

## If you are still unhappy

We will try our best to resolve your complaint. However, if you remain unhappy following investigation by the PCCS you then have the option of contacting the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman.

The Scottish Public Service Ombudsman is responsible for considering complaints about organisations providing public services in Scotland, including the PCCS.

His contact details are:

### SPSO

4 Melville Street,  
Edinburgh EH3 7NS

### You can also write to him at the following

#### Freepost address:

Freepost EH641  
Edinburgh EH3 0BR

Telephone: 0800 377 7330  
Fax: 0800 377 7331  
Text: 0790 049 4372  
Email: [ask@spsso.org.uk](mailto:ask@spsso.org.uk)

## If you are unhappy with the response to a Freedom of Information request

Should you have a complaint about the way your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act has been dealt with, you should contact the Head of Corporate Services at the address in this leaflet.

If you remain unhappy with the outcome of your complaint, you may wish contact the Scottish Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at:

Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews,  
Fife KY16 9DS

Telephone: 01334 464610  
Fax: 01334 464611  
e-mail: [enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info)

## Data protection

If you are unhappy with how we have handled your personal information under the Data Protection Act or if you wish to complain about how we have responded to a request made to us under the Act, you should contact the Head of Corporate Services at the address in this leaflet.

If you remain unhappy with the outcome, you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office at:

Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113  
Fax: 01625 524510

## Accessibility

You can request materials in other formats such as Braille or large print or choose to receive information in languages other than English.

Police Complaints Commissioner for Scotland  
Hamilton House, Hamilton Business Park  
Caird Park, Hamilton ML3 0QA

Freephone: 0808 178 5577  
Email: [enquiries@pcc-scotland.org](mailto:enquiries@pcc-scotland.org)  
Website: [www.pcc-scotland.org](http://www.pcc-scotland.org)

Revised March 2011



# A guide for any complaints about the Police Complaints Commissioner for Scotland



Increasing Scotland's confidence in police complaints handling through impartial oversight and reform

## Who is the Police Complaints Commissioner for Scotland?

The post of the Commissioner was established in 2007 under the **Police, Public Order and Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2006**. The current Commissioner is John McNeill.

## What is the Commissioner role?

The Police Complaints Commissioner for Scotland (PCCS) provides independent scrutiny of the way that police forces, police authorities and police bodies in Scotland respond to complaints from the public. As well as scrutinising the way that complaints have been handled, the Commissioner's role is to drive up standards in police complaints handling.

**His service is free and impartial.**

## Our performance

We aim to provide the best possible services but accept that sometimes things do go wrong. This leaflet tells you what to do if you are unhappy with the service you received from the Police Complaints Commissioner for Scotland or his staff. We welcome your comments and we want to know how we can put things right.

“If you are not happy with the quality of our service we want to know about it, so that we can put it right and learn lessons to prevent it happening again.”

John McNeill, Police Complaints Commissioner for Scotland

## Types of complaints

At PCCS we take all complaints seriously, and have an effective, easy-to-use complaints procedure for you to follow if you are unhappy with the service you received from us.

**We can consider a complaint if you think we have:**

- treated you unfairly or rudely
- failed to explain things to you properly
- caused unreasonable delays.

**We will not consider correspondence as a complaint if it is:**

- a request for explanation of a policy
- an appeal against the Commissioner's decision.

If your complaint is about a member of staff, that person will be consulted about the incident and asked for their views but they will not be involved in looking into the complaint.

As part of our formal complaint handling process described in this leaflet, we keep a record of all complaints about our service and use it to measure and improve our service.

## What you should do if you have a complaint

Contact us as soon as possible and no later than twenty working days of you becoming aware of the matter. This will allow us to investigate your concerns promptly while the matter is still fresh in everyone's mind.

In the first instance, please contact the person that you have been dealing with to give them the opportunity to address your concerns. This means your concerns could be resolved quickly and informally without the need to go through the formal complaints process.

If they do not resolve the problem to your satisfaction or if you do not feel comfortable speaking to that person, you can make a formal complaint to us by writing to:

Head of Corporate Services  
PCCS, Hamilton House, Hamilton Business Park,  
Caird Park, Hamilton ML3 0QA

## What to include when making a complaint

**Please include as much information as you can to help us investigate the matter thoroughly. This should include:**

- name, address and telephone number
- date
- email address (where applicable)
- if you are complaining on behalf of someone else please provide their details
- any reference number
- details of your complaint.

## What we will do

If you need an interpreter or want the information translated into another language, or on to audio tape, please let us know when you first contact us.

We will acknowledge your complaint within two working days and aim to reply fully within twenty working days of receiving your complaint. If we cannot complete an investigation into your complaint within this timescale, we will write to you to explain why and tell you when you can expect a full response.

**Our investigation into your complaint will include assessing the evidence available including:**

- our performance against our published Standards of Service
- our authority to act within the framework of the Police, Public Order and Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2006
- recordings and/or notes of telephone calls
- where appropriate, interview the staff member(s) involved
- investigation of all correspondence and other written records.

If we have not upheld our own standards, we will apologise, try to explain what happened and tell you what actions we are taking to make sure the problem does not happen again. In some situations we may suggest some form of alternative dispute resolution.