

City of London Police – Complaints 2021/22

Introduction

This is an annual report of complaints and allegations made about the City of London Police and its national Action Fraud reporting service in 2021/22. Legislation² requires local policing bodies to publish the most recent Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) quarterly complaints data for their force and the IOPC annual statistics report³, alongside a narrative setting out how it is holding the chief officer to account, and its assessment of its own performance in carrying out its complaints handling functions.

A glossary of terms used in relation to police complaints is at Annex A to this Report.

2021/22 complaints data – At a glance

The City of London Police received **588 complaints** in 2021/22, of which **137** were about the local force and **451** were about the Action Fraud service*. These complaints contained a total of **680 allegations****.

The average time to log a complaint was **3 days** and the average time taken to contact a complainant was **6 days**. On average it took **10 days** to finalise cases falling outside of Schedule 3***, and **54 days** to finalise Schedule 3 cases.

The commonest complaints – accounting for 531 (78%) of cases – were about deliveries of duties and service. Of the 9 cases reviewed by the local policing body, 8 were not upheld (meaning the policing body concluded the complaint had been handled appropriately) and 1 was upheld.

**The City of London Police operates the national Action Fraud reporting service, complaints about which are included in its totals in IOPC figures*

***Each complaint may contain one or more allegations*

****Some complaints can be resolved by early intervention. If this does not occur, it must be recorded and investigated in line with IOPC guidance, which is known as a 'Schedule 3' complaint.*

City of London Police complaints 2021/22

Chart 1 visualises the total volume of complaints, allegations, and number of complainants in 2021/22 and their split between the local City of London police service and national Action Fraud reporting service. It shows that the majority (c.70-80%) relate to the latter.

² See [here](#)

³ Available [here and relevant data attached as Annex B to this report](#)

Chart 1 – Total complaints – local service and Action Fraud

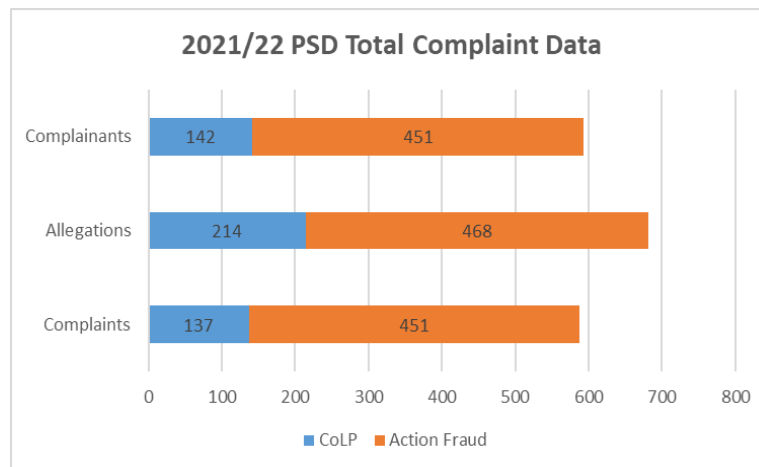


Chart 2 shows how many complaints against the local City of London police service were recorded under ‘Schedule 3’ in each quarter of 2021/22. ‘Schedule 3’ refers to complaints recorded and investigated in line with the Independent Office of Police Conduct’s statutory guidance. Some complaints may not require a detailed ‘Schedule 3’ enquiry to address, for example if someone wants explanation of an issue or to note a concern. In these cases, a complaint is logged as ‘outside Schedule 3’.

Chart 2 – Breakdown of Schedule 3 and non-Schedule 3 complaints (exc. Action Fraud)

