

Essay one title:

Analyse the role of independent bodies (i.e., IOPC/HMICFRS) in holding the police accountable to those they serve. (1000 words)

In this essay I will be analysing the role of both the Independent Office for Police Conduct and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. First, I will discuss the IOPC, what it is, what its organisational mission is and finally how this relates to rank and file police officers serving in the 43 police forces across England and Wales. Secondly, I will discuss what the HMICFRS is, how it differs from the IOPC and what impact this organisation has on the 43 police forces in England and Wales.

The Independent Office for Police Conduct was established in 2018, it takes on the responsibility of handling serious or high-profile complaints against police officers in England and Wales. They also receive voluntary referrals from police forces where in house Professional Standards Departments refer more serious cases to them to investigate or oversee. Formally these complaints would have been investigated by the IPCC (Independent Police Complaints Commission) however this was disbanded when the new IOPC was formed. This change came about after the passing of The Policing and Crime Act 2017, whereby the IPCC was changed to the IOPC and restructured (IOPC, Undated).

Focusing on Police Forces in England and Wales the objective of the IOPC is to investigate and oversee complaints received from the public. (IOPC, Undated).

The IOPC is tasked with improving public confidence in policing by providing an independent body in which victims of police misconduct can raise their concerns. Being an independent body from the police can give confidence to victims that the investigation is being handled with the utmost professionalism and in line with the police codes of practise. The IOPC has an important role to play in improving public confidence in the police and its actions and recommendations can shape the future of policing.

One prominent investigation in recent months would be Operation Hotton, this was an investigation into allegations of bullying and harassment amongst a team of officers working at Charing Cross Police Station. The investigation concluded that there was a culture of bullying and harassment from male colleagues, including misogynistic, homophobic and abusive language being used. The Metropolitan Police Service accepted all 15 recommendations from the IOPC to combat this culture spreading further in the MPS. This investigation is just one example of the important work carried out by the IOPC in holding police officers accountable and to a high standard of professionalism. IOPC Regional Director Sal Naseem was quoted as saying "We felt this was vital to make it clear to all officers and staff that this behaviour will not be tolerated in any form. For the Met we believe it is an important step on the road to rebuilding public trust and confidence in the force, which is critical to maintaining the principle of policing by consent." (IOPC, 2022).

While the IOPC plays an important role it is not immune to criticism. A report published by Home Affairs Select Committee criticised the length of IOPC investigations. It also called into question the strength of their investigations, how qualified its investigators were and how transparent the organisation is (Home Affairs Committee, 2022).

Avon and Somerset Police Federation Chair Mark Loker is quoted as saying "Investigations into officers have a devastating effect on them and on their families, it breaks people, and it is essential that they be dealt with quickly and fairly to identify officers whose behaviour requires improvement or dismissal and to lift the cloud of suspicion from those who have acted properly." (Police Federation, 2022).

Officers have an extremely difficult job and are scrutinised daily for their actions. Having a government body further scrutinise officers your actions and pick apart every decision made under pressure can have serious mental health impacts. The IOPC does need to improve how they conduct their investigation and the timeliness of them.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services plays a different role in holding police forces to account. Instead of dealing with complaints of misconduct HMICFRS focuses on the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces. HMICFRS scrutinises the performance of police forces, conducts regular visits to forces and public opinion surveys to assess how forces are performing. They also provide professional advice to forces across England and Wales in order to improve forces performance. This advice is given by experienced officers and subject matter experts to help inform forces of best practice (HMICFRS, 2018). Some of the metrics HMICFRS measure are Engaging with and treating the public with fairness and respect, protecting vulnerable people, preventing crime and anti-social behaviour amongst others.

One notable case is that of Greater Manchester Police. HMICFRS first raised concerns in 2016 that GMP were failing to record reported crimes and improvement was needed in how police responded to vulnerable victims. Due to its failing to improve on these issues in 2020 Greater Manchester Police were placed into special measures. This is a perfect example of how HMICFRS are holding forces to account on their failings in the service they provide to victims and the wider public (HMICFRS, 2020).

In conclusion, I have explained the objectives of each independent body and provided examples of how they relate to policing in a wider context. The IOPC is an important body which is tasked with upholding the professional standards expected of police officers. Through holding officers to account the IOPC increases public confidence in the complaints process. HMICFRS is tasked with auditing police forces to provide recommendations on how to improve their service to the public. They hold police forces to account on organisational failure and are for improvement. However, there are areas in which these independent bodies need to improve.

