

Police use of force

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Contents

1. Introduction	6
2. Public perceptions of the police use of force	10
3. Police views about the use of force	23
4. Accountability	29
5. Discussion	35
Appendices	37

Summary of key findings

TNS BMRB, on behalf of the IPCC, conducted research into police use of force. The research explores public and professional views and perceptions on the use of police force across three specific aims to:

- examine public awareness and understanding of police use of force;
- examine public views on the fairness and frequency with which police use force - specifically the use of moderate and excessive force in different scenarios and circumstances and,
- examine police officers' views on using force equipment and their thought processes when making decisions about using force.

Research was undertaken via a general population survey and qualitative research with the public, including people who have experienced police use of force, and police officers. A summary of the key findings across the three research strands is provided below:

The public

Public awareness and understanding of police use of force and views on the fairness and frequency of that use

- There is a high level of public trust in the police to use reasonable force. More than four in five people said they trust the police (either a lot or a fair amount) to use reasonable force.
- However Black and Minority Ethnic groups (BME), younger people, and people living in London were found to have a less positive view regarding the police's use of force.
- Concern about the frequency with which police use force was relatively low. A quarter of the public felt concerned about how frequently the police use force, and one in every 25 people reported being very concerned about it.
- The severity of force was rated as follows by the public:
 - for 'everyday' use, voice commands and handcuffs are at the lower end of force, the baton at the top end and body strikes¹ midway
 - for less routine events (e.g. armed robbery, crowd control), rising in level of severity are: CS spray, Tasers, use of dogs, firearms
- The public found it difficult to define "reasonable" force and "excessive" force because they had limited knowledge about when the police could use different types of force and what force they could legally use.
- "Reasonable force" was generally thought to be a response which was perceived to match the situation. "Excessive force" was defined as force that is used "when it is more severe than the situation requires".
- The general public expected that the key considerations for police use of force were to assess the aim, risk and impact of using force to ensure compliance.
- However there were concerns that police officers could make unfair or inaccurate pre-conceptions of a situation, if their decisions to use force were influenced by

¹ Body strike refers to a strike with the hand, foot or fist on any part of the body and does not include strikes with equipment such as a baton.

perceptions of the attitude and verbal behaviour of the individual and whether the individual was a previous or known offender.

- The public felt that personal characteristics, such as age and gender, should not affect police decision making, unless they had impact on the vulnerability and physicality of an individual.
- The survey found that there is no singular type of force that the public feel is more acceptable than others. The use of force was generally seen as acceptable in a number of different scenarios. However some members of the public felt that force (beyond physical restraint²) should only be applied when someone was armed with a weapon.
- The public had limited knowledge of how police currently recorded force, but it was felt that all use of force should be recorded and that the introduction of body cameras could provide greater transparency on the circumstances in which police officers decide to use force.
- It was generally felt that good measures were in place to ensure appropriate and reasonable use of police force.

People who had experienced police use of force

Understanding of police use of force and views on the fairness and frequency of that use

- Typically people who had experienced police use of force had a negative view of the police as a result of their direct experience.
- They largely shared similar views to the people from the focus groups regarding the severity of police use of force, but their views on specific use of force were also influenced by their own experiences. For example, handcuffs were considered to be a severe use of force where the individual had experienced handcuffs that had left an injury.
- People who had experienced police use of force, almost without exception, considered that they had received excessive force when they were arrested, and thought that 'talk-down' methods were rare and that excessive force was used far more often than the public might think.
- They were largely in agreement, with the participants from the focus groups in their understanding of "reasonable" force, in that the type of force should match the situation if it was reasonable. However, their personal experience often led to the view that it is never reasonable for the police to body strike, hit or kick someone as this was seen as aggression by the police.
- Participants from BME groups specifically discussed that young, Black/Asian and White men in socially deprived areas were most likely to have force used against them. It was felt that use of force could reflect local crime statistics; but there was also concern that this was reflective of officers' perceptions of different groups as criminals.
- Views on the types of considerations that the police should take into account were similar to participants in the focus groups, but there were specific concerns about police assessment of the level of risk and the impact of using different types of force and the injury it could cause.

² Physical restraint relates to physically holding / pinning / restraining of a person by police personnel with the aim of restricting their movement, including the use of body or limb restraints.

- Individuals with mental health conditions specifically suggested that training was required on how to approach and use force in incidences with vulnerable members of the community.
- People who had experienced police use of force were concerned about the consistency and truthfulness of current written recording procedures. They felt, in agreement with people in the focus groups, that the use of body cameras would provide greater transparency.
- People who had experienced police use of force did not feel confident in the current complaints procedures and had either experienced, or expected, limited action or changes when complaints were made.

Police officers and staff

Views on using force equipment and their thought processes when deciding on using force

- The police officers interviewed perceived that public awareness of the types of force that the police could use and whether the police used force appropriately was influenced by an individual's age or level of contact and experience of the police.
- Police officers defined 'reasonable' force as what is necessary for a person to be compliant and / or restrained and to minimise the risk of harm to the individual, the police officer or the public.
- "Excessive" force was generally perceived as rare by police officers, and was defined as continuing to use force after the tactical objective had been achieved, or once the person had become compliant, under control and no longer a threat.
- Police officers and staff felt that there was not a typical situation where force was used – every situation should be responded to individually.
- Individual characteristics such as gender and age were not seen as a factor in how often force was used by front line officers. However, some senior officers and police supervisors/managers discussed more frequent use of force in locations of high crime and poverty and where individuals were known to police as committing regular crime.
- The key factors considered by police officers in assessing the level of risk and impact were: the nature of threat and behaviour; the locality, context and circumstance; and the perceived impact of using force.
- Whilst police officers did not regard personal characteristics such as age and gender as directly influencing use of force, they were perceived as important factors in assessing the impact of using force on an individual (e.g. age and gender).
- The mental health of an individual was seen as a factor that the police should consider, but their overall response would be dependent on the behaviour they observed and how the individual responds to communication techniques.
- The methods used for recording police use of force were not consistent across the six police forces and there was variation in whether all types of force were recorded (e.g. whether documented in use of force form) and the level of detail provided.
- Police officers felt that there were clear lines of accountability through the complaints and investigation procedures, which were consistent across police forces.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background and research aims

The IPCC is conducting research into police use of force. The IPCC oversees the police complaints system in England and Wales and sets the standards by which the police should handle complaints. It is independent, making its decisions entirely independently of the police and government. Police forces must refer the most serious cases – whether or not someone has made a complaint – to the IPCC and it will decide how such cases should be investigated. In addition, the IPCC considers appeals from people who are dissatisfied with the way a police force has dealt with their complaint; this responsibility is shared with local police forces. As part of its role in securing and maintaining public confidence in the complaints system, the IPCC uses learning from its work to influence changes in policing, ensure accountability and spread best practice and high standards of customer service.

Currently the law allows the police to use reasonable force when necessary in order to carry out their role of law enforcement. In England and Wales the use of (reasonable) force is provided to police and any other person under Section 3 of the Criminal Law Act 1967, which states: "A person may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances in the prevention of crime, or in effecting or assisting in the lawful arrest of offenders or suspected offenders or of persons unlawfully at large".

Persons serving with the police (as with all citizens), may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for the purpose of³:

- self defence;
- defence of another;
- defence of property;
- prevention of crime; and
- lawful arrest.

Additionally, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) states that where force is alleged to have been used in the prevention of crime or arrest of an offender, necessity may not equate with reasonableness. The following factors must be considered:

- the nature and degree of force used;
- the seriousness of the offence which is being prevented or in respect of which an arrest is being made; and
- the nature and degree of any force used against an officer by a person resisting arrest.
- Information about guidance or training which an officer has received may be used to assist in determining what is reasonable.

³ http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/a_to_c/allegations_of_criminal_offences_against_the_police/

Police officers are also guided by three core questions⁴ when determining when, and to what extent, force may be used which should be considered alongside the 'Ten Key Principles Governing the Use of Force by the Police Service'⁵. These are:

- Would the use of force have a lawful objective (e.g., the prevention of injury to others or damage to property, or the effecting of a lawful arrest) and, if so, how immediate and grave is the threat posed?
- Are there any means, short of the use of force, capable of attaining the lawful objective identified?
- Having regard to the nature and gravity of the threat, and the potential for adverse consequences to arise from the use of force (including the risk of escalation and the exposure of others to harm) what is the minimum level of force required to attain the objective identified, and would the use of that level of force be proportionate or excessive?

Previous research by the IPCC has included analysis of restraint-related custody deaths⁶ and reports on cases involving the use of Tasers⁷. This is the first time the IPCC has conducted research examining the use of force more widely.

The scope of the IPCC study is to draw on its experience of existing investigations and appeals whilst considering the views and experiences of the public and the police. It will also engage with other key stakeholders to develop an understanding of the issues, concerns, policies and practices that relate to police use of force.

TNS BMRB has been commissioned to assist with the study by gathering views from the general public and police officers about police use of force. The overall aims of this element of the research are to:

- examine public awareness and understanding of police use of force;
- examine public views on fairness and frequency that police use force - specifically the use of moderate and excessive force in different scenarios and circumstances; and
- examine police officers views on using force equipment and their thought processes when deciding on using force.

The research has also been designed to inform and feed into the development of the evidence base for future recommendations and learning in relation to the use of force by police and to assist with increasing public confidence in this area.

⁴ <https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/public-order/core-principles-and-legislation/police-use-of-force/>

⁵ HMIC (2011) The rules of engagement: A review of the August 2011 disorders.

⁶ IPCC (2011) Deaths in or following custody: An examination of the cases 1998/99 – 2008/09.

⁷ IPCC (2008) report on cases involving the use of Taser® between 1 April 2004 and 30 September 2008 and IPCC (2014) [review of complaints and incidents relating to Taser® use from 2004 to 2013](#).

1.2. Research methods

The research conducted by TNS BMRB comprised a survey of the general public to provide a quantitative measure of the attitudes and opinions held by the public and qualitative research to provide a depth of understanding around public, people with experience of police use of force and police officers' perceptions. The research consisted of:

- A survey of the 16+ population of England and Wales, with an ethnic boost, comprising a total of 1,302 interviews. Interviews were completed with all 1,302 respondents, which consisted of a nationally representative sample of 891 respondents, plus an additional ethnic minority boost of 411 interviews. The full dataset was weighted to be representative of the population of England and Wales as a whole. The quantitative survey was conducted via a face-to-face Omnibus methodology and ran from 28 August until 14 September 2014.
- Qualitative research comprising:
 - Six focus groups with a broad spread of the general public (who had no direct experience of police use of force) to explore public knowledge and views about police use of force. Two of these groups were conducted prior to the survey to help inform the survey content and the remaining four were completed after the survey to help contextualise the survey findings;
 - 31 interviews with police officers of various ranks, across six police forces in England and Wales;
 - 13 interviews with people who had experienced police use of force when arrested or who had directly observed an incident where force was used by the police.

