

Emergency Services Alert

Fortnightly current awareness update

10 January – 23 January 2019

Welcome to the Emergency Services bi-weekly news bulletin.

The aim is to provide all those involved in delivering emergency services sector with a snap-shot of some of the latest news affecting the sector. We hope you find it useful. If you require further information on any of the articles mentioned, do please contact us.

Your feedback and comments will always be welcome.

GENERAL NEWS

Collaborations and takeovers

[West Sussex could share emergency fire service control room with Surrey](#)

Chichester Observer; 22 January 2019

West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service could share its emergency fire service control room operations with **Surrey Fire and Rescue Service**, as it looks to move on from a similar agreement with **East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service**. The Sussex Control Centre has been in operation since May 2014. The County Council has now revealed its preferred option is to enter into a partnership with Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to deliver a joint mobilisation and control centre.

[Fire service merger in Wales would save money, council leader claims](#)

BBC News; 21 January 2019

John Thomas, Conservative leader in the Vale of Glamorgan, has called for a single fire and rescue service to be launched to serve the whole of Wales. However, the Welsh Government rejects the idea of a single national service in its consultation document, arguing that a merger would result in a loss of local knowledge and control, and might not save money.

[IW Council allow fire service merger to go ahead](#)

Isle of Wight Observer; 18 January 2019

The Isle of Wight Council has approved plans for **Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service** to come under the joint control of Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton. The Council will now go ahead and vote on the matter at a cabinet meeting.

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AMBULANCE

[Ambulance service hitting targets for most severe calls but response for less serious categories 'not good enough'](#)

Chichester Observer; 21 January 2019

The **South East Coast Ambulance Service** hopes to come out of special measures within a year.

[Ending contract with Thames Ambulance Service would be an 'unacceptable risk'](#)

Grantham Journal; 18 January 2019

Health bosses will resist calls to terminate **Thames Ambulance Service's** contract in Lincolnshire because of an "unacceptable risk" it would cause. Concerns have been raised regarding the Service's poor performance.

[South Western Ambulance Service paramedic suspended after sending 'distressing' and 'unwelcome' sex texts to vulnerable patient](#)

Somerset Live; 17 January 2019

A paramedic from the **South Western Ambulance Service** has been suspended after sending sexually explicit text messages to a vulnerable patient that had come under his care.

[Woman makes age discrimination claim against ambulance trust](#)

Devon Live; 16 January 2019

A claim of age discrimination has been launched against **South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust** by an employee who believes that when her role was made redundant, she was overlooked for similar roles due to her age.

[CQC rates North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust as Good](#)

CQC; 10 January 2019

The Care Quality Commission has rated the quality of services provided by the **North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust** as 'Good' following an inspection in October 2018. The Trust was rated 'Good' in all key questions: safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led.

FIRE

[Six fire stations to close and eight engines taken off the road in cuts planned to balance books](#)

Manchester Evening News; 22 January 2019

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service must cut £7.3m from its budget this year – with six fire stations across the region earmarked for closure and the number of fire engines expected to be reduced by eight.

[Fire service seeks corporate sponsors to help plug funding gap](#)

The Argus; 16 January 2019

West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service's budget is set to be cut by £400,000 – and the local council is now looking to attract sponsorship for these at-risk services.

[Anger as Tyne and Wear fire service cuts have hit the 'most deprived areas'](#)

Chronicle Live; 15 January 2019

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority has demanded answers from ministers over a "broken" funding system, which they say has stripped cash from the most deprived areas. This has left Tyne and Wear as the third worst hit service in England, behind only **Cleveland** and the **West Midlands**.

[South Yorkshire Fire Service thermal cameras 'failing'](#)

BBC News; 15 January 2019

South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service's 35 thermal imaging cameras are increasingly failing and must be "urgently" replaced, at a cost of £160,000.


[Fire service set to put its council tax up by 2.95 percent](#)

Nottinghamshire; 14 January 2019

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is expected to raise its part of the council tax bill by 2.95 per cent.