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Essay two title:

Examine the ethical dimension of 'real time' operational decisions. (1000 words)

In this essay I will be examining the ethical dimensions of real time operational decisions in policing and explaining how officers make real time decisions. Police officers have extensive powers to deal with criminality and the public. As a wise man once said "with great power, comes great responsibility" (Spider-Man, 2002). Police officers can take away people's freedoms and ethical consideration is needed in that decision making process. The National Decision Model is a tool that police officers use to make decisions that are reasoned and consider the ethical implications of a decision (College of Policing, 2013). The National Decision Model is at the heart of all policing decisions and is used to determine how we deal with simple investigations, all the way to serious uses of force such as deploying taser. It is important that officers consider their choices as they can seriously impact people's lives and freedoms. I will explain the aspects of the National Decision Model and how ethics is at the core of it.

The first aspect of the National Decision Model is gathering information and intelligence. This is a crucial step in the decision-making process and begins as soon as the force control room receive a call. They elicit information from the reporting person as to what has happened, who is involved, where it happened and when it happened. By gathering this information, we will then be able to consult available intelligence on those involved.

Then, once all available information and intelligence has been consulted, officers can start to assess the threat and develop a working strategy. This is the stage where resources are allocated. This could mean additional units are sent, taser or firearms units deployed, specialist units such as dog handlers or traffic officers are sent. This is decided based on the initial threat assessment to officers and the public. It is also important to consider the ethical dimensions of a situation and consider that in the response to an incident. The College of Policing states that "decision makers should consider the objectives of preventing discrimination, promoting good relations and fostering equal opportunities." (College of Policing, 2013).

When forming a working strategy, it is also important for officers to consider what powers and policies are available at their disposal. One power is to arrest a suspect which itself has a massive implication for any ethical consideration. The decision to arrest takes away the freedom and liberty of a suspects and is not a decision to be taken lightly, which is why officers should always consider alternative disposals. In line with the code of ethics, the College of Policing suggests "It may be reasonable to act outside policy as long as there is a good rationale for doing so." (College of Policing, 2013).

When considering what options to use when dealing with a situation it is also important to consider contingencies if things don't go to plan. When officers are considering options to deal with a situation there are several factors which can influence this process. Including the threat, risk harm presented, available resources, public perception and others. With of decisions police make, we must consider if they are proportionate, legitimate, necessary and ethical.

Finally, it is down to the person to act. Reviewing the actions taken is also an important step in analysing the ethical dimensions of decision making. If the NDM has been used effectively then officers should be able to justify their actions even if acting outside of policy. This is because at the core of the NDM is the code of ethics. When making any decision in policing, the code of ethics is at the heart of it. As police officers we are bound by the code of ethics.

The code of ethics is comprised of two things the policing principles and standards of professional behaviour. First the policing principles are derived from the seven principles of public life (Committee on Standards on Public Life, 1995). The policing principles are comprised of 9 expectations, which are, "Accountability - You are answerable for your decisions, actions and omissions, Fairness - You treat people fairly, Honesty - You are truthful and trustworthy, Integrity - You always do the right thing, Leadership - You lead by good example, Objectivity - You make choices on evidence and your best professional judgement, Openness - You are open and transparent in your actions and decisions, Respect - You treat everyone with respect, Selflessness - You act in the public interest." (College of

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Policing , 2014). These are important principles an officer is expected to adhere to as promoting fairness and equality is crucial in maintaining and promoting public confidence in policing.

Second are the standards of professional behaviour, these are the standards all police officers regardless of rank are required to adhere to. These standards are, honesty and integrity, authority, respect and courtesy, equality and diversity, use of force, orders and instructions, duties and responsibilities, confidentiality, fitness for work, conduct and challenging and reporting improper behaviour (College of Policing , 2014). With the code of ethics at the heart of all policing decisions it is expected of officers not only to act ethically in their daily duties but to take into consideration the ethical dimensions of their decisions as well.

In conclusion, ethics is at the heart of policing, it's a consideration officers must make when making any decision. This could include taking away people's freedoms, using force, how to conduct investigations amongst other daily choices officers must make. The NDM provides a framework for officers to make ethical and justified decisions which they can be held accountable for. Ethical choices are not just required to be able to justify officers' actions but by placing ethics at the core of any decision it promotes public confidence. Overall, acting in everyone's best interest.

