following areas:

- domestic abuse
- deaths in custody
- discrimination
- mental health

- roads policing
- use of force, Taser and less lethal options
- abuse of position for sexual purpose

We are hosting roundtable events with people and groups who have particular experience or insight in some of these areas to further develop our understanding of the issues. The views we have heard at these events have already changed the focus and approach of some of our work.

Looking ahead

This report provides examples of how we use the learning from our work to influence changes in policing, ensure accountability and support best practice. While we know that we can and do make a positive difference, we recognise that there is still much more to do. Our plans are ambitious, but we are determined to bring about further improvements in our own work and across the wider complaints system.

Central to this will be our continued focus on listening to those who come into contact with the system, and to those who can provide additional insight that helps us to achieve our mission.



Welcome to the IO

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:

www.policeconduct.gov.uk

Follow us on **Twitter**: @policeconduct

Email us at: enquiries@policeconduct.gov.uk

Call us on: **0300 020 0096**

Text relay: **18001 0207 166 3000**

Write to us at:

IOPC
10 South Colonnade
Canary Wharf
London
E14 4PU

We welcome telephone calls in Welsh
Rydym yn croesawu galwadau ôn yn y Gymraeg

This document is also available in Welsh
Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn y Gymraeg hefyd