The focus groups and interviews were conducted over the period August to October 2014 in six areas of England and Wales. The areas were selected to represent a range of police force areas taking into account variation in size, demographics and urban and rural locations (please see Appendix A for full detail).

The general public participating in the group discussions were sourced through street recruitment and door-knocking using a screening questionnaire to determine eligibility for inclusion in the study and to ensure a mix of demographics as reflective of the local area; police officers were sourced through the six local police forces selected to participate; people with experience of police use of force were sourced through a variety of community organisations.

1.3. Report structure

Following this introductory chapter, the report comprises four further chapters:

- Chapter 2 – provides an overview of public perceptions of the type of force the police can use, public trust in the police to use force appropriately, views about the severity of different types of force that are available to the police, and what constitutes reasonable and excessive force;
- Chapter 3 – considers the same issues as chapter two from the perspective of police officers;

- Chapter 4 – outlines perceptions of police accountability in the use of force, including processes for recording the use of force by the police;
- Chapter 5 – provides an overview of the key findings from the research.

Throughout the report, verbatim quotes have been used to illustrate the research findings. They are attributed in such a way as to retain the anonymity of the interviewee⁸. The term “officers” is used in the report to describe ‘officers’ or ‘police staff’. Also all the views and experiences of police officers and staff in the report are of those interviewed as part of the qualitative research rather than representative of all police.

⁸ “Senior officer” means a member of a police force holding a rank above that of chief superintendent.

2. Public perceptions of the police use of force

This chapter provides an overview of the findings of the quantitative and qualitative research which aimed to identify:

- Awareness and understanding of police use of force;
- Understanding of the types of force the police can use;
- Views on the fairness and frequency of police use of force;
- Views about the severity of certain types of force.

2.1. Headline findings

The survey showed a high level of public trust in the police to use reasonable force. More than four in five people said they trust the police (either a lot or a fair amount) to use reasonable force. This trust in the police was consistently high amongst all groups other than Black respondents, amongst whom three in five people said they trust the police.

The headline findings were as follows;

- Overall, 83 per cent of the public said **they trust the police either a lot or a fair amount to use reasonable force.**
- **Trust in the police to use reasonable force is highest amongst older people aged 55+.** Amongst this group nearly nine in ten of people trust the police to use reasonable force.
- **Black and Minority Ethnic groups (BME), younger people,** and people living in **London had a less positive view regarding the police's use of force.**
- Typically **people who have experienced police use of force had negative views** of the police due to their direct experiences.
- The **public had limited awareness of what types of force the police can legally use,** but assume the police would only use types of force that were in line with the law.
- Members of the general public expected that the **key considerations for police use of force** were to assess the **aim, risk and impact** of using force to ensure compliance.
- There was consensus, by the public, that **personal characteristics should not have an effect on police decision making,** unless this had an impact on the vulnerability and physicality of an individual. Additionally, they felt the level of **vulnerability** of an individual **should be taken into account by officers,** if this was known in advance (e.g. mental health).
- Just under half of the **public felt that the police use force more readily now than 10 years ago,** whereas a third felt they do not. A quarter of the public felt concerned about how frequently the police use force, and one in every 25 people reported being very concerned about it.
- The public perceived the use of force as most likely to occur in situations where there was a **high risk of threat to the public, individuals or the police.**
- Members of the public felt that the **use of firearms by the police is rare.** However, the survey respondents believe the police fire guns four times more often than in reality.

- The survey showed that there **is no singular type of force that the public feel is more acceptable than others**. The use of force was also generally seen as acceptable in a number of different scenarios.

2.2. Trust in the police to use reasonable force

The survey showed **high levels of public trust in the police to use reasonable force**. When asked the extent to which they trust the police to use reasonable force, 83 per cent said they trust them either a lot or a fair amount. 15 per cent reported a lack of trust, with 11 per cent saying not very much and four per cent saying not at all.

Trust in the police to use reasonable force was also consistently high across age groups with the exception of young people. The highest levels of trust in the police were recorded amongst older people. As shown in Table 1, 87 per cent of those aged 55-64 and over 65 indicated trust in the police compared with 71 per cent of 16-24 year olds. High trust was also found amongst those in social grade categories⁹ AB (88 per cent) and C1 (85 per cent), which includes people in managerial, administrative or professional occupations.

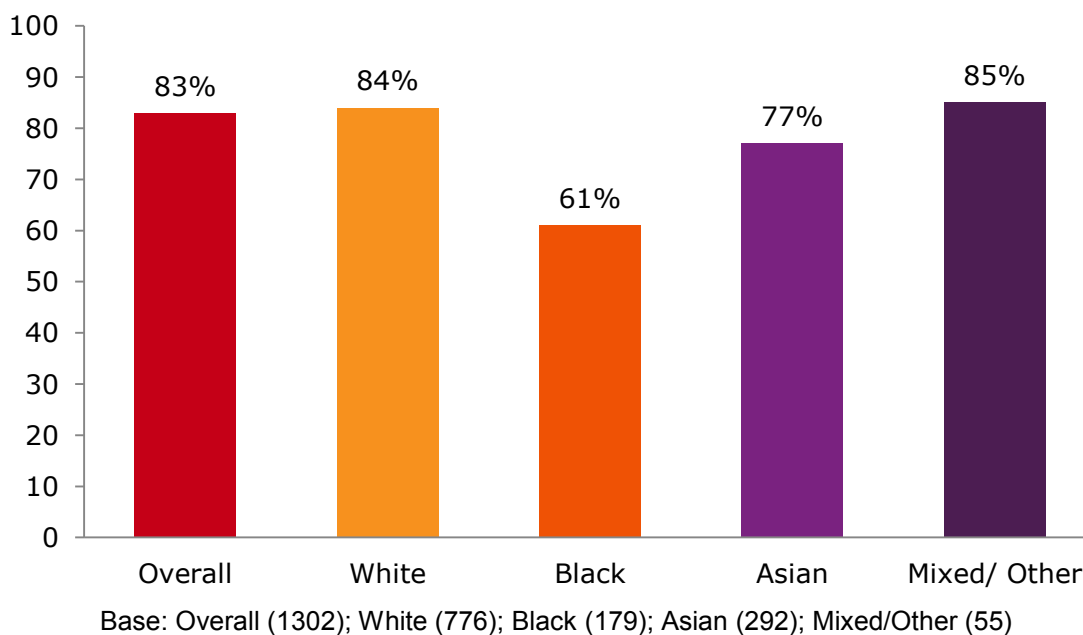
Table 1 - Trust in the police to use reasonable force by age

	% who trust the police a lot/ a fair amount	Base
Overall	83%	1,302
Age		
16-24	71%	185
25-34	83%	274
35-44	86%	227
45-54	82%	190
55-64	87%	152
65+	87%	274

Whilst trust was generally high, there were some groups where trust was lower than average. This was particularly noticeable amongst BME groups, where the level of trust was lower at 76 per cent compared with 83 per cent overall. Black respondents in particular, indicated lower levels of trust with 61 per cent having trust in the police to use reasonable force.

⁹ Definitions of social grade categories are as follows: AB – Higher/intermediate managerial, administrative or professional; C1 - Supervisory or clerical and junior managerial, administrative or professional; C2 - Skilled manual workers; DE - Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers, state pensioners, casual and lowest grade workers, unemployed with state benefits only.

Figure 1 - Trust in the police to use reasonable force, by ethnicity



Regional differences were also apparent in the findings, with trust in the police to use reasonable force lower in London than other regions. In London, 69 per cent of respondents reported trust in the police to use reasonable force, compared with 83 per cent over the country as a whole. It's worth noting at this point that the proportion of young people, and of BME groups, is higher in London than the rest of the UK, so to some extent this may be a factor in the lower level of trust in the capital.

The qualitative research with the general public explored trust in the police in a wider sense, not simply focussing on trust in the police to use reasonable force. Focus groups were conducted with members of public who had not had any experience of police use of force and depth interviews with people who had experienced police use of force.

Overall, the public felt that society has changed and that the police have to deal with a more difficult and sometimes more violent public. The level of trust the public had in the police was reinforced by this perception of a greater need for police protection alongside observations of an on-street police presence in some local areas.

“If a child goes missing or is molested or some old lady is bashed over the head with her handbag then I think I would have a good deal of trust and confidence in the police.” (Public group, London, mixed gender, 36+, neutral or negative views of the police)

“We see them walking around which is great so you do feel safe.” (Public group, London, mixed gender, 18-35, positive or neutral views of the police)

However, there were issues that undermined the public's trust in the police:

- the lack of visible police presence in the local area;
- a perceived lack of police resources to deal with less significant crimes (such as petty theft);

- taking too long to respond to a 999 call, such as after a burglary;
- the use of young police officers that, in the views of the public, “*show no respect*”;

“We’ve lost our respect for the police... Younger police means no life experience and skills.” (Public group, Birmingham, male, BME, 36+, positive, neutral or negative views of the police)

- the use of Police Community Support Officers (PCSO’s) – that were perceived as having little power to deal with situations;
- and to a lesser extent a view that the police suppress evidence, with the Jean Charles de Menezes case being given as an example of corrupt police practices.

“My concern is I have no confidence in the investigation that follows – the process of dealing with mistakes – I’ve seen too many cases where it’s quite clear that evidence has gone missing and officers have discussed a story between them.” (Public group, London, mixed gender, 36+, neutral or negative views of the police)

- perceived observations of the police bending the rules, for example, police officers parking on double yellow lines when it looked like they were taking a break and buying food from a shop.

How did these views arise? Overall, trust in the police was based on personal experience, media reporting, social media (particularly American YouTube clips of inappropriate use of force), or television documentaries and dramas – the latter especially dominant amongst the under-30 year olds. In terms of personal experience, the older age groups tended to talk about the slow response to their own or a neighbour’s burglary, the younger respondents tended to talk about being either ‘stopped and searched’ or stopped because the police thought they were “*looking suspicious*”.

While some people who had experienced use of force recognised that the police sometimes had a difficult job dealing with challenging youth behaviour and communities that would not engage, their direct personal experience of the police led to a negative view. They considered that the police were generally unhelpful, “harassed” them, and used their authority in an un-necessarily aggressive and powerful way.

