

Corruption in the Police report addresses how to improve public confidence in system

The Home Secretary has today laid the second part of the Independent Police Complaints Commission's (IPCC) report on corruption in the police service before Parliament.

The report was requested by the Home Secretary in July 2011 amid concerns about the relationship between the police and media. It concludes that, while police corruption is not endemic, 'it is corrosive of the public trust that is at the heart of policing.'

A number of serious cases which have been investigated under the direction and control of the IPCC, such as perverting the course of justice, abuse of authority, misuse of systems, unauthorised disclosure and theft/fraud are illustrated in the report.

IPCC Chair, Dame Anne Owers, said:

"There are strong links between public trust and perceptions of police corruption. A serious focus on tackling police corruption is important, not just because it unearths unethical police behaviour, but because of the role it plays in wider public trust, views of police legitimacy and, on a practical level, cooperation and compliance with the police.

"This report illustrates the kind of behaviour that undermines public confidence in the police such as abuse of authority, perverting the course of justice and accepting generous hospitality. The IPCC has identified where change is needed and we have set out some clear recommendations."

IPCC recommendations to improve public confidence include:

- The requirement for Chief Constables to ensure greater consistency in the recording and referral of corruption cases to the IPCC. An IPCC analysis showed variations across police forces, both in the rate of recorded corruption-related complaints and in the rate of serious allegations referred to the IPCC.
- The need for clearer public information on what constitutes police corruption. Focus group research illustrates the lines between corruption, misconduct and poor judgement can be fine ones. This reinforces the need for a clear definition, understood by both the public and the police.
- The need for a more effective national system for handling allegations against very senior officers. The IPCC will work with the HMIC, the NCA and the CPS to establish a more formalised and robust system for escalating such complaints.

The report also highlights that:

- The public expects serious corruption to be investigated by an organisation independent of the police, and there needs to be consideration of whether the IPCC can be resourced to carry out more investigations and exercise greater oversight in this area
- Additional powers are necessary to enable the IPCC to conduct the most effective corruption-related investigations - such as powers to investigate contracted out private sector employees, to gain access to data held by third parties and the power to require the police and other responsible bodies to respond formally to IPCC recommendations.

-ENDS-

For media enquiries, please contact the IPCC Press Office on 0207 166 3082

*This describes the type of behaviour being complained about. A single complaint case can have one or many allegations attached, for example, a person may allege that they were pushed by an officer and that the officer was rude to them. This would be recorded as two separate allegations forming one complaint case.