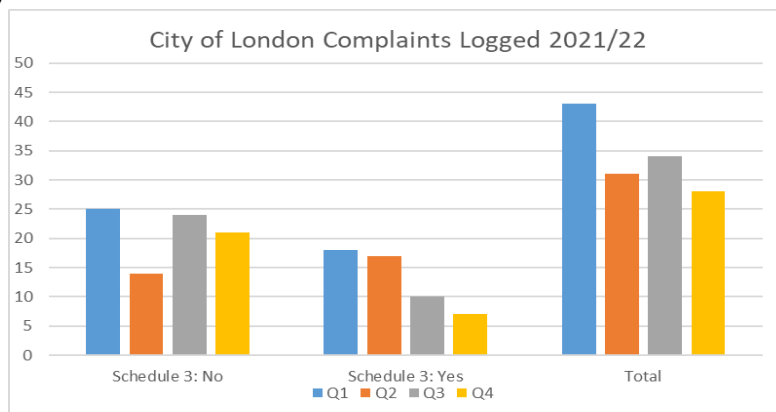


Chart 3 shows why complaints were recorded as ‘Schedule 3’ by the City of London police. IOPC guidance (see link for Chart 2) sets out that complaints must be logged under Schedule 3 if a) the nature of allegations meets certain criteria of seriousness, b) if the chief officer or local policing body decides it is appropriate to do so, c) the complainant requests it be logged as such. A complaint initially not logged under Schedule 3 may then be if initial handling does not resolve it to the complainant’s satisfaction.

Chart 3 – Reasons for recording complaints under Schedule 3 (inc. Action Fraud)

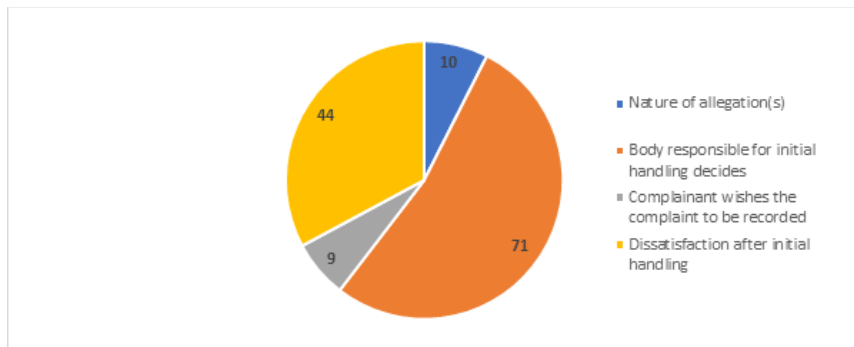


Chart 4 shows the breakdown of what types of allegations have been made against the City of London police. The following Table 2 shows the same information for additional clarity.

Chart 4 – Breakdown of allegations – what has been complained about (inc. Action Fraud)

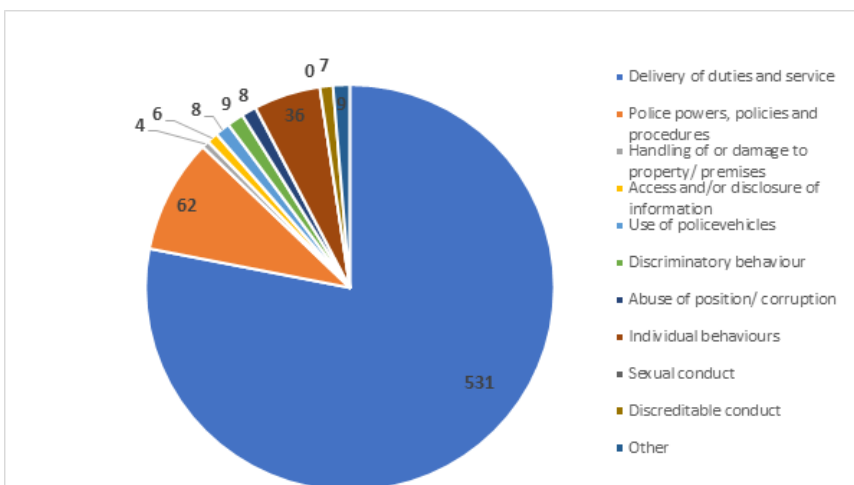
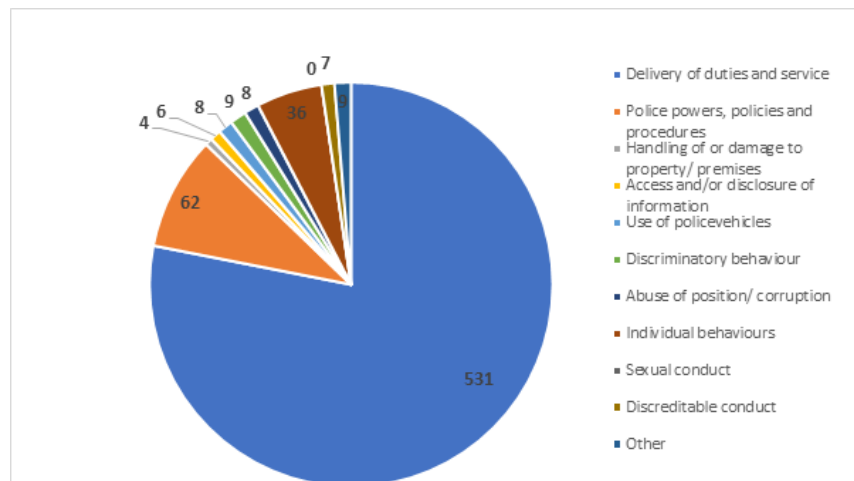
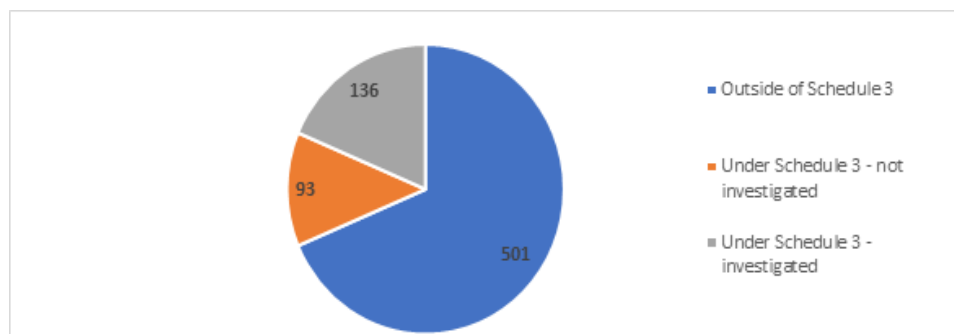