“Just because you’ve got authority doesn’t mean you can go on a power trip any time you feel like it, and I think a lot of them have done that.” (Manchester, male, 21-34, Black British)

“They’re there when you want them but some of them think they’re God.” (Durham, male, 24-30, White)

However, there were some positive comments about the police:

“The vast majority of them I think are all right. There’s always going to be a couple of bad apples.” (Durham, male, 24-30, White)

2.3. Perceptions of the types of force that the police can use

Some of the **public in the focus groups** were able to name a wide range of force types that the police could use; others had a very limited understanding. This difference in

awareness seemed to be influenced by personal experience and how much television crime programmes they watched.

The public tended to differentiate between different types of force – those for ‘everyday general use’ and those used in special, or more threatening, situations:

- General use: Shouting and voice commands (although not recognised by everyone as a form of force); physical restraint¹⁰ (physical and with equipment, but not including handcuffs); handcuffs; baton
- Special situations: Taser and firearms

Other types of force were also mentioned: Stop and search; Police sirens – to stop car drivers; water cannons; Mosquito device (produces sound waves); CS gas; ‘Kettling’; horses; pepper spray; and riot gear and shields.

The public were generally unclear on what types of force police could *legally* use but assumed the police would only use the types of force that were legally allowed.

The more controversial type of force was that of striking someone with a hand, fist or foot: some of the general public thought the police were never allowed to strike a member of the public as this would be equivalent to fighting; others thought it was acceptable but only as a form of self-defence and if the member of the public hit them first.

“They are not allowed to fight because that would be an outright attack on the other person. They can’t provoke a situation by throwing the first punch but they are allowed to defend themselves.” (Public group, Cardiff, mixed gender, 18-35, neutral or negative views of the police)

People who had experienced use of force focussed on the types of force they had either witnessed or experienced such as: handcuffs; leg restraints; multiple officer restraint; baton; CS spray; use of police dogs and horses and Taser.

2.4. Extent of force used by the police

Opinion was divided amongst the public in the survey as to whether the police use force more readily now than they did ten years ago. Almost half of the public (47 per cent) felt that the police use force more readily now, whilst a third (33 per cent) disagreed with this view. A significant proportion (19 per cent) was unable to answer. **Whilst the majority of the public feel the police use force more readily now, as described later in Section 2.6, this is not necessarily a negative opinion.** People that agreed with this statement may feel that the type or level of crime in England and Wales requires a police force that will use force more readily.

¹⁰ Physical restraint relates to physically holding / pinning / restraining of a person by police personnel with the aim of restricting their movement, including the use of body or limb restraints.

Table 2 – Agree/Disagree that the police use force more readily now than 10 years ago

All respondents	
	%
Strongly agree	14%
Tend to agree	33%
Tend to disagree	25%
Strongly disagree	8%
Don't know	19%
AGREE	47%
DISAGREE	33%
Base:	1,302

Whilst opinion was fairly split on whether the police use force more readily now than ten years ago, this had very little correlation with how likely people were to trust the police. The level of trust in the police to use reasonable force was very similar amongst people who felt force was used more readily now, and those who felt it was not used more readily now (82 per cent and 85 per cent respectively).

The perception that the police use force more readily now was highest amongst people aged over 65, of whom 58 per cent agreed with the statement compared to 47% overall. In the younger age groups, half (49 per cent) of 16-34 year olds agreed with the statement. It was the middle age group of 35-54 who were least likely to agree (39 per cent).

Amongst BME groups the overall agreement was very close to the average (46 per cent).

2.5. Perceptions of the severity of different types of force

In the focus groups, the public were shown a list of types of force available to officers: physical force¹¹; Taser; CS spray; baton rounds; baton; firearms; police dogs and horses; and restraint equipment. Apart from baton rounds (rubber bullets), the public were aware of all these types of force.

In terms of severity for everyday use of force, the people in the focus groups rated handcuffs as the lightest form of force and the baton as the most severe form. Voice commands, where they were recognised as a form of force, were on par with handcuffs; the use of body strikes¹², where they were recognised as being a legitimate use of force, were seen as being midway between handcuffs and the baton.

¹¹ Physical force was defined for participants as physically holding/pinning/restraining a person, plus any form of physical contact such as pushing, pulling, striking.

¹² A body strike refers to a strike with the hand, foot or fist on any part of the body and does not include strikes with equipment such as a baton.

For less frequent events, such as an armed robbery, a terrorist attack or crowd control, the public saw the baton as the least severe form of force, with the use of firearms being the most severe. In rising level of severity were: CS spray; Tasers; and the use of dogs. Some placed Tasers and dogs as very severe forms of force as they viewed Taser as representing a potential death threat if it were to be used on people with a heart condition, and a dog was viewed as uncontrollable and therefore liable to inflict considerable damage on the individual.

People who had experienced police use of force had similar views to members of the focus groups about the severity of different types of force, although their views could be coloured by their own experiences. For example, handcuffs were considered to be a severe use of force where the individual had experienced tight handcuffs that had left them with bruising and wrist pains. Similarly, those who had experienced the use of CS gas considered it a very severe form of force as it left the individual in a state of disorientation which could have led to injury.

2.6. Frequency of force used

When asked about how often the police would use force, public views varied according to whether the discussion was about 'day to day' policing or public events such as football matches and demonstrations. The public thought the use of force is more necessary nowadays for issues such as gangs carrying knives and guns and the increasing number of young people being drunk on the streets; but was less necessary for large public events such as football matches because public order events were generally perceived as well managed by police controlling crowds.

Whilst half of the public in the survey were in agreement that force is used more readily now, concern about the frequency of police use of force was relatively low. When asked how concerned they were about this, two thirds (67 per cent) said they were either not very, or not at all concerned. Overall a quarter (25 per cent) identified some level of concern, but four per cent felt very concerned. **So, whilst the public believe that force is being used more readily now, this is not something which seems to cause concern.**

The overall level of concern was higher amongst BME respondents at 32 per cent (compared with 25 per cent on average); it was considerably higher among Black respondents (45 per cent). This is much higher than the other BME groups, for example Asian and Mixed / Other, in which 30 per cent respondents reported concern.

The lower social grade groups showed higher levels of concern over frequency of police use of force. Opinion varied from the AB and C1 groups, both of which had levels of concern at 21 per cent, to the C2 group at 27 per cent, to the lowest grade DE where 33 per cent of people were concerned about frequency of force.

This question also once again identified differences between attitudes in London and the rest of the UK. As shown in Table 3, the overall level of concern over frequency of police force was 25 per cent, whilst in London it was notably higher at 37 per cent.

Table 3 – Concern over frequency of police use of force, by region

		% concerned with the police use of force	Base
Overall	%	25	1,302
Region			
North East	%	22	56
North West	%	30	145
Yorkshire & the Humber	%	23	96
East Midlands	%	28	77
West Midlands	%	20	110
East of England	%	16	132
London	%	37	368
South East	%	22	201
South West	%	30	68
Wales	%	18	[49] ¹³

A second question was asked in relation to frequency of force, in which respondents were asked to estimate the average number of times a gun is fired by armed police each year.¹⁴ The actual figure in 2012/13 was three times, which is typical of the last five years, during which the figure has never been higher than six¹⁵. Respondents were asked to answer this question with a value between zero and 5,000. When analysing the results of this question the median answer given has been used as the key measure, as some respondents answered with very high numbers which distort the mean figure¹⁶.

Overall the median figure given by respondents was 11.6 times, which is almost four times higher than the actual number. The public perception is therefore that guns are being fired by police more often than they are in reality. Although four times as much as the real figure, there still seems to be some recognition that the discharging of firearms by the police is a relatively rare occurrence.

People aged over 65, who had the highest levels of trust in police to use reasonable force, estimated the number of times a weapon was fired by police to be above the average (15.5 times). In contrast people aged 16-24 estimated a lower average of 11.3 times per year.

¹³ The percentage for Wales should be treated with caution due to the base size below 50

¹⁴ Only firearms were asked about in this question, as aside from Taser use, national statistics are not available for other types of police force

¹⁵

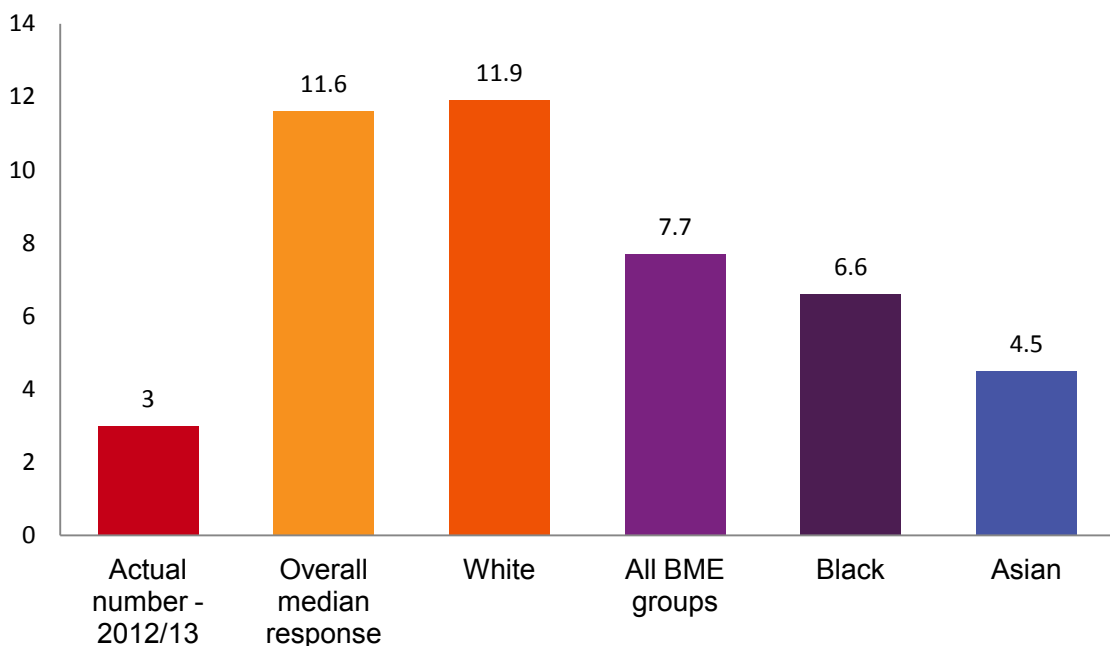
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/298435/Police_use_of_firearms_Commons.pdf

¹⁶ Answers given at this question ranged from the lowest answer of 0 (39 respondents), up to 5000 which was given by one respondent. Of those that provided an answer, over 75% gave an answer between 0 and 50 times.

