

Our reference: 1008305

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2 April 2020

Dear Taryn Taylor

Thank you for your information request of the 12 March 2020.

Your request was as follows:

“...do the IOPC take cover ups seriously. And can I have a copy of the police guidelines that relate to harassment”

Although you framed this as a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), it appears to be a general question about our work as well as a request for information held by the police rather than the IOPC.

The FOIA is intended to provide a right of access to recorded information held by a public authority rather than to be a channel to ask questions generally or seek information about a public authority's stance on a particular matter.

It is difficult to understand what recorded information you may have anticipated in response to your first question *“...do the IOPC take cover ups seriously.”* As such we have provided you with some information to assist you in understanding more about the IOPC's ways of working and investigations rather than a formal FOIA response.

We have interpreted this question to concern how the IOPC is involved in cases involving police corruption and seeking confirmation as to whether the IOPC independently investigates such matters.

Corruption is defined as dishonest or fraudulent conduct by a person in power. If a police officer abuses their position of power, whereby their responsibilities and duties have been breached in order to make a gain for themselves or another person, and does so dishonestly and without integrity, then the officer has acted corruptly. This behaviour would include the attempt to cover up wrongdoing. The conduct does not have to be considered to be an arrestable offence to constitute an act of corruption.

The IOPC may be involved in investigating cases involving corruption where the threshold of the mandatory referral criteria has been met. Police forces must refer allegations of serious corruption to us to allow us to assess whether it is appropriate

for us to carry out an investigation. Information about the IOPC's stance on corruption and abuse of power can be found on our [website](#). Further details about the mandatory referral process can be found in our [Statutory Guidance](#).

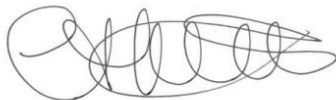
If we decide that an independent investigation is required, we have an Anti – Corruption Unit whose core purpose is to provide oversight into sensitive and covert investigations where an expertise in that field is required.

Further information regarding IOPC investigations is also available on our [website](#). We trust this information reassures the public that serious and sensitive complaints about the conduct of police officers, including allegations of corruption, are thoroughly and fairly investigated.

Turning to the second part of your request, as we are independent from the police, we do not tend to hold police guidance documents and these are better obtained directly from the police. However you may find the following [guidance on stalking and harassment](#) issued by the College of Policing helpful, this is available via their website. You may also wish to approach your local police force to obtain their guidance on harassment.

If you have any questions about this request please contact us. Please remember to quote reference number 1008305 in any future correspondence about this matter.

Yours sincerely



Gemma Thomas
Data Protection Officer
Independent Office for Police Conduct