



Professional Standards & the IPCC

Federation spokesperson: *"Police officers are granted extraordinary powers and a wide discretion with which to exercise those powers. Public confidence in the police depends on police officers demonstrating the highest level of professional standards and integrity with the police service being fully accountable for its actions"*

- For many years the Police Federation of England and Wales called upon the government to introduce an independent system for investigating all complaints made against police officers by members of the public. In 2004 the government launched the IPCC.
- We want the IPCC to succeed, however they must, above all ensure that police officers have confidence in the system and this will only stem from a system that is proportionate, equitable, thorough and timely.

Police Federation of England and Wales thoughts on the IPCC:

- There has been a rising tide of concern about the impartiality of investigations
- A number of investigations including the Harry Stanley and Christopher Alder cases have taken an alarming amount of time to be conducted causing undue stress to not only the officers involved, but the families of the victims.
- The Police Federation will continue to challenge the IPCC at every opportunity when injustice and unfairness to police officers has taken place and we will continue to monitor their performance.

Background

The Police Reform Act 2002 led to the creation in April 2004 of a new body called the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC). Whilst this only partly met our aim we were supportive of a move towards a fully independent system.

During their first year in existence the IPCC conducted 31 independent investigations (including 3 fatal police shootings), 126 managed investigations and supervised a further 598 investigations. The Police Federation has raised concerns that the IPCC should make sure press coverage of its investigations is more balanced as negative reporting makes officers feel vulnerable and does nothing to improve police officer confidence in the independence of the IPCC.

We have called upon the IPCC to deal with all matters proportionately, particularly in police shooting incidents and this has been agreed by the IPCC. This is a matter that the Police Federation will monitor vigorously. The capability and integrity of the IPCC to deal with a major enquiry in a professional and independent manner was called into question with the disclosure of confidential and highly sensitive material relating to the shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes at Stockwell tube station in July 2005. The Police Federation, amongst others, called for and were granted an independent inquiry into all the circumstances surrounding the disclosure.

The IPCC launched their Statutory Guidance on 1 December 2005 and also produced a leaflet on Local Resolution for distribution to complainants. The Police Federation have strongly challenged this leaflet that states minor incidents that result in physical contact should not be suitable for local resolution. The IPCC have subsequently acknowledged that incidents resulting out of physical contact (eg. handcuffing) are, in fact suitable for local resolution. This again gives the initial perception to police officers that the IPCC are complainant driven rather than being an independent body.