Ethnic minority groups estimated the lowest number of firearm discharges by police. The average estimate across all ethnic minorities was 7.7 times, which was significantly lower than those of white origin, who on average estimated 11.9 times. This difference is illustrated below in Figure 2.

Outside of London, there was an interesting split at this question by region, as the estimates were notably higher in the North and Midlands regions than they were in the South and Wales. Estimates in the North and Midlands averaged at around 15 times, whilst the average in the South and Wales was nine times.

Figure 2 – Estimated number of times when firearms were used by the police in a year, by ethnicity



Base: Overall median response (1302); White (776); All BME groups (518); Black (179); Asian (292)

2.7. Acceptability of different types of force

Police officers have a range of methods of force available to them and the survey asked the public how acceptable they found these methods across a range of situations. The four scenarios were as follows:

1. A situation where a suspect is attempting to escape arrest
2. A situation where a person is threatening to harm themselves
3. A situation where a suspect is assaulting an officer
4. A situation where a suspect is attacking another person with a knife

The types of force asked about were: using a baton; a police dog; a physical strike; and a Taser.

Overall, across the four different scenarios there was little variation in the acceptability of the use of force by type of force. If, in any given situation, the use of force was felt to be acceptable then the type of force used did not seem to be a significant factor in this decision.

Respondents were most likely to consider the use of force always acceptable in a situation where someone was attacking another person with a knife, around two-thirds of respondents felt force was always acceptable in these situations. Around half of respondents felt it always acceptable to use one of these types of force in a situation where a police officer was being assaulted, and around a third felt it always acceptable when a suspect was attempting to escape arrest. The use of force was seen as least acceptable in cases where a person was threatening to harm themselves; around one in ten respondents felt force to be always acceptable in these circumstances (Table 4).

Table 4 – Acceptability of each scenario by type of force (% always acceptable)

	Using a baton	Police dog	A physical strike	A taser
	%	%	%	%
Attacking another person with a knife	67	65	64	65
Assaulting a police officer	49	47	52	44
Attempting to escape arrest	30	39	33	29
Threatening to harm themselves	12	12	17	13

Base: 1,302 respondents

There were, however, some situations where one type of force stood out. Use of a police dog was generally seen to be most acceptable in cases where someone was attempting to escape arrest (39 per cent felt this would be always acceptable, compared with 29 per cent, 30 per cent and 33 percent respectively for Tasers, baton or a physical strike).

In situations where a person is threatening to harm themselves, the proportion of respondents that felt it was always acceptable to use force was higher for a physical strike (17 per cent) compared with 12 percent for use of a baton or a police dog. At least a third of the public felt it was never acceptable to use any type of force if the person was threatening to harm themselves.

As described above, there appears to be little distinction among members of the public as to which types of force are acceptable and when. **The acceptability of each type of force**

is very consistent, suggesting that once the public are willing for the police to use force, the actual type of force used, of the four discussed, is generally not a major concern.

The qualitative research explored the appropriateness of different types of force for a range of different situations. Overall, there was a preference for the police officer to 'talk down' the threat and some suggestion that force should only be used when a person is threatening with a weapon. Further details may found in Appendix C.

2.8. Factors to be considered when using force

The **public** were asked what factors the police should take into account when making decisions about using force. They thought the following factors should be considered by officers, these were:

- Initial **use of intelligence** on the situation and individuals involved;
- Whether an individual is a **previous or known offender**;
- Whether the individual has **responded to initial communication to calm them down**;

"Most of these arrests can be calmed if they know how to speak to people." (Public group, London, Mixed Gender, Mixed Ethnicity, 18-35, neutral or positive perception of the police).

- **The context of the situation:** how many people are involved and the impact on the individual and members of the public;
- An assessment of the **level of threat:** whether the individual is a dangerous threat to themselves and others; whether they have a weapon or access to a weapon; and the nature of the individual's behaviour (e.g. are they behaving erratically and with aggression);
- **The perceived impact of the type and level of force** (e.g. where force was applied to the body and how many times used) in relation to the size, strength and health of the arrestee/detainee. For example, whether the individual is already injured, their age and mobility or whether there is any prior intelligence of health conditions;
- The **type of crime** committed (e.g. whether violent or serious);
- The **level of resource** available: the equipment or types of force the police have available and the number of officers available to provide support;
- **Police understanding of the local area and community, and perceptions of the public on the use of force in this situation.**

"I'd like to think they think about public perceptions but I don't think they do." (Public group, Birmingham, Mixed Gender, Mixed Ethnicity, 36+, neutral or negative perception of the police)

The **public felt that personal characteristics**, such as age, gender and ethnicity, **in themselves should not have an effect on police decision making to use force, unless the use of force had an impact on the vulnerability and physicality of an individual.** For example, age, gender, mental health, pregnancy and intoxication were

factors that would need to be taken into account, but were not necessarily deciding factors in their own right.

However there were concerns that police officers could make unfair or inaccurate pre-conceptions of a situation, if their decisions to use force were influenced by perceptions of the attitude and verbal behaviour of the individual and whether the individual is a previous or known offender. For example, participants from BME groups specifically discussed that young, Black/Asian and White men in socially deprived areas were most likely to have force used against them. It was felt that use of force could reflect local crime statistics; but there was also concern that this was reflective of officers' perceptions of different groups as criminals. Similarly there were concerns that individuals with mental health conditions who might display erratic behaviours could be incorrectly seen as an offender with the police response being dependent on the behaviour they observed and how the individual responds to communication techniques. The public specifically suggested that training was required on how to approach and use force in incidences with vulnerable members of the community.

2.9. Views about 'reasonable force'

The public were initially asked their views about **reasonable force**. They had little to say about what 'reasonable' force might be, other than problems with defining 'reasonable' and the need for police to match the type of force used to the type of situation.

"For each situation there is a justified means...so if someone's stolen sweets you are not going to Taser them. It is what diffuses the situation the quickest but up to the officer's judgement." (Public group, Durham, mixed gender, 25-34)

2.10. Views about 'excessive force'

The public were also asked to define '**excessive force**'. It was readily defined as *"When it is more severe than the situation requires"* and included:

- use of body strikes (or 'hitting' as the general public described it) as it was considered to be 'fighting';
- when the restraint of an individual was undertaken by multiple police officers;
- the use of batons (also referred to as 'bone breakers'), primarily because they were seen to cause considerable bodily harm.

"Police shouldn't ever touch someone. Should use the tools they've got." (Male, 24-30, White)

While the public would not condone the excessive use of force in general, they recognised that this might happen in certain circumstances. For example, there was a generally held view that younger, less experienced officers were more likely to use excessive force. This was because younger officers were perceived as more likely to act instinctively to a threat by using force rather than holding back and trying to assess and calm down the situation. Equally, where the attack on a police officer was felt to be personal – such as goading an officer or spitting at them – then excessive force was thought to be more likely to occur.

“...the age of the officer, as young officers probably have more adrenalin and an older officer may be more willing to talk.” (Public group, Durham, mixed gender, 25-34)

People who had experienced police use of force almost without exception, considered that they had received excessive force when they were arrested, that officers were ‘too quick to get physical’ and were often not in control of themselves:

“She grabbed one hand and knelt on the sofa and yanked my hand back so that now I have to have physiotherapy on my arm...that was months ago and I still can’t use my wrist properly.” (London, Male, 35- 54, Mixed Race)

“They had me on my knees for half an hour and then on the floor face down...excessive...because I never raised a hand to them.” (Manchester, Male, 35-54, Black Caribbean)

3. Police views about the use of force

This chapter focusses on how the police interviewed viewed the use of force, whether they thought the public trusted them to use force appropriately and the types of force they thought the public would know about and consider for use in a range of different circumstances. The chapter concludes with discussion of police views about reasonable and excessive force. Throughout Chapter 3 and 4 we will report the views and experiences of police officers and staff, and this represents the police interviewed as part of the qualitative research rather than representative of all police.

3.1. Headline findings

- The police officers interviewed thought that the **public may have misperceptions about the types of force that could be used** and the circumstances in which they might be deployed because there was limited public awareness of police use of force.
- Police officers and staff said that there **was not a typical situation where force was used and that every situation should be responded to individually**.
- In general, officers thought that **individual characteristics were not a factor in how often force was used**. However, some senior and supervisory officers discussed more frequent use of force in locations of high crime and poverty and where individuals were known to police as committing regular crime.
- The **key factors considered by the officers in the six police forces** in assessing the level of risk and impact were: **the nature of threat and behaviour; the locality, context and circumstance and the perceived impact on using force**.
- Police officers interviewed thought that personal characteristics did not influence their decision to use of force, but they were perceived as **important factors in assessing the likely impact of the force used**.
- There was a shared view that **force should be used as part of a continuum, whereby communication is used initially** and that force is then introduced as the level of risk is escalated.
- Police officers considered that **'reasonable' force was what is necessary for a person to be compliant and / or restrained and to minimise the risk of harm to the individual, the police officer or the public**.
- The use of **"excessive" force was generally perceived as rare by the police** officers interviewed, and was defined as continuing to use force after the tactical objective had been achieved, or once the person had become compliant, under control and no longer a threat.

3.2. Police perceptions of public trust in the police use of force

At senior and supervisory levels there was a perception that the public understand the types of force that can be used and that the public trust the police to use force appropriately – although opinion was mixed. At the front line level, the police were of the opinion that as the public know so little about the types of force that could be used it was difficult for them to consider whether they were trusted by the public to use force appropriately and proportionately.

“There are a whole lot of circumstances that have got to be looked at and put together as a jigsaw that the public might not always see and be privy to for them to understand why things were done or not done.” (Police Superintendent)

The police thought that the general public are not fully aware of the potential threats that may arise and are not able to gauge the type or level of force to be used, nor would they recognise the consequences for both the public and the police if force was not used. This potentially gives rise to unfair criticism of police conduct because the public are unable to appreciate the context of the situation or do not have the full knowledge of what is legal or appropriate:

“The public freeze-frame a second and say that is out of order and you have no right to hit someone.” (Detention Officer)

While the public confirmed this view, there were groups of people who had a better idea of the types of force that the police could use and at the same time were less likely to trust the police to use force appropriately. These were:

- young people that had experienced ‘stop and search’ procedures (*‘they see force as power of punishment’*),
- people who been detained (and complained that handcuffs were too tight); and
- people living in local areas that were known to be areas of high crime..