Table 2 – Breakdown of allegations – what has been complained about	
Category	Number of allegations
Delivery of duties and service	531
Police powers, policies, and procedures	62
Handling of or damage to properties / premises	4
Access and/or disclosure of information	6
Use of police vehicles	8
Discriminatory behaviour	9
Abuse of position / corruption	8
Individual behaviours	36
Sexual conduct	0
Discreditable conduct	7
Other	9
TOTAL	680

Chart 5 shows how allegations were finalised (i.e., concluded). As set out for Chart 2, some complaints and allegations are not recorded under ‘Schedule 3’. Not all complaints and allegations recorded as 'Schedule 3' must be investigated – for example if it is substantially the same as a complaint made previously. Chapter 10 [IOPC guidance](#) sets out when there is an is not a duty to investigate.

Chart 5 – Means by which allegations were finalised



Action Fraud complaints

The City of London Police is the National Lead Force for economic crime. As part of this role the City Police operate the Action Fraud service for reporting and recording fraud offences – since 2013 all reported offences are sent to Action Fraud.

This sub-section provides a brief breakdown of complaints about Action Fraud, using internal data. As set out in Table 1 and Chart 1 above, 70-80% of complaints and allegations received by the City of London Police are about Action Fraud.

Chart 6 shows the breakdown of ‘Schedule 3’ and ‘non-Schedule 3’ complaints about Action Fraud. Schedule 3’ refers to complaints recorded and investigated in line with the Independent Office of Police Conduct’s statutory guidance. Some

complaints may not require a detailed ‘Schedule 3’ enquiry to address, for example if someone wants explanation of an issue or to note a concern. In these cases, a complaint is logged as ‘outside Schedule 3’. See Chapter 6 of [IOPC guidance](#) for full detail.

