



## People for Proper Policing in North Wales

### North Wales Police complaints up 76%

Feb 2 2009 By Tom Bodden Daily Post

**FORMAL complaints against North Wales Police have soared over the last five years by 76% to 319 in 12 months.**

The findings prompted a warning by a former police officer that the special relationship between North Wales Police and the law-abiding public was beginning to break down. In Dyfed Powys, complaints more than doubled from 126 a year to 287 over the period and in Wales as a whole, complaints rose by 77% for the year 2007- 08.

According to the **Independent Police Complaints Commission**, six out of 10 complaints in England and Wales alleged either neglect of duty (24%), rudeness and intolerance (22%) or common assault (14%).

The findings **released to Plaid Cymru by the IPCC** came as it emerged **North Wales Chief Constable Richard Brunstrom earned £14,249.07 in bonus along with a basic £126,471 salary, according to the Police Negotiating Board.**

**Phil Edwards, a Conwy councillor and ex-police federation secretary** in the region, is worried that a lack of foot patrols by officers is eroding vital daily contact with local people. Mr Edwards, said: *"These rises in complaints against the police are **significant and very disturbing**. The police have always investigated complaints very thoroughly but this worrying trend may be masking a much more serious, deep-rooted issue than the fact that the IPCC has been formed, **making it easier for complaints to be made**.*

*"Police officers have traditionally had a special relationship with the law-abiding members of the public so I have real concerns that the warnings I have been giving for a long time now, that this relationship could break down because of lack of foot-patrolling officers having day-to-day contact with people, may be starting to become a reality."*

**IPCC commissioner for Wales Tom Davies** said the rise in complaints against the police forces in England and Wales was a reflection of the work done to improve reporting standards. *"We believe it also demonstrates rising public confidence in the complaints process and greater awareness the public has of the IPCC itself, and the easier avenues provided for the public to complain. It is unacceptable that many complaints involve **neglect or rudeness**. There is absolutely **no excuse for being rude to the public** and I know that each Welsh police force has taken steps to tackle this."*

He was discussing with Assembly ministers and the Presiding Officer the IPCC's wish to establish reporting mechanisms to the Welsh Assembly, which would include complaints against the police in Wales.

*"The IPCC has also done much work in passing on the learning from investigations **in road traffic pursuits** and custody issues involving vulnerable people with mental health issues to both the police service and the Assembly Government in Wales," he said.*

Councillor Edwards said a reporting mechanism for complaints against the police in Wales to the Assembly was a step forward to call the police to account.

*"There is a balance of course between scrutiny and not allowing interfering with operational policing, but that is out of kilter at the moment. No arm of the state should be beyond proper scrutiny and there are too many instances where police authorities have failed in their duty to be a voice for the people they represent."*

A North Wales police spokesman said **51% of complaints received were resolved locally** – one of the highest rates in the country. *"While some are withdrawn or discontinued, currently 2% of all complaints received by North Wales Police are substantiated,"* he said.

**The PPP comments ...** We have pasted the details of the type of complaints and the increases in the tables below. The misuse of the human rights legislation, greedy lawyers advising criminals and the distortion of current PC attitudes all distort the reality and CAN make life difficult for frontline officers BUT there does seem to be a real problem. NWPF has suffered from an arrogant and abusive attitude in their leadership and thus their culture but this is coming to an end and we can expect a significant change for the better. The poor force Moral & job satisfaction will improve and with that must follow improved attitude and service to the customer. All these problems have been overseen and ignored or paid lip service to by the Police Authority which had, and still has, the responsibility and mechanisms to manage the situation. The IPCC should be a last resort if the PA officers and committees are doing what we pay them so to do. We have little faith in the IPCC and their reports (2) on the Peter Bolton Fiasco at [http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/redacted\\_mr\\_bolton\\_1.pdf](http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/redacted_mr_bolton_1.pdf) & [http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/redacted\\_mr\\_bolton\\_2.pdf](http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/redacted_mr_bolton_2.pdf) and on the abuse of the remains of a deceased motorcyclist by NWPF at [http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/nwp\\_published\\_report2.pdf](http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/nwp_published_report2.pdf) are why that is so.

**Complaints Recorded By Category for Corresponding Yearly Periods –April to December**

Complaint Type		Apr - Dec 08			Apr - Dec 07	
		% change on 2007/08	Number	% of total	Number	% of total
<b>A</b>	<b><i>Serious non-sexual assault</i></b>	↑100%	4	0.75%	2	0.5%
<b>B</b>	<b><i>Sexual assault</i></b>	↑100%	2	0.5%	1	0.25%
<b>C</b>	<b><i>Other Assault</i></b>	↑4%	56	11%	54	15%
<b>D</b>	<b><i>Oppressive conduct or harassment</i></b>	↑127%	59	11.5%	26	7.25%
<b>E</b>	<b><i>Unlawful/unnecessary arrest or detention</i></b>	↓5%	20	4%	21	6%
<b>F</b>	<b><i>Discriminatory Behaviour</i></b>	↑350%	9	1.75%	2	0.5%
<b>G</b>	<b><i>Irregularity in evidence/perjury</i></b>	↑29%	9	1.75%	7	2%
<b>H</b>	<b><i>Corrupt practice</i></b>	↑500%	6	1.2%	1	0.25%
<b>J</b>	<b><i>Mishandling of property</i></b>	↓9%	10	2%	11	3%

K	Breach code A PACE	↑300%	12	2.4%	3	0.75%
L	Breach code B PACE	↓30%	12	2.4%	16	4.5%
M	Breach code C PACE	↑114%	30	6%	14	4%
N	Breach code D PACE	↔	-	-	-	-
P	Breach code E PACE	↔	-	-	-	-
Q	Lack of fairness and impartiality	(81%)	29	5.75%	16	4.5%
R	Multiple or unspecified PACE breaches		-	-	-	-
S	Other neglect or failure in duty	(82%)	111	21.75%	61	17.25%
T	Other irregularity in procedure	↓27%	8	1.5%	11	3%
U	Incivility, impoliteness and intolerance	↑20%	101	19.75%	84	24%
V	Traffic irregularity	(25%)	9	1.75%	12	3.5%
W	Other	↔	2	0.5%	2	0.5%
X	Improper disclosure of information	↑100%	20	4%	10	3%
Y	Other sexual conduct	n/a	2	0.5%	-	-
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>↑44%</b>	<b>511</b>		<b>354</b>	

A total of **426 complaints** were disposed of during the period 01.04.08 - 31.12.08

	Local Resolution	Unsubst.	Substant.	W/drawn	Waiver	Open	Total
Complaints completed during period	196	110	9	56	55	-	426

The PPP comments ...there appears to be a significant increase year on year in the categories that concern us **A to J inclusive** . Nearly 50% were resolved by **local resolution**, a term we are not familiar with. We will further research these categories.

There is no comment in this 'news story' on the nature or outcome on the several complaints (above) against Senior Officers and/or referred to the IPC.

Two OTHER such referrals of GREAT concern to the PPP are .... regarding the Stray bullet and cattle shooting incident in Mold and the recent improper (against the new ACPO guidelines) use of a TASER against an elderly man in Llandudno.

For the details, facts and informed comments on all these issues just enter the appropriate **key word** ( taser, shot, motorcyclist, IPCC, bonus) into our **News article search** on this site.