“...the police are the enemy for some people. I can think of one neighbourhood where the neighbourhood officer is well respected and they respond to that one officer but when we turn up on the estate in a van it’s a completely different dynamic because we are not that one officer.” (Police Sergeant)

Police officers interviewed felt that both the news media and the IPCC perpetuated the view that force was used inappropriately by the police. In the case of the news media, it was only the high profile ‘negative’ cases that were ever reported; the IPCC were also thought to only publicise wrong-doings rather than where it was shown that a police officer had made the correct decision to use a particular type of force.

“There’s a public perception that we need to be more clinical like they see in the movies like Jason Bourne where he wraps somebody up in three seconds. And I’m not Jason Bourne. I can’t do that...so they see quite an untidy fight with somebody and that’s because it’s hard to arrest someone that doesn’t want to be arrested.” (Police Inspector)

“The IPCC are overtly politicised and very quick to share bad news stories about the police...we are all for a bad news story and not a pat on the back story.” (Police Sergeant)

3.3. The types of force that the police can use and views about the level of severity

Depending on role and training, the police interviewed were able to use different types of force: a firearms trainer said that they could use the *‘full spectrum – right up to the use of lethal force with firearms’*; a Custody Sergeant could use restraint through handcuffs to CS spray, but not a Taser; and a Detention Officer could use only wrist and arm locks and restraining straps.

Police rating of severity was very similar to that of the general public. In order of severity the general ranking was: voice commands; physical restraint including handcuffs; physical strikes; CS spray; Taser; baton; AEP rounds; dogs; and firearms.

The police said they tried to use the minimum force necessary to control the situation and to minimise harm to the individual being arrested, the police officer concerned and the public in the vicinity. For public order issues even the 'presence' of force could have an effect without the force being deployed:

"The dogs can be just sat in the van to have a positive impact on the crowd. From that low level of they are there, you can see and hear them, through to they are now being used." (Police Inspector)

Further details of the types of force that the police consider appropriate for different types of situation can be found in Appendix C.

3.4. Influences on police officers' views about the use of force

Senior and supervisory officers (e.g. Deputy Chief Constables and Chief Inspectors), tended to talk about the National Decision model¹⁷ as the basis for how police officers make decisions about using force:

"I would never, ever, say to somebody use force until I've spun that wheel on the national decision-making model, to get my head round what I've got, what's in front of me, what am I dealing with, and what do I need to deal with that effectively and efficiently without getting people hurt." (Chief Inspector)

Using the National Decision Model, police officers said they would decide on an individual basis the type of force required, the degree of severity with which it was applied (e.g. where and how hard an officer might body strike an individual), and whether additional support was required from other officers present:

"Personally, I go into every situation considering that I'll be gripping the rail of a court at some point." (Police Inspector)

They would take a range of factors into account when using force:

- the **situation** (for example whether the police officer was dealing with an individual, a gang, or a larger scale public order issue);
- whether the police office has **intelligence about the person being arrested** (e.g. mental health state, prior convictions, history of violence, etc.);
- whether the **officer considers they are being assaulted**;
- the **nature of the threat and behaviour** e.g. what is the arrestee/detainee doing that is aggressive and how are they not being compliant;

¹⁷ <http://www.acpo.police.uk/documents/president/201201PBANDM.pdf>. The National Decision Model (NDM) provides a simple, logical and evidence-based approach to making policing decisions. The NDM is suitable for all decisions. It can be applied to spontaneous incidents or planned operations, by an individual or teams of people, and to both operational and non-operational situations. Decision makers can use it to structure a rationale of what they did during an incident and why.

- **locality, context and circumstance:** what is the risk to others in the context; what weapons are available; thinking about what the public would expect them to do in that situation; whether the police officer was arresting someone in an open public space or in the person's home; the size of the individual;
- the **perceived impact on using force** e.g. the potential injury vs. protection and safety

Individual characteristics were not seen as a factor in when or how often force was used by front line officers although they were perceived as important factors in assessing the impact of the use of force (e.g. age and gender). However, some senior officers discussed more frequent use of force in locations of high crime and poverty and where individuals were known to police as committing regular crime.

Overall, views on the types of considerations that the police should take into account were similar to the public, but there were specific concerns about police assessment of the level of risk and the impact of using different types of force and the injury it could cause.

While a supervisory officer could authorise the use of force, ultimately it was considered to be at the officers' discretion as to whether they should use force:

“As a commander I can authorise the use tactic (baton / dogs / shields / firearms, etc.) but the decision to use force is still with individual officers...the whole concept of policing in this country is that it's at the officer's discretion.” (Chief Inspector)

Underpinning the decision to use force was the training that the police have received. Supervisory officers mentioned how the training is based on the national guidelines and uses the National Decision Model as a basis, with training updated to reflect learning from complaints and recommendations from coroners. Overall, there was some variation across the police forces in the accounts given by officers regarding the precise content and frequency of the training received.

Overall, the content, quality and frequency of the training provided were considered to be sufficient and adequate, although there were some concerns raised by individual officers. For example, in one area personal safety and first aid training had been combined, which was considered to be insufficient and too infrequent to ensure that officers are fully up to speed. In another area a move to online self-learning was thought to have made it more difficult to evaluate whether the officer had really understood the training.

“There is really no way of evaluating it [training]...face to face I can see if you have understood or remembered it but I think training is suffering.” (Police Constable,)

Good training was also viewed as supporting accountability. There was now considered to be a greater focus on providing good support materials and tools to officers and staff to aid decision-making and evaluate and assess how they use force. However, some of the police officers interviewed felt that **there could be further embedding of the national decision making model within training, increased sharing of lessons learnt from investigations and the discussion of the legal requirements around use of force into more operational language.**

3.5. Police officers views about reasonable and excessive use of force

Without exception, the police officers interviewed considered reasonable force in a similar way. They based their definition around what was appropriate for the individual, the situation, and the police officer present. They defined it as what was necessary for a person to be compliant and / or restrained with a minimum of risk to the individual, the police officer or the public.

“If you hit someone around the head when they’re just shoving you it’s not reasonable and the threat you receive has to be responded to proportionately and once you’ve achieved compliance you must stop.” (Police Constable)

However, the police officers also considered that ‘reasonable’ force was very subjective and depended on the decision-making of the officer.

“It would be an individual decision as to what force to use...you’d have to look at what the perceptions of that officer were at the time and that personal perception will depend on their own characteristics, so say, their build. The perceptions of all three officers in the car of incident X were all different, but perceiving it differently doesn’t mean it’s wrong.” (Operational Firearms Commander)

“It’s each situation on its individual merits. I suppose there’s no right and wrong answer and each officer’s assessment of a situation can be completely different based on their experience and exposure and background.” (Police Sergeant)

Excessive force was defined as either a high level of immediate use of force which was not required to control a situation or continued use of force after the tactical objective had been achieved, or once the person had become compliant, under control and no longer a threat to themselves, the police officer or the public.

“If the officers continued with using force after the point at which the threat has diminished, it would be excessive.” (Detention Officer)

Across the levels of seniority of police officers interviewed there were mixed opinion about whether excessive force was used, although the general opinion was that the use of excessive force was rare. While police officers said that they would not use excessive force intentionally – and it would never be sanctioned...

“Why overstep the mark? What are you going to gain by it? Lose your job?”
(Detention Officer)

...they also recognised that police officers were human and that there would be times when they may over-react in a situation, particularly where the person arrested was making their aggression personal – such as name-calling or spitting at the officer.

“It’s the individual officer that lets themselves go too far – i.e. the red mist syndrome.” (Chief Inspector)

When discussing the issue of excessive force, the police considered that they were often unfairly judged by the public. This was because the public:

- rarely witnessed the whole incident and therefore were making judgements on a 'snapshot' of the event;
- rarely had any background information on the person being arrested;
- rarely recognised how aggressive some people can be when arrested; and
- in most cases did not know the most effective ways in which to restrain an individual.

Because of the difficulty of retrospectively having to defend oneself, the police interviewed were keen to find ways of enabling others to understand why a certain level of force was used. Body-worn cameras were considered to be an excellent way of ensuring that excessive force is not used and as a way of demonstrating to others that the amount of force used was reasonable. Body cameras are further discussed in section 4.1.

"I think body worn cameras would lead to a reduction of excessive uses of force. I think it would lead to a reduction of complaints because the officers that would otherwise be over-zealous or intolerant would be more tolerant if their actions were being filmed. Likewise, the public, if they know they are being filmed by officers, are more likely to be compliant if they know their actions are being captured on camera." (Senior Officer)

4. Accountability

This chapter explores perceptions of trust and accountability in police using force from the perspectives of the **public and the police participating in the qualitative research**. This includes how the police currently record force, but also suggests how the police might record their use of force in the future. It also explores how participants currently viewed police accountability.

4.1. Headline findings

- The **methods for recording police use of force, as discussed by police interviewees, were not consistent across police forces** and they highlighted issues around the level of consistency of both recording all types of force and the level of detail provided within these procedures.
- It was **usual practice to record force within officers' notebooks** and for this to be monitored by line managers, **but recording via the 'use of force form' was not consistent**. More uniform processes were reported in certain sections of policing, specifically within firearm response, Taser units, police dogs sections and custody teams.
- **The public had limited knowledge of how police currently recorded force**, but generally felt that all use of force should be recorded.
- People who had experienced police use of force were specifically concerned about the **consistency and truthfulness of current written recording procedures**.
- **Police officers were confident in the current measures to ensure reasonable use of force and accountability** because of the good training, monitoring and supervision procedures. However, there were some concerns raised (discussed in section 3.4) that training could be further improved.
- **Police interviewed felt that there were clear lines of accountability through the complaints and investigation procedures**, which were consistent across police forces.
- **The public generally felt that good measures were in place to ensure appropriate and reasonable use of police use of force**. This was less so for those who had experienced police use of force. There was **agreement from all participants that the use of body cameras could provide greater transparency of decision making** of use of force by police personnel.

4.2. The recording of police using force

As reported by the police officers interviewed, **the methods for recording when the police use force were not consistent across police forces**. There were also **issues around whether there was a consistent approach to recording all the types of force used and the amount of detail provided within these procedures**. For example, one police sergeant said that it was procedure for any use of force to be recorded as soon as officers left the scene. However, how this was recorded would vary in detail, length and content according to the approach of the officer. While it was usual practice to record force within officers' notebooks and for this to be monitored by line managers, recording via the 'use of the force form' was not consistent. Indeed, it had been part of the national guidelines for police forces to have a procedure in place to fill out a use of force form every

time force was used. However, in practice this was not perceived as being used regularly used officers in any of the six police forces.

Senior officers discussed that this variation was often due to the pressure of time rather than because officers were actively trying to hide the use of force, in terms of type, level and frequency of use. There was an understanding that recording when force was used was important for central statistics and monitoring, but often it would be perceived by front line officers as an inconvenient administrative task and that the use of notebooks was a sufficient record.

