

Our Reference No: FOI/1003287
Your Reference No:

Mr Tony Wise
By email:
Request-126901-ad0a8cfc@whatdotheyknow.com

1 October 2012

Dear Mr Wise

IPCC Contact:
Alison Davies
S&Q Support Officer
alison.davies@ipcc.gsi.gov.uk

Re: Your Request for Information

Thank you for your email received in this office on 24 August 2012 regarding your request for information.

I would like to apologise for the delay in responding to your request. I can confirm that I am now in a position to formally respond to you.

I note that you have requested the below details:

1. *How many corruption allegations have been made against ACPO rank officers in 2010, 2011 and 2012 that have not been independently investigated by the IPCC? Please provide reasons if they weren't. I don't want any personal data.*

Response

There were 3 cases in 2010, 10 cases in 2011 and 10 cases in 2012. (One of the cases in 2010 was redetermined to Independent). Each referral was assessed on its own merits and these were deemed appropriate for managed, supervised or local investigation.

2. *Please provide the forces involved at 2. I don't want any personal data.*

Response

The Forces involved were North Yorkshire, Dyfed Powys, Metropolitan, Cleveland, Northamptonshire, Staffordshire, West Midlands, Wiltshire, British Transport, Leicestershire and South Wales

3. *Please supply the full criteria adopted by the IPCC as to how corruption allegations re: ACPO rank officers are assessed for independent investigation.*

Response

Paragraph 240 at Page 7 of the IPCC Statutory Guidance refers to Independent Investigations. 'IPCC staff conduct independent investigations into incidents that cause the greatest level of public concern, have the greatest potential to impact on communities or have serious implications for the reputation of the police service'. Whilst each referral is assessed on its own merits, it is likely that an allegation of

corruption involving a Chief Officer will meet the criteria for an Independent Investigation.

For a trial period only, the Commission agreed that all cases involving senior police officers should be reported to the Deputy Chair and that, depending on the rank, the nature of the issue and any other issues that might go to perceived bias, the Deputy Chair would agree with the relevant Commissioner whether the case should be dealt with by the Force Commissioner or elsewhere. Such cases should also be double-handed.

4. *Re 3: or does the IPCC always investigate corruption allegations against ACPO officers in concord with the undertakings and promises made to Parliament and the public as outlined above.*

Response

The response to this question is outlined in Response 3.

5. *Does the IPCC take seriously promises and undertakings made to Parliament and the public as a whole?*

Response

The IPCC's primary statutory function is to secure and maintain public confidence in the police complaints system in England and Wales. Information about our work towards achieving this is already in the public domain and is contained within our annual reports to Parliament which have been produced each financial year since the IPCC's inception. These are available on our website.

6. *In summary what are the IPCC's findings from public surveys and focus groups re: corruption allegations against ACPO rank officers?*

Response

The IPCC's reports (parts one and two) do not contain any breakdown on allegations of corruption by ACPO rank. Instead, Chapter 2 of the part two report *Corruption in the Police Service in England and Wales: a report based on the IPCC's experience from 2008 to 2011*, focuses on survey questions and focus groups responses from the general public. There is a section in the report in chapter five which looks at the outcome of corruption cases investigated by the IPCC. Here a number of case studies are discussed and reference is made to the seniority of officers who had been involved in corruption (see below***).

Neither of the two studies a) the public survey; or b) the focus groups, asked the public any questions relating specifically to ACPO rank officers. However both did explore public perceptions and whether they were able to distinguish between less serious and more serious forms of corruption based on a range of different scenarios. Any findings which relate to senior officers have been highlighted and appear below in the bullet points.

Details of research studies

The survey questions about police corruption were placed in a face-to-face omnibus survey and put to a representative sample of 1777 adults across England and Wales.

The qualitative research involved six focus groups and nine in-depth interviews being conducted.

Public views on police corruption: A qualitative research study (the following points were taken directly from the qualitative research report i.e. focus groups).

- *Most expressed the opinion that **serious corruption would be found 'at the***

top' and among more senior officers, rather than the 'bobby on the beat' as there was an assumption that a degree of power is necessary for more serious corruption to occur' (page 9)

- In response to a question asking what they thought corruption is, an in-depth interview said *things like bribery, evidence going missing, cover ups, senior officers turning a blind eye – that sort of thing ...*' (page 11)
- In relation to levels of seriousness *'six scenarios were picked out to demonstrate how the general public perceive seriousness' – 'the seniority of the individual involved; the more senior, the more serious the public considered the act to be'* (page 21-22)
- In relation to question on factors that impact on approach for how corruption is best managed, a summary stated that *'in making a decision about the ideal management approach, respondents identified a range of factors that could affect the decision. In many ways these shared much in common with the factors they identified as being important in weighing up the seriousness of the corruption and misconduct. A range of key factors to consider included – the seniority of the officer and their position within the force'* (page 24).
- Therefore, falsifying figures could vary in seriousness – **the degree of seniority in order to falsify these pointed to a more external approach**, however as not all viewed this as serious, for others internal management felt more appropriate (page 25).

*** *Corruption in the Police Service in England and Wales: a report based on the IPCC's experience from 2008 to 2011* – (the following is an extract from chapter five on the outcomes of independent investigations in part two of the corruption report). The below is in reference to organisational vulnerabilities relating to management and leadership.

- Management and Leadership was 'an additional theme to emerge from the IPCC's cases concerning the actions of ACPO rank officers, a number of which feature in the case studies in the report. They specifically raise questions about whether these **senior officers saw themselves as being 'above the rules'** that they expected their junior officers and staff to follow' (page 43).

7. *Does the IPCC always operate in the public interest? Please produce any policy, procedure or promise that confirms that the IPCC always and is required to work in the public interest.*

Response

The IPCC's primary statutory function is to secure and maintain public confidence in the police complaints system in England and Wales. Information about our work towards achieving this is already in the public domain and is contained within our annual reports to Parliament which have been produced each financial year since the IPCC's inception. These are available on our website.

If you are not satisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review by our FOI appeals officer, who has had no involvement in dealing with your request. If you wish to complain about any aspect of this decision, please contact:

Amanda Kelly
Director of Business Services
Independent Police Complaints Commission

90 High Holborn
London WC1V 6BH

All emails requesting a review should be sent **directly** to: amanda.kelly@ipcc.gsi.gov.uk

Should you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you will have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner; however, I should point out that under section 50(2)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act, you are normally obliged to exhaust the IPCC's own internal complaint mechanism before complaining to the Information Commissioner.

Yours sincerely

Alison Davies
S&Q Support Officer
On behalf of the Independent Police Complaints Commission