Chart 6 - Breakdown of Schedule 3 and non-Schedule 3 complaints – Action Fraud (internal data)

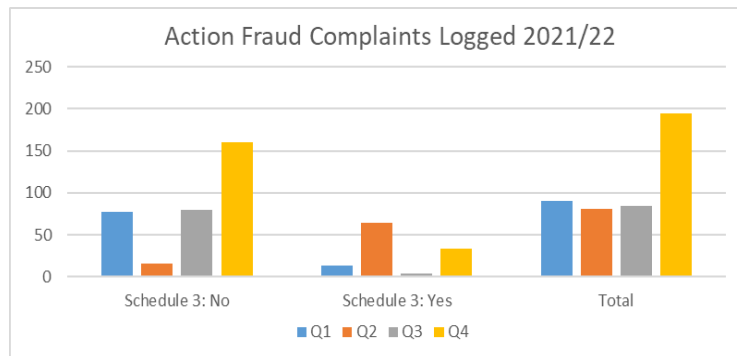
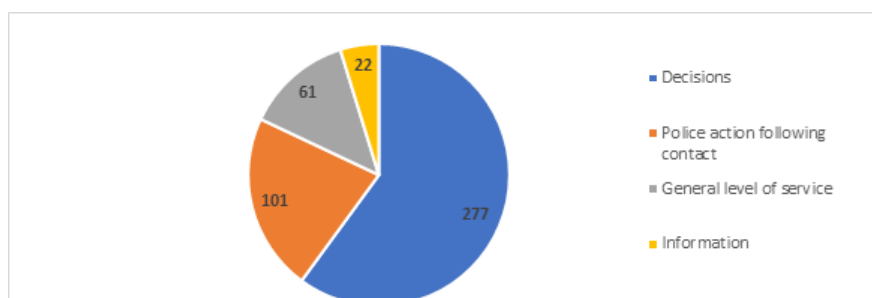


Chart 7 shows the breakdown of types of allegations received about Action Fraud.

While the majority of allegations are about a failure to investigate cases sent to Action Fraud (in ‘decisions’ category below), Action Fraud is solely a reporting service and does not have investigative responsibilities. Cases sent to Action Fraud are first assessed by the National Fraud Investigative Bureau and, where appropriate, are disseminated to local police forces to consider an investigation.

The City of London Police now, as standard, provides complainants with details of relevant partners and stakeholders that may be better placed to address their complaint and recovery of money lost, which has resulted in increasing number of cases being resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

Chart 7 - Breakdown of allegations recorded for Action Fraud (internal data)



Complaints regarding the delivery of the Action Fraud service are included with the City of London Police data by the IOPC. The City of London Police Authority’s Professional Standards and Integrity Committee (see below) has received separate reporting on the Action Fraud and City Police complaints data since September 2020. This has allowed a more focused approach to scrutinising the separate areas of complaints.

The detail of IOPC data on complaints and allegations against the City of London Police in 2021/22 is set out in Annex B to this report.

How the City of London Police Commissioner is held to account

The Professional Standards and Integrity (PSI) Committee of the City of London Police Authority has responsibility for providing detailed oversight of professional standards in the City of London Police, including scrutiny of the City Police's handling of complaints and conduct matters. It is chaired by an elected member of the City of London Corporation. Members of this Committee also meet to determine complaints reviews received by the Police Authority (see below).

Further details on the overall work of this Committee can be found here: [<https://democracy.cityoflondon.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=398>].

The outcome of the quarterly PSI Committee meetings is reported to the City of London Police Authority Board, which has the overall responsibility for holding the City of London Police Commissioner to account for running an effective and efficient police service.

During 2021/22, the PSI Committee received statistical updates on complaint cases and trends relating to (a) the nature of allegations in complaints, and (b) the means by which those allegations are resolved. The PSI Committee continues to perform a highly detailed scrutiny function to examine the casework of complaints logged by the City Police.

The PSI Committee has worked with the Director of the Professional Standards Directorate (PSD) of the City Police to ensure that the papers reviewed by Committee Members contain sufficient information to be able to assess whether an appropriate outcome was reached, while not unnecessarily revealing personal details of individuals involved or creating extra workload. In 2021/22, the Committee continued to look at matters of conduct; it received updates on all misconduct meetings and hearings which had been dealt with by the City Police.

The PSI Committee continues to support the City Police in ensuring themes identified in complaint or conduct cases are progressed as issues of organisational learning and embedded widely across the service.

Learning is central to the work of PSD. Complainants often express that they want the officer/organisation to acknowledge what went wrong and understand how the Force will ensure that similar issues will not happen again. The PSD Engagement Officer established excellent relationships throughout the Force during the period in question, sharing learning identified from PSD cases and matters of reputational importance. Reflective Practice has been immersed as a part of the learning culture the Police Regulations encourage.