However, more standardised processes were reported in certain sections of policing, specifically, firearm response, Taser and police dog units. For example, firearm officers discussed the use of logs, individual officer's statements, level of force form and a specific form for Taser use. Similarly, police dog sections were required to fill out a dog incident form every time a dog was used.

Custody sergeants and detention officers felt there was a more consistent approach within a custody setting. All force should be recorded through the custody records and police notebooks. This included the type and level of force and also the rationale and decision-making to use force. Interactions and contact with detainees were also often filmed on CCTV.

"They are [the use of cameras] the greatest thing in the world ... The camera says it all ... I think it does generally protect us more than people think ... it's 24 hour CCTV in custody so whatever I say and do is recorded." (Detention Officer)

These procedures were seen as both protecting the health and safety of individuals and safeguarding police staff from accusations of using excessive force. However, it was less common to record via the use of the force form because they felt they had other effective processes, and there were concerns about duplication of the process and the impact on police time and resources.

Some custody staff discussed that there may be different perceptions of what would constitute physical force and whether all physical contact to provide restraint or compliance should be recorded.

"I suppose there's a grey area; there's certainly a grey area in my mind, with regards to when you would or when you wouldn't. You certainly wouldn't fill one in for every time you had to grab hold of somebody or touch somebody, because literally you'd be sat there filling forms in all day. It's when strong, physical violence has to be used or controlled, and it's down to the individual what level you're happy with. Obviously, custody sergeants are present, and if they believe that a form is required then they'd tell you anyway." (Detention Officer)

Overall, police officers interviewed thought that comprehensive notes were more likely to be made where there was a worry that a complaint or an issue would be taken up. There was some discussion of concerns regarding how different police perceptions and accounts were seen as negative in any investigation or court proceedings. One officer felt that it was important to discuss what happened after an incident so that they checked perceptions and there was an overall consistent account. However, across the interviews, it was stressed that there was an open culture of reporting any suspicions of where police

colleagues may be using excessive force and that it was not practice to cover up incidents where excessive force was used.

“There’s no one that would lie to protect me, and I wouldn’t lie to protect me.”
(Police constable)

Supervisory officers also felt that there was limited evidence to suggest that the police close ranks to protect each other.

From the perspective of the **police** interviewed, **there was general consensus that the main way to improve the recording of force would be through the use of body cameras** because they would provide greater transparency in showing good and bad decision-making and provide additional evidence in investigations. They also were seen as a good method to tackle public concerns that police officers’ written records were dependent on individual perceptions of that situation. However, there were concerns raised about how body camera footage would then be interpreted and that body cameras would never be a comprehensive recording system on their own.

“I’m in favour of body cameras – it captures the impact factor of the behaviour of the person and the crowd which is difficult to portray in a court. They can’t fully record everything ... and the degree of sound, they might not be picking up that while you are struggling to detain someone... the three pubs around might be playing loud music so when you radio you can’t hear response and don’t know if someone is coming to help you.” (Police Sergeant)

There was also a concern that some communities may be against the use of body cameras because they would view this as an intrusion of their privacy. It was therefore important to communicate their value and benefit to the public so they felt confident in their use.

In terms of recording use of force, two suggested improvements were:

- **changes to written forms of recording needed to be incorporated into existing systems**, for example, amending the custody record for more comprehensive recording of force used and decision-making by arresting officers. One detective constable stressed that any internal changes or implementation of national guidelines must be proportionate to the need to resolve the current level of complaints and issues, which was perceived by him to be minimal;
- **written recording would be improved if done electronically via remote devices** because it would be easier to collate and monitor by police professional standards departments.

The public had limited knowledge of how police currently recorded force, but it was generally felt that all force should be recorded and there was strong support for visual recording via body cameras. This was because of their concerns that any written accounts could be changed and manipulated after the event to provide justification for actions when the police were accused of using excessive force.

“With written [notes] you can always doctor [it] and it’s one person’s viewpoint ... we could all go away from tonight and write what we’ve talked about down and not one

of the accounts would be the same, that's the problem." (Public group, London, Mixed Gender, Mixed Ethnicity, 36+, neutral or negative perception of the police).

Body cameras were also perceived as useful to evidence good decision making.

"At the end of the day it's for their own benefit if someone is accusing them of violence." (Public group, Birmingham, Male, BME, 16-24, neutral, positive or negative perception of the police)

There was also a perception that body cameras could cut down on paperwork and allow for more police resource on the street.

Additionally, **people who had experienced police use of force** felt they had a clear understanding of current written recording procedures which they felt allowed the police to document their own perception of an event. They agreed with the people in the focus groups that whenever force is used by the police, it should be recorded, and this should include minor physical interactions, such as, the forceful application of handcuffs. However, there was limited trust in the accuracy with which the police record incidents of force because complaints relied on the individual's word against the officer and the supervisory officer who reviewed the case.

"If people make complaints, there's written records, whether it goes anywhere is another matter." (London, Male, 35-54, Black Caribbean)

The recording of police using force was also perceived as a way to detect regular or consistent use of force, which could raise suspicions of inappropriate use of force by an individual officer or police force.

Certain officers have reps because they're that type of guy ... if that was on paper, that stuff could be looked at more." (Manchester, Male, 21-34, Black British)

CCTV was also seen as a method of recording, and was viewed as a deterrent for police using excessive force. It was important that CCTV was present in all spaces within custody. People who had experienced force were also in favour of the introduction of body cameras because they ensured transparency and accountability and removed the issue of individuals and officers having different perceptions of an event.

"With camera there's no lying, you know because you can see for yourself." (London, Gender, Male, Mixed - Black Caribbean/White, 35-54)

4.3. Views on the accountability of police using force

Generally, there was **a high level of confidence by the police officers interviewed around the current measures to ensure that reasonable force was used** and that police were accountable due to the good training, monitoring and supervision procedures that were in place.

“Line managers and supervisors should be out there monitoring what the staff are doing, and as a supervisor you shouldn’t be allowing people to use excessive force, and you should be dealing with it.” (Chief Inspector)

Police officers interviewed were also conscious that they were under constant observation and scrutiny because of CCTV and film footage on camera phones, lessons learnt from other police officers experiences and media and public reaction to high profile cases.

It was felt that there were clear lines of accountability through the complaints and investigation procedures, which were consistent across police forces. Investigations were undertaken by either supervisors/line managers or the police professional standards department, depending on the seriousness of the complaint. If an officer was suspected of using excessive force or a complaint was made, it was investigated (internally or externally) and could then result in monitoring, further training (e.g. review by skills training departments), dismissal or legal proceedings.

All six police forces had whistleblowing policies and procedures in place (e.g. an anonymous phone line to police professional standards departments for officers to raise issues about other officers). However, some police staff and officers felt that complaints were unlikely to happen where a lower level of force was used or in less clear cut cases, because officers would want to be very certain of a complaint in order to put another officer’s career at risk.

“The perception is that if you report someone they will end up being disciplined, whereas it might not need that level of intervention, it might just be a training need. The police are so concerned with the lack of public confidence that the minute a person looks like they might be a candidate for disciplinary action they play it down.” (Police Sergeant)

The consequences of police using force were generally perceived as fair because officers received thorough training to understand and apply the legal definitions of reasonable and excessive use of force.

“We do teach them the correct way to do things. We do teach them about decision-making. Unfortunately, if officers do step over the line, well then they need to be brought to bear for their actions.” (Superintendent)

However there were concerns that investigations often take a long time which could then have a negative effect on police officers’ welfare as they waited for a decision. It was also felt that police officers received tougher sentencing compared to the public when cases were criminally investigated.

I know several officers that have used excessive force that have been charged with a section 39 assault – which is the lowest level of assault – have gone to prison and the assailant that assaulted somebody else got charged with a (section) 47 and didn’t go to prison. That’s not fair. So yeah, we are looked at differently, we are dealt with differently.” (Chief Inspector)

The public generally assumed that good measures were in place to ensure appropriate and reasonable use of force. They expected regular and efficient training and that the police ensured that there were disciplinary procedures in place to deal with

police using excessive force. They also discussed the need for greater public awareness of what were legal and reasonable types of force for the police to use so that the public felt confident to report and complain about incidents where excessive force was used.

Similarly, **people with experience of the police use of force** believed that good training and internal review processes were important to ensure force was used proportionately. It was suggested that this should focus on how to assess each situation independently, the use of approaches which remove threat without huge risks of harm (e.g. safe restraint techniques) and the use of communication to try and prevent escalation and the use of force. However, based on their own direct experience, some participants did not feel confident in the current complaints procedures because they had experienced limited action, for example, their complaint had not been upheld or was not regarded as fairly investigated. Other participants, who had not made complaints, expected a limited outcome because they did not trust the police to internally investigate complaints because of their low levels of trust in the police.

5. Discussion

In this chapter we draw out the key themes emerging from the research.

Trust in the police and the use of force

When discussing the use of force with the general public it is clear that while they have some idea about the types of force the police can use, and in what circumstances, their awareness of the full range of force available to officers is limited. Despite this lack of awareness, the public express a high degree of trust in the police to use force appropriately.

The public expect the police to use verbal commands and ‘talk-down’ methods to manage situations before using physical force.

The public do not generally know whether the police use excessive force, or how often, but make the assumption that force may at times be used inappropriately. They consider that these are rare events. The public also assume that there are clear lines of accountability that would minimise police using excessive force.

However, people who had experienced police use of force in the study considered that ‘talk-down’ methods are rare and excessive force is used far more often than the public might think. In this respect, most said that they had been the recipient of inappropriate or excessive force being used and considered that there was little police accountability in relation to the use of force.

Decision-making and the use of force

In considering how the police are likely to make decisions about the type of force to use and when, there is an overall view amongst the public that the police need to take into account a variety of factors. They do not believe that personal characteristics, such as age, gender and ethnicity are relevant factors by themselves, although they may be relevant when taking into account other factors such as how the person presents themselves and the degree to which they are assessed as being a threat (either to themselves, the public generally or the police).

The public also recognise that the police are human and have to make ‘on-the-spot’ decisions, often in the face of considerable aggression.

By contrast, those who had experienced force felt there was limited consideration and assessment by officers as to why and when to use force, because they believed the police used force in order to demonstrate that they were in a position of ‘power’.

The police position is that every situation is decided on an individual basis and that the national decision model forms the basis for police decisions on using force. Overall, the police considered that force was used where appropriate and required, with some of the officers in the research not having used any form of force for a considerable time; others using it more frequently – even daily, depending on their role.

