



The IPCC and complaints against members of the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) staff



Making a complaint against a member of staff of the Serious Organised Crime Agency

IPCC stands for Independent Police Complaints Commission. Our job is to make sure that complaints against the police are dealt with effectively.

The government set up a new Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) in 2006 to combat organised crime.

As well as being responsible for complaints about the police, after SOCA's launch in April 2006 the IPCC will also be responsible for the way complaints against SOCA staff are handled.

What can I complain about?

If you think you have been treated badly by SOCA, it's easy to complain. You can complain about SOCA staff of any rank.

If a friend or relative has been treated badly by SOCA, you can complain if you are distressed as a result. You can also complain if you personally saw someone you didn't know being treated badly by SOCA.

The IPCC can only deal with complaints about the behaviour of SOCA staff. The IPCC has no powers to deal with complaints about overall SOCA policies. These complaints should be made directly to SOCA.

The IPCC only has authority for incidents occurring in England and Wales. Where an incident occurred in Scotland or Northern Ireland you should complain directly to SOCA and they will tell you what to do next.

Can anyone else complain for me?

Yes, they can. A friend, relative or member of a community group can make a complaint on your behalf as long as you agree in writing that you are happy for them to complain for you.

Who do I complain to?

You can complain directly to SOCA, or via the IPCC. You can contact the IPCC using the details below:

Address: Independent Police Complaints Commission, 90 High Holborn, London WC1V 6BH

Tel: 08453002002 (local rate)

Email: enquiries@ipcc.gsi.gov.uk

If you complain to the IPCC, we will ask your consent to pass the complaint on to SOCA for them to record it.

Who will deal with your complaint?

Most complaints will be dealt with by SOCA, so long as you agree to this. This is called "local resolution". It's the simplest and most flexible way of:

- telling SOCA what happened
- finding out why it happened
- allowing someone to say sorry, if appropriate
- making sure action is taken to stop the same thing happening to someone else in the future



More serious complaints may involve a more formal investigation by SOCA or may be referred to the IPCC who will decide how they should be handled.

The IPCC may oversee a SOCA or police investigation or, in the most serious cases, handle your complaint using our own independent investigators. This might be when someone dies or is badly injured while they are in contact with SOCA.

Why trust us?

We make our decisions independently of SOCA.

Appeals to the IPCC

If you are not happy with how your complaint is dealt with, you may be able to appeal to the IPCC if:

Your complaint was not 'recorded'. After you made your complaint, SOCA or the IPCC should have contacted you to tell you how your complaint would be dealt with. This means your complaint has been 'recorded'. You can appeal if your complaint was not recorded by SOCA, if they haven't decided whether or not to record it or if they haven't told you whether they will record it or not.

During Local Resolution, SOCA didn't handle your complaint in the way you agreed. At the start of a Local Resolution, SOCA will agree with you how your complaint will be dealt with. You can appeal if you don't think SOCA handled your complaint in the way you agreed.

If SOCA investigated your complaint and you are not happy with the amount of information you have received, the findings of the investigation or the action that SOCA intend to take as a result of the investigation.

Who works for the IPCC?

The IPCC is made up of Commissioners and professional staff. None of our 17 independent Commissioners has ever worked for SOCA or the police.

They come from many different backgrounds and include lawyers, health and education professionals, as well as people from voluntary, business and community organisations.

We also have teams of independent investigators, caseworkers and support staff.

Where are we based?

At four regional offices in England and Wales. Our national office is in London.

We are here to help

Remember – if you are unhappy about how you have been treated by a member of SOCA staff, it is your right to complain.