The Organisational Learning Forum (OLF) in the City Police has an important role in terms of embedding learning in the Force. It is supported by tactical working groups focusing on custody, public order, stop and search and professional standards, to promote learning at a local level. The Professional Standards Directorate Working Group (PSDWG) is attended by the compliance officer from the City of London Corporation's Police Authority Team, representing the PSI Committee. They attended meetings of the PSDWG in 2021/22, engaged in refresher workshops

facilitated by the IOPC with other South East area Offices of Police and Crime Commissioners, and provided the Committee with a digest of highlighted areas/themes of learning at these meetings.

The Police Authority Board's assessment of its own performance in carrying out its complaint handling function

Since February 2020, local policing bodies have been responsible for making determinations on reviews of police complaints, which are appeals by the complainant where they feel the response they have received has not been handled in a reasonable or proportionate manner.

In the City of London, this responsibility is delegated to the Professional Standards and Integrity Committee of the Police Authority Board, whose members meet (in line with the established governance within the Corporation) to hold review panels to consider review applications received by the Police Authority.

The review panel consists of the Chair and two other members of the Professional Standards and Integrity Committee. The panel exists independently to review the handling of complaints and determine whether the complaint in question was dealt with reasonably and proportionately. It also considers any themes, trends and wider organisational learning which emerge from complaints.

The complaints review panel function is supported by the Compliance Lead within the Police Authority Team in the City of London Corporation, who handles the review process from start to finish. Their duties include the acknowledgement and assessment of review requests submitted to the Police Authority, administration of the review documentation, and drafting a report of recommendations to the review panel for each case, based on consideration of the relevant documentation.

All review requests submitted to the Police Authority are assessed against the criteria outlined in the IOPC statutory guidance for police complaints.

Reviews considered in 2021/22

Table 3 sets out the outcome of reviews completed by the local policing body for the City of London Police (i.e. the City of London Police Authority).

When a complaint has been recorded under 'Schedule 3' the complainant has the right to review the outcome of their complaint, and this is either done by the local policing body or the IOPC depending on a range of criteria, set out in Chapter 18 of the [IOPC guidance](#).

Reviews are not a reinvestigation of the merits of the original complaint – instead the relevant body will assess whether the police handled the complaint in a 'reasonable and proportionate' manner. If they conclude they did not, they may issue recommendations for how the police will improve their processes.

During 2021/22, the complaints review panel met on four occasions to consider nine cases.

Table 3 - Outcomes of reviews by Local Policing Body:		Upheld	Not Upheld
Reviews completed	9	1	8
Subject matter of cases			
Action Fraud	4	1	3
Police Powers, policies and procedures	5	0	5

One review was upheld by the Professional Standards and Integrity Review Panel during 2021/22, which determined that the City of London Police should provide a fuller explanation to the complainant of the matters being addressed.

There is no statutory timescale for reviews to be completed under the IOPC statutory guidance. There are several factors which may cause a delay in the completion of a review request. These can include the complexity of the case, and the necessity to make further enquiries with the force and/or the complainant, including reviewing police statements and Body Worn Video footage. Nevertheless, the Police Authority recognises the importance of completing reviews in as timely a manner as practicable.

In 2021/22, requests for reviews were acknowledged within 10 days of receipt. The average number of days taken for the review panel to make determinations on cases during this period was 197 days.

Themes

Three main themes emerged from complaint reviews submitted to the City of London Police Authority in 2021/22:

- i) *Perceptions of an inadequate service provided by the City of London Police* – this includes expressions of dissatisfaction from complainants across the initial handling of a complaint submitted (i.e., delayed engagement from the force to the complainant to discuss proportionate measures to resolve the matter reported).
- ii) *Greater acknowledgement of the emotional/financial impact of police decisions on complainants* – particularly across complaints that allege a disproportionate or unfair use of police powers, policies and procedures (i.e., police vehicle stops, use of force, stop and search, arrest and detention).
- iii) *Seeking appropriate reassurance that learning emerges from dissatisfaction and leads to fewer repeat incidents* – complainants have often cited a lack of acknowledgement from the force, on ‘what went wrong’ (across the handling of their complaint) as the main reason for submitting a complaint review.