There was a general recognition that force may be used excessively, although this was not condoned by the police officers generally. The police thought that excessive force was more likely to be used either by young and inexperienced officers or where the

confrontation becomes personal (such as verbal abuse or being spat at), in which case, officers at all levels talked about the 'red mist', where an officer might lose their temper. Although not deemed acceptable, the police and the public recognised that such behaviour may occur when a police officer is confronted with an aggressor.

Recording the use of force

It was apparent that police forces do not use the same process of recording when force was used. Similarly, it was also apparent that as different police officers will have different perceptions of a situation (as do the public), they are unlikely to record use of force in the same way.

The police – and the public – were strongly in favour of more robust methods of recording how and when force is used providing it did not pose any additional administrative burden on the police. In this respect, body cameras were thought to be an ideal solution, providing they were permanently recording and could not be manipulated by selectively being switched on and off.

Accountability

In the focus groups, the public assumed that there were already robust systems in place to ensure that the police were accountable for their actions and that there were clear investigation routes. People who had experienced force were less convinced, arguing that when they had complained about excessive use of force their complaints were dismissed and it was usually a case of 'their word against mine'.

The police recognised that they had to be accountable and considered that they were fully responsible for their actions.

However, officers also considered that current procedures to ensure accountability focussed too much on negative experiences and didn't look at experiences where force had been used appropriately. There was a view that this not only sent the wrong messages to the public but also potentially undermined trust in the police.

Appendices

- A. Research methodology
- B. Additional survey tables
- C. Considerations in the police use of force: additional qualitative findings
- D. Qualitative topic guides
- E. Quantitative survey questions

A - Research methodology

Quantitative survey

The quantitative survey was conducted via a face-to-face Omnibus methodology.

This approach uses a sophisticated computerised sampling system to integrate the Postcode Address File (PAF) with Census small area data at output area level. To ensure a balanced sample of adults, interlocking quotas are set on the basis of sex, presence of children and working status. To minimise the geographical clustering, each wave used a large number of sampling points. Within each sample point, only one interview was undertaken per household and a minimum of six households was left between each successful interview. This minimises the effects of clustering within the sample.

Interviews were completed with 1,302 respondents in England and Wales, which consisted of a nationally representative sample of 891 respondents, plus an additional BME boost of 411 interviews. The nationally representative survey was conducted on one Omnibus wave from 29 August – 2 September. The BME boost was conducted over two Omnibus waves and ran from 3 September - 14 September.

The full dataset were weighted to be representative of the population of England and Wales as a whole. This process involved rim-weighting the ethnic minority sample on its own first, based on population estimates for these groups (Black, Asian, Other). A base weight of one was then applied to the non-ethnic minority case cases, and the ethnic minority rim-weights were averaged to equal one. Following this the whole dataset were rim-weighted together. Rim-weights were applied based on age, gender, working status, ethnicity, region, and social grade.

Qualitative research

The qualitative research was conducted over the period August and October 2014 in six areas of England and Wales. These areas were selected to represent a range of police force areas across size, statistics of the frequency of use of police force and urban and rural locations.

The general public participating in the group discussions were sourced by conventional free-find methods (street recruitment and door-knocking) using a screening questionnaire to determine their eligibility for inclusion in the study; police officers were sourced through the local police force from initial IPCC contacts; people who had experienced police use of force were sourced through a variety of community organisations.

A full breakdown of the achieved sample is provided below:

Public focus group sample:

- Six groups were conducted in London, South Wales, West Midlands and Durham.
- Each focus group comprised five- eight participants, and discussions lasted 90 minutes.
- Two group discussions (London) were conducted with a broad spread of the general public to explore public knowledge and views about the police use of force.

The discussions were used to consider the overall scope of the research and provide key questions to be included in a general population survey.

- Four focus groups (South Wales, West Midlands and Durham) were conducted with a broad spread of the general public to further explore public knowledge and views about the police use of force and follow up interesting issues identified in the preceding general population survey.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
	London	London	South Wales (Cardiff)	West Midlands (Birmingham)	West Midlands (Birmingham)	Durham	Total
Age	18-35	36+	18-35	36+	16-24	25-34	
Gender	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Male	TBC	
Life stage	Mix of singletons and young families	Mix of older families and empty nesters	Mix of singletons and young families	Mix of older families and empty nesters	Mixed	Mix of singletons and young families	
Ethnicity	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	BME	Mixed	
Perceptions of the police	Mix of neutral / positive	Mix of neutral / negative	Mix of neutral / negative	Mix of neutral / negative	Mixed	Mix of neutral / positive	
Number of attendees	8	8	8	7	8	5	44
Gender	5 Male, 3 Female	4 Male, 4 Female	4 Male, 4 Female	3 Male, 4 Female	Male	2 Male, 3 Female	
Ethnicity	3 White British, 3 Black Caribbean, 2 Black African	4 White British, 1 White Irish, 3 Black Caribbean	6 White British, 1 Chinese, 1 Asian Pakistani	3 White British, 2 Black British, 1 Asian Indian, 1 Asian Pakistani	1 Black British, 2 Asian Pakistani, 1 Asian Indian, 2 African, 1 Bangladeshi, 1 Mixed Race White and Black Caribbean	5 White British	

People with experience of police use of force sample:

- 13 interviews were conducted with people with experience of police use of force when being arrested. Interviews took place in Bristol, Durham, London and Manchester.

	Male	Female	White	BME	18-20	21-34	35-54	Total achieved
Bristol	2	2	0	4	0	1	3	4
Durham	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	2
London	3	0	1	2	0	0	3	3
Manchester	4	0	0	4	0	2	2	4
Total	11	2	3	10	0	5	8	13

Police force officers and staff sample:

- 31 interviews with police officers and staff of various ranks, across six police forces in England and Wales.
- Police staff and officers have not been attributed by police force to ensure anonymity of participants.

Size of Force	Police constable /sergeant	Inspector/ superintendent (including chief officers)	Custody sergeant	Detention officers	Deputy/ Chief Constable	Total achieved
Big	3	2	1	1		7
Big	2	2		2	1	7
Medium	2		2	1		4
Small	2	2		1		5
Small	2	1	1			4
Small	1	1		1	1	4
	10	8	2	5	2	31

B – Additional survey tables

Table A - Trust in the police to use reasonable force, by region

	% who trust the police a lot / a fair amount	
Overall	83%	1,302
Region		
North East	84%	56
North West	85%	145
Yorkshire & the Humber	80%	96
East Midlands	94%	77
West Midlands	86%	110
East of England	91%	132
London	69%	368
South East	85%	201
South West	82%	68
Wales	81%	[49] ¹⁸

Table B – Estimating the average number of times police fire a gun per year

	Median response	Base
Actual number of discharges (2012/13)	3	
Overall	11.6	1,302
Age		
16-24	11.3	185
25-34	9.9	274
35-44	19.4	227
45-54	9.9	190
55-64	9.8	152
65+	15.5	274
Ethnicity		
White	11.9	776
All BME groups	7.7	518
Black	6.6	179
Asian	4.5	292
Mixed/Other	9.1	55

¹⁸ The percentage for Wales should be treated with caution due to the base size below 50

Region		
North East	16.6	56
North West	13.1	145
Yorkshire & the Humber	16.5	96
East Midlands	15.5	77
West Midlands	15.7	110
East of England	9.2	132
London	9.8	368
South East	9.7	201
South West	10.0	68
Wales	8.1	[49] ¹⁹

¹⁹ The percentage for Wales should be treated with caution due to the base size below 50

C - Considerations in the police use of force: additional qualitative findings

The public, people with experience of use of force and the police were presented with a series of situations in the qualitative research where force maybe. They were asked to consider the factors that would be taken into account when force is used.

Police use of force scenarios

As a means of further exploring the issues around the police use of force a number of scenarios were discussed with the research participants, providing an opportunity to think about decision-making in specific circumstances and the types of force that may be appropriate. The scenarios that were presented varied amongst each participant group, with some scenarios only explored with specific participant groups.

The views of people with experience of the use of force were generally informed by their direct experience and tended to be more negative about specific types of force that they had experienced. Some members of the public also felt that any type of force beyond physical restraint should only be applied when someone had a weapon.

The findings are summarised in the following table.

Public views	Views of people with experience of police use of force	Police views
An individual is armed with a gun		
Following a verbal warning, Taser or firearm would be a reasonable response	N/A	N/A
Individual assaulted the police officer		
Physical restraint, possibly a body strike, CS spray, Taser	Physical restraint, but should not be used as a punishment	Physical restraint or body strikes
An individual is armed with a knife and threatening to hurt themselves		
Initially talk-down to assess the situation; if not successful then Taser	CS Spray or Taser	Talk-down techniques, body strikes, Taser
An individual is known to have a history of violence		
No clear view, but an expectation that the police would use force more readily	N/A	Useful information to assess risk but type of force used would depend on the situation
An officer Tasers an individual		
Only acceptable if the individual or others are at risk of harm; where restraint did not work; if the individual is armed	Only acceptable if the individual or others are at risk of harm; where restraint did not work; if the individual is armed	N/A
Taser used in a custody cell)		
N/A	N/A	Three views: 1) never appropriate; 2) only in response to excessive

		violence; 3) instead of using multiple officers, which can result in bodily harm
A police officer assaults an individual using fists or kicks		
Two views: 1) Acceptable only if used in self-defence; 2) never acceptable as restraint is available	Two views: 1) Acceptable only if used in self-defence; 2) never acceptable as restraint is available	Acceptable only in self-defence, or where no other restraint options or equipment are available
Multiple officers restraining an individual		
Acceptable only if escalation of violence is likely and dependent on the strength of the individual	N/A	Acceptable in certain circumstances. Positional asphyxia a key consideration
A police officer releases a dog on a suspect		
Acceptable to stop a suspect escaping, but concerns about the effects of a dog biting	Seen as unpredictable and generally excessive in all circumstances	Used only where there was a severe risk to the police; Taser and CS spray preferred. Presence of dogs can act as a deterrent

D – Qualitative Topic Guides

Public Focus Group - Topic Guide

Aims:

The IPCC's study on police use of force is divided into four key research areas - context, in-depth case analysis, public views and stakeholder input.

