

# News story: Independent Office for Police Conduct launches today

The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) is the reformed police watchdog, previously known as the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC).

New leadership under a director general will mean speedier decision-making with a new board to ensure greater accountability to the public.

This is the latest step in the Home Office's reforms to strengthen the organisation and will lead to new powers.

The new single executive head will ensure clear lines of accountability and a streamlined decision-making process.

As well as these changes, the Policing and Crime Act 2017 includes further provisions which will increase the IOPC's powers, clarify its investigative processes and further safeguard its independence. The major reforms were announced by Prime Minister Theresa May during her time as Home Secretary and these powers will allow the IOPC to:

- initiate its own investigations without relying on a force to record and refer a particular case for investigation
- reopen cases it has closed where there are compelling reasons, such as new evidence
- increase the IOPC's independence from the police by abolishing 'managed' and 'supervised' investigations
- investigate all disciplinary investigations against chief officers
- present cases against officers in the police disciplinary process when the force disagrees with the IOPC's findings

Minister for Policing and the Fire Service Nick Hurd said:

We are absolutely determined to make the police complaints and discipline systems simpler and more transparent for the benefit of the public. We want confidence in policing to continue to grow and be underpinned by the vital role the reformed IOPC will play.

Under the leadership of Michael Lockwood and the newly appointed

board, it will provide powerful scrutiny for policing, with new powers to begin investigations when they are deemed appropriate and be decisive in concluding cases.

Director General of the Independent Office of Police Conduct Michael Lockwood said:

Public confidence in policing is best served by robust and independent oversight. People need to know that when things go wrong, or serious allegations are made about police officers, they will be thoroughly investigated by a truly independent body. That's the role of the IOPC; it's crucial work, and I'm proud to be a part of it.

The IOPC, like the IPCC before it, will continue to investigate the most serious and sensitive matters involving the police, including deaths and serious injuries as well as matters such as allegations of corruption. It will also oversee the complaints system in England and Wales and set the standards by which complaints should be handled by the police.

The Home Office is also pleased to announce the appointment of new board members Geoffrey Podger as senior independent director, and Manjit Gill, Catherine Jervis, Mary Lines, Andrew Harvey and Bill Matthews as non-executive directors. The non-executive directors will form the majority of the new board, and provide independent support and challenge to the director general as well as oversight of the overall running of the organisation.