

Tables of forces that 'drag heels' when investigating officers will be published

The Independent Police Complaints Commission has announced it is to publicise a run down on how well or how badly forces perform when carrying out investigations of police officers.

Rod Dalley, then vice-chairman of the Federation, said one of the concerns of officers is the length of time investigations have been taking.

He told Nick Hardwick, chairman of the IPCC, that professional standards departments in forces are still 'dragging their heels' when it comes to investigating police officers.

Mr Dalley added that Federation members were still not being told what was happening when they are under investigation.

Mr Hardwick said that the timing of the cases investigated by forces were a matter for them locally.

But he said that they are now in the process of calculating data on the performances of forces and how timely they are in their investigations and are planning to publicise the results.

The Police Federation wants:

- It was agreed to seek to work with the IPCC to ensure that they adopt proper impact assessments prior to trawling for witnesses
- It was agreed that the Federation will continue to monitor and challenge inappropriate press releases and ask to be kept fully apprised of local difficulties.
- It was agreed that the Federation will take an active role in future misconduct arrangements dialogue with a specific view to ensure our members will continue to have legal representation at hearings when their livelihood is at risk. We will vigorously pursue that unsatisfactory performance procedures are robustly managed.

First year of IPCC is promising but there is room for improvement, according to federation

The IPCC should make sure press coverage of its investigations is more balanced, says the Federation lead on discipline.

Bob Kitchen, chairman of the Federation's discipline sub-committee, said the Independent Police Complaints Commission had made a promising start over the last year but 'it could do better'.

He told Nick Hardwick, chairman of the organisation, that if he were giving the IPCC a performance development review he would have a few points to make.

Mr Kitchen said that press releases sent out to the wider media should be more balanced because they have an impact on police officers' morale.

'Whilst we accept you have

to investigate cases,' he said, Mr Kitchen added that negative reporting makes officers feel vulnerable.

He asked Nick Hardwick, chairman of the IPCC, for investigators to start with an open mind and 'not to fall into the trap that the complainant is always right'.

He also 'questioned the sanity' of keeping an officer on duty when he or she admits their guilt in a case and offers to resign, only to sack them some months or years later, wasting hundreds of thousands in tax payers' money.

He called for more meetings between the IPCC and discipline liaison officers and said that officers fear that promises to speed up investigations are not working.

Mr Kitchen that said that

most matters are still investigated by forces and officers fear that they are not carrying out timely investigations.

Mr Hardwick said that they would not say the IPCC have got everything right but that they have made substantial progress on the issues outlined.

He said they have worked to establish contact with the Federation at both a national and local level.

Although he did say they had been improving the speed of investigations, Mr Hardwick admitted the 'legacy cases' they had inherited from the Police Complaints Authority, its precursor, had created some delays.

But, he added: 'We have made a real difference to some of the new cases we have taken on.'

Warm reception as complaints chief says firearms officers should not be treated like criminals

Firearms officers should not be made to feel like criminals if they are involved in a shooting incident where they have followed their training guidelines, says Nick Hardwick, chairman of the IPCC.

Mr Hardwick spoke at the Federation's annual conference in Blackpool last month and was clapped as he told delegates that firearms officers should not be treated like criminals when under investigation.

He said that firearms officers have a unique responsibility and that they are accountable for how they operate that responsibility but he added that investigations should be appropriate and fair.

Mr Hardwick added that he realised officers were in a position where they sometimes had to make split second decisions.

'The starting point will be to investigate the incident and not assume any individual is to blame,' he said.



Nick Hardwick, chairman of the IPCC.

He added that firearms officers who carry out duties in accordance with training should not be made to feel like criminals.

He told delegates that a year ago a Met officer shot an armed

man and the IPCC investigated the case thoroughly within four months and no criminal charges or discipline were taken against the officer.