These themes have been fed back directly to the Professional Standards Directorate Complaints Team, Professional Standards Directorate Engagement Officer and Working Group. Collectively, they have continued to work extensively

across the force, to address poor service as learning and have provided training to officers and staff on improvements that can be made via continuous professional learning and a non-disciplinary process called reflective practice. This process has enabled officers and line management opportunities to better understand complainants concerns and dissatisfaction, discuss matters that have gone wrong and identify key solutions to prevent future reoccurrences.

During the period in question, there was no system in place to assess a complainant's satisfaction with the review process. Complainants have been reminded about the Police Authority's remit in relation to the complaints system (i.e., to determine whether a reasonable and proportionate outcome was provided in respect to the handling of their complaint). And the Police Authority signposts complainants to alternative bodies outside the police complaints system that may be able to provide further impartial advice across a wide range of matters, such as the Citizens Advice Bureau and the Financial Conduct Authority. In addition, any dissatisfied complainant is advised on their legal right to seek judicial review via an application to the High Court. No such applications were made during 2021/22.

Reviews - conclusion

The Police Authority Board remains satisfied that the right approach is being taken in terms of forming review panels from its Professional Standards and Integrity Committee to undertake independent complaints reviews.

It is a requirement in the complaints regulations that those determining review outcomes have relevant training. To this end the Compliance Lead in the Police Authority Team will continue to engage in refresher workshops facilitated by the IOPC and SANCUS (a nationally recognised investigative skills training company), to ensure that consistency continues to be applied across rationales produced for review outcomes.

The Police Authority Board recognises that improvements are required to ensure that complaints reviews are completed in a timely manner. Doing so will help support the Police Authority with its ambitions to be an effective oversight body that supports the delivery of the City of London Policing Plan. Work is being undertaken to improve the timeliness of responses.

The Police Authority Team has been expanded since January 2023, including with the appointment of a new policy officer to lead on professional standards and integrity work. This additional capacity will improve the support given to the Professional Standards and Integrity Committee, including in terms of the efficiency of its complaints review responsibilities.

Annex A – Glossary of Terms

Annex B – IOPC data for 2021/22

Annex A: glossary of terms

Allegation: An allegation may concern the conduct of a person or persons serving with the police or the direction and control of a Police force. It is made by someone defined as a complainant under the Police Reform Act 2002 (see 'complainant' below). An allegation may be made by one or more complainants. A complaint case may contain one or many allegations. 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. An allegation is recorded against an allegation category.

Chief officer: 'Chief officer' is a collective term that refers to the heads of police forces (chief constables for all forces except the Metropolitan Police and City of London Police, which are each headed by a commissioner).

Complainants: Under the Police Reform Act 2002, a complaint may be made by:

- a member of the public was adversely affected by the matter complained about, or is acting on behalf of someone who was adversely affected by the matter complained about
- a member of the public who claims to be the person in relation to whom the conduct took place
 - claims to have been adversely affected by the conduct
 - claims to have witnessed the conduct, or
 - is acting on behalf of someone who satisfies one of the above three criteria
- a member of the public can be said to be a witness to the conduct if, and only if: they have acquired their knowledge of the conduct in a manner which would make them a competent witness capable of giving

admissible evidence of that conduct in criminal proceedings, or

- they possess or have in their control anything that could be used as admissible evidence in such proceedings

- a person acting on behalf of someone who falls within any of the three categories above. This person would be classed as an 'agent' or 'representative' and must have the written permission of the complainant to act on their behalf. A person is 'adversely affected' if they suffer distress or inconvenience, loss or damage, or are put in danger or at risk by the conduct complained of. This might apply, for example, to other people present at the incident, or to the parent of a child or young person, or a friend of the person directly affected. It does not include someone distressed by watching an incident on television.

One complaint case can have multiple complainants attached to it and one individual can make more than one complaint within the reporting year.

Subjects: Under the Police Reform Act 2002 (PRA 2002), complaints can be made about persons serving with the police as follows:

- Police officers of any rank
- Police staff, including community support officers and traffic wardens
- Special Constables

Complaints can also be made about contracted staff who are designated under section 39 of the PRA 2002 as a detention officer or escort officer by a chief officer.