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Legal news

[Legal action threatened against MPS on spit guards](#)

Police Professional; 15 January 2019

The **Metropolitan Police Federation** has said that it is considering taking legal action against the Metropolitan Police Service over its decision not to issue spit guards to officers. The Federation claims that “three police officers a day are being spat at in London”.

Collaborations and mergers

[Merger calls as latest chief quits 'merry-go-round' force](#)

Police Oracle; 22 January 2019

The Home Secretary Sajid Javid has been asked to determine the future of **Cleveland Police** following the departure of Chief Constable Mike Veale. Local MPs and the Tees Valley Mayor want Mr Javid to consider merging Cleveland Police, potentially with neighbouring constabularies **Durham** and/or **North Yorkshire**.

Employment issues

[Police remove job ad seen as offensive to frontline officers](#)

Guardian; 22 January 2019

The **College of Policing** has dropped a recruitment advert for external candidates to become senior officers after widespread complaints that it insulted the intelligence of frontline officers. It called for “proven leaders” to join at these levels, rather than working their way up after starting “at the bottom”.

[Cleveland police chief Mike Veale resigns after 'serious allegations'](#)

Guardian; 21 January 2019

Mike Veale, the Chief Constable of **Cleveland Police**, has resigned following “serious allegations” about his behaviour.

UPDATE: **Humberside Police** Chief Constable Lee Freeman will take temporary charge at **Cleveland Police** (Grimsby Telegraph; 21 January 2019). Click [here](#).

[Ethnic minority police paid less as gap with white officers widens, Met figures show](#)

Guardian; 19 January 2019

New figures have shown that the pay gap in the **Metropolitan Police** between white officers and their black and Asian counterparts has widened in the past year. The study of average wages found that black and Asian police officers working in London were paid £1.80 an hour less than their white colleagues last year, compared with £1.52 in 2017.

[Nineteen forces could take on direct entry recruits](#)

Police Oracle; 16 January 2019

As many as 19 police forces could take on direct entry personnel later this year. According to the College of Police's website, the post with **Avon & Somerset** has already been filled via a deferral. Forces recruiting for direct entry inspectors in 2019 are **Cumbria, Derbyshire, Dyfed-Powys, Greater Manchester, Hampshire, Metropolitan Police Service, Norfolk, North Wales, North Yorkshire, Northumbria, Nottinghamshire, South Yorkshire, Suffolk, Sussex, Thames Valley, Warwickshire, West Mercia** and **West Midlands**. Dyfed-Powys is the only force in the UK participating at both inspector and superintendent levels.

New appointments

[Preferred candidate for Cheshire Police chief constable announced](#)

Warrington Guardian; 21 January 2019

Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner David Keane has confirmed that Acting Deputy Chief Constable Darren Martland is his preferred candidate for Chief Constable of **Cheshire Constabulary**.


[Thames Valley Police announces new chief constable](#)

BBC News; 15 January 2019

John Campbell, the current Deputy Chief Constable for **Thames Valley Police**, has been selected as the preferred candidate to succeed Francis Habgood as Chief Constable.

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Misconduct

Sean Rigg death: Met officers' hearing could be scrapped

Guardian; 21 January 2019

Lawyers for the five **Metropolitan Police** officers facing a disciplinary hearing over the death of Sean Rigg, who died in police custody in 2008, are considering asking for the hearing to be scrapped, arguing that the officers will not get a fair hearing after such a long period of time.

Police misconduct: Watchdog 'bringing wrong cases'

BBC News; 17 January 2019

Figures obtained by the BBC through a Freedom of Information request have revealed that "gross misconduct" charges were not proven in two-thirds of the 48 misconduct cases pursued by the **Independent Office for Police Conduct** in the three years to October 2018.

IOPC put too many officers through misconduct trauma

Police Federation; 17 January 2019

Police Federation Conduct Lead Phill Matthews has said that **The Independent Office of Police Conduct** (IOPC) process is "traumatising" and the effect on officers involved can be "catastrophic". This follows the publication of figures obtained by the BBC through a Freedom of Information request, which shows that only five police officers in England and Wales were dismissed in the last three years following misconduct cases ordered by the IOPC. Full details are in the above story.

