

# 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).

### Update on Focus – handling complaints involving race discrimination

We previously highlighted the work we are doing in the thematic area of race discrimination, including the special edition of *Focus*. This edition will provide practical guidance for complaint handlers on the handling of more challenging aspects of complaints involving race discrimination. It also includes examples of initiatives and new practices being adopted by forces and local policing bodies. The period of external consultation closed on the 5 September 2022 and we are considering the feedback received. Thank you to everyone that contributed to this process.

### Managing unacceptable service user contact policy

Our newly revised [Managing Unacceptable Service User Contact policy](#) sets out safeguarding rules for our staff when engaging with service users. It replaces our Managing Customer Contact policy. The guidance is for internal IOPC staff, but you may find it helpful when looking at your own policies around customer contact.

The policy outlines to IOPC staff and service users what unacceptable contact is and what to expect if a contact restriction is put in place, and how to dispute a restriction. The policy ensures consistency around how restrictions are implemented within IOPC.

By way of reminder, you can also find the [guidance on managing unacceptable or unreasonable complainant behaviour](#) on our website. This guidance provides complaint handlers with a fair and consistent approach to managing unacceptable or unreasonable behaviour by complainants, while making sure access to the police complaints system is maintained for all.

If you have any questions about our internal policy or the guidance please contact [Oversight@policeconduct.gov.uk](mailto:Oversight@policeconduct.gov.uk)

### Recent information

#### Backlog of reviews and investigation appeals

On 27 September 2022 we shared with Heads of Professional Standards an update on the IOPC backlog of reviews and investigation appeals. It explains the underlying reasons for the backlog and includes a turnaround plan which details the steps we are taking to reduce the number of cases, reduce waiting times and keep pace with rising demand. We reiterate that we understand

the impact of these delays on you and those involved, and we assure you that we are working hard on the turnaround plan to improve the situation.

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

## Future events and publications

### IOPC overview for new PSD starters

We are developing an overview of the IOPC for new starters into PSDs. The sessions will be held quarterly (remotely), last around 60-90 mins and will cover how the IOPC started, the work we do, complaints handling tips and a chance to ask us questions on any area of our work.

We will let you know when the dates of these sessions are confirmed. In the meantime, please email [Oversight@policeconduct.gov.uk](mailto:Oversight@policeconduct.gov.uk) if you have new starters you would like to add to the first session, and we will do our best to accommodate you.

### Focus – reflective practice

We are drafting a new issue of *Focus* on reflective practice in consultation with Home Office and College of Policing colleagues. It is designed to support and complement the [Home Office Guidance](#), offering additional guidance on the practical and cultural implementation of reflective practice. It also addresses some of the common questions and issues forces told us about during our professional discussions. The *Focus* is due to be published at the end of November 2022.

## ? Common questions from forces and LPBs

**Q: I am handling a review and I am aware that the complaint handler has not recorded all of the allegations that are detailed within the complaint. Should I uphold the review on this basis?**

A: No, we cannot comment on or consider complaints that have not been recorded and dealt with as part of the complaint handling. Although we would expect that there was some initial contact with the complainant which should have clarified the allegations, the failure to record any parts of the complaint should be highlighted to the complaints handler, so they learn from this and decide how the missed complaints will be handled. You are only able to consider the recorded complaint and the outcome that was provided in response.

## Corporate news

### IOPC managed investigation finds missed opportunities in Becky Godden-Edwards murder inquiry and makes recommendations

Our [IOPC managed investigation](#) has found that Wiltshire Police missed significant opportunities to bring Christopher Halliwell to justice sooner for the murder of Becky Godden-Edwards.

The investigation found that between 2011-14 the murder inquiry was poorly progressed and supervised, reasonable lines of enquiry were not pursued, and key evidence was not forensically examined.

The IOPC has made recommendations to Wiltshire Police which are focussed on ensuring better strategic oversight and review of murder investigations and improved use of the major inquiry system HOLMES, in line with national guidelines. Those recommendations have already been acted on by the force.

You can read our [full media release](#), [learning report](#), and a [list of our learning recommendations](#) on our website.

## **Update on fatal police shooting of Chris Kaba**

Our investigators are working hard to collate and review a large amount of evidence as our homicide investigation progresses into the fatal shooting in Lambeth, south London of Chris Kaba. We are conducting a criminal investigation into this police officer in relation to Mr Kaba's death.

When a person dies in these circumstances, the law requires us to conduct a wide-ranging independent investigation. Therefore, we must explore all of the circumstances surrounding Mr Kaba's death including: how the officers came to be aware of the vehicle Mr Kaba was driving; if they had any prior knowledge of Mr Kaba; and their decision-making and actions on the day.

We will also examine whether or not Mr Kaba's race influenced any actions taken by the police.

IOPC Regional Director Sal Naseem says our focus is on progressing a thorough and effective investigation and our priority is to communicate with the family and update them as the investigation develops.

We continue to ask that people avoid speculating about this incident out of respect for Mr Kaba's family and for everyone else affected. You can check the [news section on our website](#) for updates.

## **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.

[West Yorkshire Police officer to appear in court charged with computer misuse offences](#)

[Former Kent Police community support officer to appear in court for misconduct for pursuit of an inappropriate relationship](#)

[Northumbria Police officer dismissed for abusing his position for a sexual purpose](#)

[IOPC appeals for witnesses as investigation continues following man's death in Kingston](#)

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