Complaint recording

Complaint case: A single complaint case may have one or more allegations attached to it, made by one or more complainants, against one or more persons serving with the police.

Changes to the Police Complaint & Conduct regulations in 2020 placed a greater emphasis on handling complaints in a *reasonable and proportionate* way and in a more customer focused manner.

Reports of dissatisfaction are logged and assessed in line with Schedule 3 of the Police Reform Act 2002 and IOPC Statutory Guidance 2020 and this assessment can result in one of a number of outcomes;

Non-Schedule 3 or early service recovery. PSD will make early contact with the complainant to understand their concerns and their dissatisfaction and, where the nature of their dissatisfaction allows, will try to resolve it to their satisfaction. This avoids a more lengthy process of investigation and can provide a complainant with an early resolution, explanation or other satisfactory outcome. If at the end of this process, it cannot be resolved it may be dealt with as a formal complaint within Schedule 3.

Schedule 3 Recorded – IOPC Statutory Guidance stipulates where complaints must be recorded and those that must be investigated; these include the more serious matters. Complaints which do not require an investigation will be handled in a *reasonable and proportionate* manner to try to achieve an earlier resolution to the complainant's satisfaction, while others will be investigated formally. At the end of this process if the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint they have a right of review by either the Local Policing Body or the IOPC, depending on the seriousness of the allegation.

Referral to Independent Office for Police Conduct – some complaints may be referred to the IOPC and they may decide to independently investigate or oversee a police investigation. The IOPC also monitor our complaints system.

Investigations:

- Local investigations: Are carried out entirely by the police. Complainants have a right of appeal to the relevant appeal body following a local investigation.
- Supervised investigations: Are carried out by the police under their own direction and control. The IOPC sets out what the investigation should look at (which is referred to as the investigation's 'terms of reference') and will receive the investigation report when it is complete. Complainants have a right of appeal to the IOPC following a supervised investigation.

Investigation outcomes:

Where a complaint has been investigated but the investigation has not been subject to special procedures, or a complaint has been handled otherwise than by investigation, the outcome of the complaint should include a determination of whether:

- the service provided by the police was acceptable
- the service provided by the police was not acceptable, or
- we have looked into the complaint, but have not been able to determine if the service provided was acceptable

Reflective Practice Review Process:

Practice Requiring Improvement (PRI) is an appropriate outcome within Police Regulations for low level matters of complaint or conduct following a PSD investigation. The Reflective Practice Review Process (RPRP) is the process undertaken by officers to reflect upon their involvement and review the practice that requires improvement. Where a matter is raised or identified internally and does not reach the threshold for PSD investigation or disciplinary action, it should be handled locally by line managers and supervisors under RPRP. The process

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

should be a clear focus on reflection, learning from mistakes and focusing on actions / development to improve and, where necessary, put the issue right and prevent it from happening again. RPRP should be used for low-level intervention and performance issues that do not warrant a written warning or above or Unsatisfactory Performance Procedures (UPP).

Gross Misconduct: A breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour so serious that dismissal would be justified.

Misconduct: A breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour

Misconduct Hearing: A type of formal misconduct proceeding for cases where there is a case to answer in respect of gross misconduct or where the police officer has a live final written warning and there is a case to answer in the case of a further act of misconduct. The maximum outcome at a Misconduct Hearing would be dismissal from the Police Service.

Misconduct Meeting: A type of formal misconduct proceeding for cases where there is a case to answer in respect of misconduct, and where the maximum outcome would be a final written warning.

Sub judice: After recording a complaint, the investigation or other procedure for dealing with the complaint may be suspended because the matter is considered to be sub judice. This is when continuing the investigation / other procedure would prejudice a criminal investigation or criminal Proceedings. There are a number of factors Police forces should consider when deciding whether a suspension is appropriate. The complainant must be notified in writing when the investigation / other procedure into their complaint is suspended and provided with an explanation for the decision. A complainant has the right to ask the IOPC to review that decision.

Withdrawn: A complainant may decide to withdraw one or more allegations in their complaint or that they wish no further action to be taken in relation to their allegation/ complaint. In this case, no further action may be taken with regard to the allegation/ complaint.