967 Words

Essay three title:

Assess the impact of organisational justice on police agency. (1000 words)

In this essay I will be assessing how organisational justice impacts how police officers behave. Examining the elements of organisational justice and what impact they have on police officers. Organisational justice as defined by Greenberg is the “perception of the fairness of outcomes, processes, and interpersonal behaviour in the workplace along with their associated affective, cognitive, and behavioural reactions” (Greenberg, 1987). Organisational Justice Theory (Greenberg, 1987) can be broken down into four facets. First, distributive justice, second, procedural justice, third, interpersonal justice and finally informational justice.

First, I will be reviewing distributive justice which can be defined as the how workers perceive the outcomes taken by an organisation and the need for them to be fair and equitable (Rasooli, et al., 2019). In the context of policing, it is how fairly officers feel resources and workload are distributed. Also, how they feel about recognition for their work e.g promotions and pay and the need for it to be fair and equitable. Distributive justice can be characterised as how fair officers and staff feel treated within their roles compared to their peers. This is important in the workplace. In a 2021 study on workplace discrimination, it stated that “findings suggest that workplace discrimination is associated with an elevated risk of long-term sickness absence” (Clark, et al., 2021). The fair treatment of officers, equitable distribution of work and recognition improves team cohesion and cooperative working.

I will now be assessing the impact of procedural justice on officers. A report by the College of Policing defines procedural justice in three elements “How fairly employees feel decision-making processes are in the organisation... How open, honest and timely employees feel decisions are communicated... and how respectful and dignified contact is perceived to be between senior staff and employees on a personal level” (Quinton, et al., 2015). These are all important facets in how officers identify with an organisation. If an officer perceives an organisation to be fair, open and honest in its decision making they are more likely to identify with the organisation. Thus, being more likely to act in the interest of the organisation (Quinton, et al., 2015). However, if officers feel undervalued in the workplace it can have the opposite effect of driving the individual further from the organisation’s goals.

Third, I will be reviewing interpersonal justice. An article published in Applied Psychology defines interpersonal justice as “the degree to which people are treated properly, with dignity, politeness, and respect” (Colquitt, 2001). This is an important element to organisational justice as this links into the overall wellbeing of staff and officers. In a policing context this mainly refers to the treatment of officers by senior management and supervisors. There are direct links between officers being treated with fairness and respect by supervisors and overall job satisfaction. An online article by Patricia Grabarek stated that employees that are treated with respect “tend to have higher well-being, lower burnout and stress, and fewer absences from work” (Grabarek, 2019). More respectful and fair treatment of direct reports leads to higher job satisfaction and in turn leads to better performance (Grabarek, 2019). A strong positive working relationship fostered by being treated with respect and fairness means officers are more likely to perform their duties to a higher standard and less likely to take time off work for burnout or stress.

Finally, I will be assessing how informational justice impacts the working relationship between officers and their organisations. Informational justice can be defined as “focuses on explanations provided to people that convey information about why procedures were used in a certain way or why outcomes were distributed in a certain fashion” (Colquitt, et al., 2001). Policing is a fast-paced profession in which senior officers make critical decisions in high pressure situations. It is important for that information to be disseminated to officers and staff in the interest of keeping them well informed of changing policies and procedures. It is also important for forces to be transparent with their decisions and this fosters trust from staff, officers and the public.

It's a fair cop and It's a fair cop 2 are both research reports published by the College of Policing with the scope of providing insight into how operational justice could be applied to policing and what that would look like. Both reports present some interesting findings. Officers who feel respected, treated fairly and

feel supervisors and senior officers make fair decisions 'are more likely to take on additional work voluntarily to help others, see value in delivering a good quality of service to the public, and feel empowered to use their own professional judgement.'" (Quinton, et al., 2015).

To summarise, organisational justice is important to improve a forces relationship with its officers. It is also important in furthering the forces vision as officers who feel treated fairly and valued are more likely to identify with an organisation's goals. Research has shown that organisational justice has a positive impact on officer's wellbeing and their overall satisfaction. This leads to officers performing better and providing a better service to the public. It also shows fair and equitable distribution of workloads and recognition improves team cohesion and cooperation. All these factors combined influence how an officer performs their duties. If these factors are implemented, research shows that officers are more likely to provide a better service to the public. The aforementioned report from the college of policing concluded that "Overall, therefore, fair decision-making and respectful treatment by supervisors and senior leaders was found to be linked with a wide range of benefits for the organisation and the public." (Quinton, et al., 2015).

