

# OVERSIGHT

## newsletter

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

### Welsh language standards

The IOPC's work to comply with the Welsh Language Standards is set out in [an English report](#) and a [Welsh report](#) on our website. As part of our ongoing work, we are keen to understand the level of demand there may be for Welsh versions of the Oversight team's work and publications (such as this newsletter). **Could you please tell us of your preference for publications or activities in Welsh by emailing the Oversight team at [oversight@policeconduct.gov.uk](mailto:oversight@policeconduct.gov.uk).**

Gauging your interest in receiving the Oversight team's work in Welsh, or if it is likely that the Wales region would like translation services at future events such as the Oversight workshops, is helpful for planning purposes. When we do hold events, we will continue to check in advance whether they should be delivered in both Welsh and English. Understanding your preferences now, is helpful when we start developing, scheduling, and budgeting for future work.

### Right first time

As explained in our November 2023 newsletter, we will soon host a series of online 'right first time' workshops starting in February 2024. Invitations have been shared with Heads of PSD and LPBs for cascading with their teams.

Thank you to those who provided feedback and suggestions on the draft guidance and toolkit, which we sent to you in December. We hope our work will assist forces to resolve complaints at the first attempt, by concentrating on engagement with service users and managing expectations. Alongside the guidance and toolkit, we asked for feedback on what else we can provide to help complaint handlers and investigators deal with complaints. Please let us know if you have any further suggestions.

We look forward to seeing you at the workshops. If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact the Oversight team at [oversight@policeconduct.gov.uk](mailto:oversight@policeconduct.gov.uk).

### Invitations to online workshops

As many of our workshops are hosted online via MS Teams, we would like to remind you not to forward your Outlook invitation to colleagues. This allows us to monitor attendance, ensure content is appropriate for the audience, and provide invited attendees with a safe space and an open forum for discussion. It also allows us to manage numbers and prepare for breakout room discussions (when needed). If you are no longer able to attend a workshop and would like to

recommend a colleague to attend in your place, or if you want additional places, please contact us at [oversight@policeconduct.gov.uk](mailto:oversight@policeconduct.gov.uk). We will do our best to accommodate your requests.

## Common questions from forces and local policing bodies

**Q: An appropriate authority (AA) assesses that a public complaint is suitable for handling otherwise than by investigation (OTBI), but then finds that it requires a referral to the IOPC. If the mode of investigation decision is either local, directed or independent, does this mean that the case automatically has to be investigated, rather than handled OTBI, because the IOPC has directed an investigation?**

A: Yes. Where a complaint is referred, the IOPC must make a decision as to whether it must be investigated (Schedule 3, paragraph 5(1C)). If it must be investigated, then we can only decide if it needs to be independent, directed/managed or undertaken by the AA (Schedule 3, paragraph 15). If it is a local investigation, then the normal provisions and rights apply to it as an investigation undertaken by the AA (paragraph 16).

Where the IOPC determines that an investigation is not required, the matter will be referred back to the AA. They can then handle the matter in a way that is reasonable and proportionate.

## Corporate news

### **IOPC outcomes report found four in five misconduct cases were proven following IOPC investigations**

Almost 100 police officers and staff faced disciplinary or criminal proceedings as a result of an Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) investigation in 2022/23.

[Our latest Outcomes Report](#), shows how our work is helping hold police to account and drive up standards in policing. The data is taken from IOPC independent investigations, which include cases where someone dies or is seriously injured following contact with the police, serious conduct matters and public complaints.

It shows that in almost two thirds (196) of the 312 investigations completed last year, none of the officers and staff involved faced an investigation into their conduct but were treated as witnesses throughout.

Of the 232 individuals whose conduct was investigated last year, we found 108 (46 per cent) had a case to answer for misconduct or gross misconduct. Of the 121 who had no case to answer, further action was taken to help improve the performance of 54 (45 per cent).

But where we found a case to answer for potential breaches of police professional standards, the case was found proven at 80 per cent of the disciplinary proceedings held by police forces during this time (70 out of 87).

IOPC Director General Tom Whiting said: "Every day we see examples of police officers going above and beyond to keep people safe. But when things appear to go wrong – such as when

people die or are seriously injured – it is vital that all of the circumstances are thoroughly scrutinised.

“More often than not, the officers and staff involved are treated as witnesses throughout. But the value of independent investigation, to identify opportunities to improve policing and reassure the public that matters have been carefully examined, must not be underestimated.

“What this report also shows is that where police officers fail to uphold the high standards required of them, our independent scrutiny continues to help ensure those who are not fit to serve are identified and dealt with.

“At a time when reduced resources mean we have been refocusing our attention on a smaller number of cases where independent investigation will have most impact on maintaining public confidence in policing, it is pleasing that the proportion of cases found proven remains high.

“Despite the growing complexity of our investigations, the figures show we continue to ensure the right ones end up in front of disciplinary panels for them to reach a decision.”

## **Super-complaint on section 60 stop and search**

We conducted a joint super-complaint investigation on section 60 Stop and Search, together with HMICFRS (His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services) and the College of Policing. This super-complaint was raised by the Criminal Justice Alliance. Read the [super-complaint investigation report](#) and [media release](#).

## **Latest news**

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

[Former Staffordshire road safety partnership staff jailed for conspiring to delete speeding offences](#)

[Sussex officer in court for a road traffic incident resulting in death of a young man](#)

[Investigation underway after man dies in the custody of Northumbria Police](#)

[IOPC investigates complaints about South Wales Police from families of two teenagers who died](#)

[Investigation progresses into fatal police shooting involving Metropolitan Police officer in London](#)

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