Police Terminology

AA: Appropriate Authority

ANPR: Automatic Number Plate Recognition

ATOC: (Association of Train Operating Companies) agreements.

To be authorised to travel within the ATOC agreement warranted officers must sign to join the scheme and an agreed amount is taken from their wages at source. When they begin working at CoLP officers are provided with a warrant card which previously permitted travel on the over ground trains within a specific region in the south east of the UK. As long as the warrant card did not have the words 'Not for Travel' across it officers were considered to be in the ATOC agreement. This has since changed and officers now receive a Rail Travel card to be shown alongside their warrant card to confirm they are in the agreement.

Other forces have similar schemes including Essex Police who issues their officers in the agreement with a travel card. This has to be shown with a warrant card. With both CoLP and Essex Police when officers leave the force they are required to hand back both their warrant and travel cards. If they are transferring forces and required to travel by train the expectation would be that they would buy a train ticket on their first day before their new warrant card and now travel card are issued.

BWV : Body Worn Video

CAD: Computer Aided Dispatch

CCJ: County Court Judgement

DPS: Directorate Professional Standards (Metropolitan Police Service)

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DSI: Death or Serious Injury

ECD: Economic Crime Directorate

FI: Financial Investigator

HCP: Health Care Professionals

IOPC: Independent Office of Police Conduct

LP: Local Policing

MIT: Major Investigation Team

MPS: Metropolitan Police Service

NFA: No Further Action

NLF: National Lead Force

NUT: National Union of Teachers

PCO: Public Carriage Office

PHV: Private Hire Vehicle

PMS: Property Management System

PNC: Police National Computer

POCA: Proceeds of Crime Act

PRI: Practice Requiring Improvement

P&T: Professionalism and Trust

SAR: Subject Access Request

SAR: Suspicious Activity Report

SIO: Senior Investigating Officer

SOP: Standard Operating Procedure

SO: Specialist Operations

STOT: Safer Transport Operations Team

TFG: Tactical Firearms Group

TfL: Transport for London

TPH: Taxi and Private Hire

niche: City of London Crime and Intelligence Database

IC Codes:

IC1 – White – North European

IC2 – Dark European

IC3 – Black

IC4 – (South) Asian

IC5 – Chinese, Japanese, or other South-East Asian

IC6 – Arabic or North African

IC9 – Unknown

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Annex B – IOPC Annual Complaints Data Statistics

Table 1 sets out full detail of IOPC data on complaints and allegations against the City of London Police in 2021/22. It is presented alongside national averages but it should be noted that City of London IOPC data includes complaints and allegations made about the Action Fraud reporting service, which means volumes and response times are not necessarily directly comparable.

Table 1 – City of London Police complaints data 2021/22		
Metric	Figure	National average*
Number of complaints logged (of which Action Fraud)	588 (451)	1705
Number of complaints logged per 1,000 employees	407	309
Number of allegations logged (of which Action Fraud)	680 (468)	2743
Number of allegations logged per 1,000 employees	471	700
Average time taken to log complaint	3 days	6 days
Average time taken to contact complainant	6 days	9 days
Number of complaint cases finalised – outside Schedule 3	428	872
Number of complaint cases finalised – inside Schedule 3	111	763
Average time taken to finalise complaint – outside Schedule 3	10 days	24 days
Average time taken to finalise complaint – inside Schedule 3	54 days	108 days
Applications for review received by local policing body – investigated	2	101
Applications for review received by local policing body – not investigated	1	13
Applications for review received by IOPC – investigated	2	18
Applications for review received by IOPC – not investigated	1	19
Number of allegations finalised by investigation under Section 3 – investigated (not subject to special procedures)	45	382
Number of allegations finalised by investigation under Section 3 – investigated (subject to special procedures)	0	31
Average time taken to finalise allegations – outside Schedule 3	8 days	21 days
Average time taken to finalise allegations – not investigated under Schedule 3	66 days	84 days
Average time taken to finalise allegations –by local investigation under Schedule 3	74 days	134 days

**Note that figures for the City of London include complaints and allegations about Action Fraud. This means they are not directly comparable to other forces data.*