930 Words

Essay four title:

Analyse potential links between serious and organised crime and public protection issues (1000 words)

In this essay I will be analysing some links between serious organised crime and identified public protection issues. I will be talking about the two more commonly seen issues of cuckooing and county lines. Particularly in my force area this is something I see and must deal with daily. It is extremely difficult to police and safeguard the vulnerable members of society that are targeted by organised crime groups. I will be looking the effects this has on the most vulnerable people affected by these issues.

First, I will be looking at cuckooing and what impact it has on the vulnerable people who are the target of it. Cuckooing is a practise that organised crime groups use to identify vulnerable members of society and take over their properties, using them as a hub to store and sell drugs. Usually those that can't really fight back due to mental illness, disability, elderly, drug or alcohol dependencies and other factors. In some cases, manipulating those people into believing they're friends. In a 2019 Guardian article by Sarah Marsh, she spoke to a male named as Kevin to hide his real name. In this he said, "I always itched to have them back as I missed the company," (Marsh, 2019). Cuckooing creates difficulties when trying to safeguard victims. When looking into the psychology behind the practice, victims of cuckooing can develop something called a trauma bond. An article written by Lois Zoppi describes trauma bonding as 'the person experiencing abuse may develop sympathy for the abusive person, which becomes reinforced by cycles of abuse, followed by remorse.' (Zoppi, 2020). This is obviously challenging for police and partner agencies to address as the victim of this type of abuse usually doesn't recognise the abuse or believes that there is no abuse. One recommendation made by Johny-Angel Butera of the university of Ottawa is that "victims must be relocated and perhaps enter a witness protection program. This is so that the victims will feel safe enough to provide testimony" (Butera, 2013). It also suggested that to address the issue of cuckooing victims would need support in the aftermath, particularly drug and alcohol support for those dependant (Butera, 2013). With these issues in mind, it makes it particularly difficult to support these individuals and prosecute the offenders. Therefore, a multi-agency approach is needed to tackle the issues of cuckooing. Without a partner agency approach to this issue, it will be very difficult for police to effectively safeguard the vulnerable people who are affected by cuckooing.

Another public protection issue faced when dealing with serious organised crime is that of child exploitation. This links into something called "County Lines". The NPCC definition of a County Line is "a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move [and store] the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons." (National Crime Agency, Undated). Most of the transportation is done by children recruited by organised crime groups. Again, like cuckooing there is a psychological element at play that makes it more difficult for police and partner agencies to deal with this criminality. Trauma bonds are a big part again of why victims of this exploitation find it difficult to realise what is happening and are reluctant to provide testimony against their abusers. Children and vulnerable people used to carry out this criminality can often be left with severe psychological issues from this exploitation and struggle to come to terms with what has happened (Alessandra & Fiona, 2019) Organised crime groups often use money, drugs, protection and a sense of family to entice these children into their organisation. Once a bond is formed, whoever is handling the child will start telling them to carry drugs, stash them or even weapons. In some cases, these handlers pretend to be a boyfriend, and this can also lead to child sexual exploitation whereby the child is loaned out to friends for sex. Further reenforcing the trauma bond. Police are struggling to keep up with the demands of county lines exploitation. While there is better education surrounding county lines and how to deal with the vulnerable people its effecting, with a real term cut in officers and funding, forces are struggling to resource this. Not only this, with a cut in funding for youth services begs the question if we are committed to dealing with the root cause of the issue. Police forces cannot criminalise children as this would likely push them back into a life of crime. There needs to be a partner agency approach to tackling this issue as without partner agencies we will never be able to deal with the root cause of the problem, which is the poverty and vulnerability these children deal with. A preventative approach is needed to stop these vulnerable people and children being targeted by organised crime groups.

In this essay I have explored just two facets to how organised crime groups cause public protection issues. This topic has much wider research and encompasses topics such as human trafficking and modern-day slavery, amongst others. All of which are linked to how organised crime groups operate. The police cannot tackle this problem on their own and a national effort is required to really disrupt county lines and organised crime groups. The national crime agency in conjunction with the National Police Chiefs Council and other partner agencies set up the National County Lines Coordination Centre with some fantastic results in disrupting this type of crime and protecting vulnerable people affected by it. Published on the NCA website it states “During three intensification weeks alone, which were coordinated by the centre, police forces and Regional Organised Crime Units identified and safeguarded over 2,400 vulnerable people – including more than 1,000 children – arrested over 1,800 offenders as well as disrupting hundreds of ‘deal lines.’” (National Crime Agency, Undated). This is step in the right direction to disrupt the effect organised crime groups have on young and vulnerable people.

1031 Words

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