

# Police Conduct and Complaints

Police officers patrolling

## Key information

Publication type: General

Publication date: Thursday 1 December 2022

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The Metropolitan Police has been rocked by a series of recent scandals including the murder of Sarah Everard, the strip-search of Child Q, and officers caught exchanging highly offensive messages.

In response to the recent turmoil, the **London Assembly Police and Crime Committee** launched an investigation into the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) and how police complaints are handled.

The Committee has published its findings in the report 'Police Conduct and Complaints'. It highlights areas where further attention is required to increase confidence in the complaints and conduct system.

- Statutory guidance does not allow for the swift removal of officers who have committed serious misconduct, including those convicted of crimes.
- There is a highly fraught relationship between Met officers and the IOPC. Accusations and disagreements between both parties risk further eroding trust in both the Met and the conduct and complaints system.
- The Met still does not know how to effectively respond to the increased prevalence of footage of policing incidents being shared on social media.
- Senior Met officers do not feel confident that they can comment publicly on policing incidents subject to ongoing investigation by the IOPC.

The Committee makes eight recommendations in several key areas:

### Recommendation 1

In order to decrease the number of cases being unnecessarily taken forward, the Home Office should review the threshold at which police conduct matters are brought to a disciplinary panel.

### Recommendation 2

The Mayor should work with the IOPC, the Met and the Metropolitan Police Federation to lobby the Home Secretary to review statutory guidance to allow for the immediate removal of police officers who are proven

unfit for the role, including those who have been convicted of criminal offences.

### **Recommendation 3**

For the IOPC to fulfil its role as the custodian of police complaints data for London and nationally, it should establish a consistent policy on data, informed by the principles set out in the Code of Practice for Statistics, which seeks to:

- ensure that all statistical reports are accompanied with associated data tables
- make raw data on police complaints and conduct publicly available at force-level, where appropriate
- ensure the IOPC website is regularly maintained so that statistical bulletins are easily accessible and clearly labelled, and links to external webpages work
- clearly communicate when each statistical bulletin is published and when the next in that series is expected to be published.<sup>4</sup>

### **Recommendation 4**

Upon publication of annual police complaints statistics, the IOPC should brief the Committee on key data relevant to the Met and how the Met's performance compares to most similar forces.

### **Recommendation 5**

The Met should develop a new communications strategy to enable it to respond more proactively to members of the public recording and uploading video footage of police incidents online. The strategy should set out clear guidance to Met communications staff on how they can swiftly publish contextual information online to ensure the public are aware of the full context of incidents.

### **Recommendation 6**

The IOPC should, jointly with the NPCC, seek feedback from individual forces, including the Met, to inform a review of its protocol for media relations, to provide officers with greater confidence when commenting publicly on incidents subject to live investigations, including when attending official scrutiny meetings of elected representatives.

### **Recommendation 7**

The Mayor should work with the IOPC, the Met and the Metropolitan Police Federation to lobby the Home Secretary to request that the IOPC is provided with a long-term uplift in resources to boost its capacity in line with the increase in police numbers.

### **Recommendation 8**

By the end of 2022, MOPAC and the IOPC should establish and publish details of a formal joint mechanism for tracking the implementation of the IOPC's learning recommendations made to the Met.

[Read the Police Conduct and Complaints Report](#)

[Read the Mayor's Response](#)