Ex-PC guilty of gross misconduct for 'assaulting colleagues'

BBC News; 15 January 2019

A former **Thames Valley Police** officer accused of sexually assaulting two of his colleagues has been found guilty of gross misconduct.

Slough PC sacked over 'inaccurate account' of crash

BBC News; 15 January 2019

A **Thames Valley Police** officer has been dismissed for gross misconduct after giving an inaccurate account of a crash he was involved in while on duty.

Essex PC sacked for French Foreign Legion lies

BBC News; 11 January 2019

An **Essex Police** officer has been dismissed for gross misconduct after lying in his interview, inventing a reference and disguising his handwriting.

Inquests and investigations

Internal GMP probe finds no corruption in Operation Holly investigation

Police Professional; 22 January 2019

An internal inquiry by **Greater Manchester Police** into allegations that a prominent Manchester criminal underworld figure had a corrupt relationship with officers has found no grounds for concern.

Two Met officers under criminal investigation over shooting

Guardian; 22 January 2019

Two **Metropolitan Police** officers have been placed under criminal investigation over the shooting of a robbery suspect in Wimbledon.

Josh Pitt: Knifeman shot by police 'lawfully killed'

BBC News; 14 January 2019

An inquest has concluded that a knife-wielding man shot by a **Bedfordshire Police** officer after imprisoning his fiancée in his flat was lawfully killed.


Police officer investigated over Sean Fitzgerald shooting

Guardian; 10 January 2019

A **West Midlands Police** officer is under investigation for shooting dead a man as he fled from a house during a planned raid. Full details are [here](#) (IOPC).

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[Katrina Makunova killing: Police probed over victim's allegations](#)

BBC News; 10 January 2019

Five **Metropolitan Police** officers are being investigated over their handling of assault allegations made by a teenager against her boyfriend before she died. Full details are [here](#) (IOPC).

Performance

[Metropolitan police custody - many positives but concerns about use of force and health care](#)

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services; 15 January 2019

Inspectors have found many positive features in custody suites across the **Metropolitan Police Service** area, including clear overall governance and generally well-trained staff.

[Leicestershire Police's crime-recording progress a 'credit' to leadership, but more to be done](#)

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services; 15 January 2019

While inspectors found limited improvements at how **Leicestershire Police** records crime, they concluded that the overall recording rate is too low.

[Police inspectorate praises Kent Police for its 'outstanding' crime-recording](#)

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services; 15 January 2019

Kent Police's crime-recording arrangements have improved dramatically since June 2017.

[West Midlands police 'failing to report thousands of crimes'](#)

Guardian; 15 January 2019

According to HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, **West Midlands Police** is failing to record more than 16,600 violent crimes each year and "failing domestic abuse victims. Full details are [here](#) (HMCFRS).

[Public perceptions of policing in England and Wales 2018](#)

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services; 10 January 2019

The fourth HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) survey into the public's overall opinion of the police has shown that they remained positive overall. The 2018 surveys covered the public's views and experiences of local police, perceptions of image and reputation, representativeness, engagement with their Police force and opinions on what the Police should be.

Policy and regulation

[Home Office approves IOPC guidance and concludes firearms review](#)

Home Office; 17 January 2019

The Home Secretary approved the **Independent Office for Police Conduct's** 'Draft statutory guidance to the police service on achieving best evidence in death or serious injury matters'. The guidance, which has been made statutory, includes a preference that key police witnesses should be separated after an incident, but also gives senior officers operational discretion to use alternatives, like recording proceedings on body worn video. This completes the Home Office review into police use of firearms. UPDATE: The Government has been accused of watering down plans for a total ban on police conferring after the deaths of suspects, after it approved new rules for officers following the most controversial cases. Click [here](#) (Guardian).

[Deaths in Custody](#)


Crown Prosecution Service; 17 January 2019

The Crown Prosecution Service has published updated legal guidance on death in custody, which takes into account recent court judgements and ensures there is a consistent approach to prosecutions involving self-defence and reasonable force by the police.

For more information please contact [Hugh Giles](#), [Alessandra Gettins](#), or [Tracy Giles](#).

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