The research to explore public and professional views and perceptions on the use of police force will specifically aim to:

- *examine public awareness and understanding of police use of force;*
- *examine public views on fairness and frequency that police use of force - specifically the use of moderate and excessive force in different scenarios and circumstances and views on the IPCC's role in this context*

Timings	Content	Stimulus needed
	Arrival and registration	
5 mins	<p>Welcome <i>Purpose: To introduce format for day and purpose of the focus group</i></p> <p>TNS BMRB Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose of the research: <i>To understand public confidence in policing</i> • TNS BMRB independent research organisation undertaking research on behalf of IPCC • Housekeeping • Ground rules • Purpose of workshop • Length of discussion: 90mins • Audio recording • Confidentiality and anonymity: their participation in and contributions to the research are kept strictly confidential, 	

	and they will not be identified to IPCC	
5 mins	<p>Participants' introduction</p> <p>Purpose: <i>ice breaker to allow all participant's to introduce themselves and an opportunity to raise any issues/tensions between the police and community</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell us a bit about yourself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name; where you live; what you do • What are your views on policing in your local area? 	
25 mins	<p>Knowledge about police use of force</p> <p>Purpose: <i>To explore spontaneous views and understanding of what police use of force is and when it can be used.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the police are carrying out their duties and are in contact with the public, what types of force do you think are they legally able to use <p>[FLIP-CHART types of force]</p> <p>PROBE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Perceptions of the severity of each type of force if used by an officer ○ What is their understanding of when police are allowed to use handcuffs <p><i>NOTE to interviewer handcuffs can only be justified if a detained person is likely to escape or attempt to escape or is likely to offer violence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what types of situations do you think the police are most likely to use force <p>[FLIP-CHART situation]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who do you think the police will most likely use force against <p>[FLIP-CHART characteristics] [SPONTEOUS and then PROBE]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Age, gender, ethnicity, religion 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have you been informed about this? (e.g. media, observations, personal/friend/family experiences) • What factors, if any, do you think the police should consider when using force <p>[FLIP-CHART]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think is a reasonable use of force <p>[FLIP-CHART]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think is excessive use of force <p>[FLIP-CHART]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you feel concerned about police using force? How, what, why? 	
<p>45 mins in TOTAL</p> <p>20 mins</p>	<p>Perception of police force, including scenarios of police use of force introduced and discussed (types of force, level, context)</p> <p>I'm now going to present some more information around the types and level of force police officers and staff can use.</p> <p><i>Facilitator to present and read aloud the information: [types of force, legal definition, reasonable force definition, excessive force definition]</i></p>	<p>PRESENT 'types' [Slide 1]</p> <p>Then PRESENT 'legal' definition [Slide 2]</p> <p>Then PRESENT 'reasonable' definition [Slide 3]</p> <p>Then PRESENT 'excessive' definition [Slide 4]</p>

<p>20 mins</p>	<p>SCENARIO 1 and then SCENARIO 2</p> <p>We are now going to (<i>work in two groups</i>) to explore scenarios where police use of force may be used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenario 1 – custody setting, an individual is acting violently in their custody cell • Scenario 2 – point of arrest, an individual is acting aggressively and violently during arrest. <p>Ask each group to discuss for each scenario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How should the police initially respond? • What type of force should be used in this scenario? • What level of force should be used? • What factors do you think the police should have to take into account in making their decision? <p><i>[To discuss within groups and then feedback in plenary]</i></p> <p>Now, thinking again about scenario 2, what if the person was....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> pregnantarmed with a gunassaulted the officer known to have a history of violence mentally ill drunkarmed with a knife & is threatening to cut his throat14 years old <p>Ask for each of the eight factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should this influence the response of officers and the level and type of force used? • How / why / why not? <p><i>[To discuss within groups and then feedback in plenary]</i></p> <p>PROBE on all discussion points above – <i>what factors do they consider</i></p>	<p>PRESENT scenarios 1 & 2 [Slide 5 & 6]</p> <p>PRESENT questions 1 [Slide 7]</p> <p>PRESENT additional considerations [Slide 8]</p> <p>PRESENT questions 2 [Slide 9]</p>
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<p>5 mins</p>	<p>SCENARIO PART 2</p> <p><i>[Participants are then presented with a number of different options of use of force]</i></p> <p><i>(In your groups)</i> I now want you to consider the following five uses of force</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An officer Tasers an individual • An officer shoots an individual causing serious injuries • An officer uses his fist to gain control of an individual • Five officers restrain an individual • An officer releases a police dog on an individual <p>REMINDE PARTICIPANTS THAT “INDIVIDUAL” CAN MEAN - suspect, someone detained in a police cell, or someone behaving erratically</p> <p>Please consider...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the force could ever be justified? • In what circumstances the force could be justified? • At what point the force becomes excessive? Why? <p><i>(Prompt: e.g. number of strikes, number of officers involved, location force is used (i.e. in a cell / a public space), injury sustained, characteristics of arrestee/detainee...)</i></p> <p><i>[Participants to discuss within groups and then feedback in plenary]</i></p> <p><i>PROBE on each discussion point above - what factors did they have to consider</i></p> <p>OVERALL THOUGHTS ON EXERCISE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did they find the exercise • Whether views on what is reasonable vs excessive use of force have changed in light of receiving additional information 	<p>PRESENT scenarios 3 [Slide 10]</p> <p>PRESENT questions 3 [Slide 11]</p>
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5 mins	<p>Proportionality and Accountability</p> <p>Purpose: <i>to explore views on recording the proportionality of the use of force by police, how police accountability should be ensured and the role of IPCC and others in managing and overseeing police use of force</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What measures should be in place to ensure force is used proportionately by the police <p>[PROMPT]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How important is it to record police use of force <p>[PROMPT]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whether all types of force should be recorded 	
5 mins	<p>Information needs and role and responsibility of the IPCC</p> <p>Purpose: <i>to explore the public needs around information around police use of force and accountability</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you heard of the IPCC • What do you know about it • How do you know about it <p><i>Facilitator to present information on the role of the IPCC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What types of use of force cases should the IPCC investigate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How do these factors influence this: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Situation and location, - type of force, - injury received, - person characteristics and demeanour • Has your opinion / understanding about police use of force changed following today's discussions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why, what has changed 	PRESENT IPCC role [Slide 12]
	Thank and close	

People with experience of police use of force - Topic Guide

Aims:

The IPCC's study on police use of force is divided into four key research areas - context, in-depth case analysis, public views and stakeholder input.

The research to explore public and professional views and perceptions on the use of police force will specifically aim to:

- *examine public awareness and understanding of police use of force;*
- *examine public views on fairness and frequency that police use of force - specifically the use of moderate and excessive force in different scenarios and circumstances and views on the IPCC's role in this context*

1. Introduction

- TNS BMRB independent research organisation undertaking research on behalf of IPCC
- Purpose of the research: *To understand public confidence in policing and views and understanding of police use of force*
- Length of discussion: 45- 60mins
- Recordings: Only the researcher and the person who types up the notes will listen to the conversation.
- Confidentiality and anonymity: their participation in and contributions to the research are kept strictly confidential, and they will not be identified to IPCC. We will put what everyone says together in a report but we will not say who has said what, or put any names in the reports. It will not be possible for anyone outside the research team to know what you personally have told us.
- Disclosure: Everything you say will be confidential and you don't have to talk about anything you don't want to. However, we would have to share and pass on information, if you tell us something which may cause significant harm to you or another person, or if you disclose information about a future or past criminal offence.

2. Background and general perceptions/contact with the police [5 mins]

Purpose: *to get an overview of the participant's general experiences and contact with the police*

- Ask the respondent to introduce themselves

- area they live in and how long, whether living on own or with others; what they do day to day
- Briefly describe your experience of contact with the police in the past (*ask them describe most recent contact and summarise previous types of contact*)

PROBE

- Types of experiences/relationships/frequency
- Whether during arrest, custody, other types of contact
- What are your views on the police in your local area
- What do you think are the challenges faced by the police in your area?

3. Knowledge of police use of force [5 mins]

Purpose: *To explore spontaneous views and understanding of police use of force and when it can be used*

- When the police are carrying out their duties and are in contact with the public, **what types of force** do you think are they **legally** able to use
 - ASK spontaneous and then PROBE [*to produce types of force SHOW CARD 1 if appropriate to provide more information*]
 - Physical force, Taser, CS spray, Baton rounds / AEP rounds, Baton, Conventional firearm, Police dog / horse, Restraint equipment

PROBE

- Perceptions of the severity of each type of force if used by an officer
- What is their understanding of when police are allowed to use handcuffs

NOTE to interviewer handcuffs can only be justified if a detained person is likely to escape or attempt to escape or is likely to offer violence

Researcher to read brief definition of police use of force:

- *The police can use **such force as is reasonable** in the circumstances in the **prevention of crime**, or in effecting or assisting in the **lawful arrest** of offenders or suspected offenders*
- *The use of force can include a **range of equipment or tactics**. Force could be used in a **custody setting**, including **during an arrest**, or during **other moments of contact between police and public**.*

- In what **types of situations** do you think the police are **most likely** to use force
- **Who** do you think the police will **most likely** use force against? Why? Is this acceptable?
 SPONTEOUS and then PROBE
 - Age, gender, ethnicity, religion, football, public protest, violent offenders
- How do they you get your information about police use of force
 PROBE
 - media, observations, personal/friend/family experiences

**4. Experiences of police use of force – direct/and of others (to discuss where appropriate)
 [20 mins]**

***Purpose:** To explore participants direct or observed experiences of police use of force and their views of the appropriateness and proportionality of the force used*

- Have you had direct experience of police use of force
- IF YES: Describe the **circumstances** of an incident where **police used force against you?** (if more than one instance, then select one)

PROBE on ALL

- What were the circumstances
 - How did you come in to contact
 - What were you doing before / during
 - Why do you think the police used force
 - How did you feel
 - What do you think officer was feeling
 - Do you think officer felt in control
 - Can you understand why he / she made decision to use force
- Type of force
- Level of force used
- Do you feel it was appropriate to use force in this circumstance
 - Perception of whether reasonable vs. excessive

- Prompt for understanding of reasonable & excessive
 - If you were the police officer, how would you have responded, and why
 - What other options do you think they could have considered? *[if not covered in question above]*
 - Has this incident, or other similar experiences, had an impact on how you view the police. If yes, how, why?
 - What advice would you give to the police in their dealing of similar incidents?
- IF NO: Have you ever **observed or witnessed police use of force**
- IF YES, to describe the most recent event (*to discuss in full detail for those who have not had direct experience and for those with direct experience, if time allows*)

PROBE on ALL

- What were the circumstances
 - How did you come in to contact
 - What were you doing before / during
 - Why do you think the police used force
 - How did you feel
 - What do you think officer was feeling
 - Do you think officer felt in control
 - Can you understand why he / she made decision to use force
- Type of force
- Level of force used
- Do you feel it was appropriate to use force in this circumstance
 - Perception of whether reasonable vs. excessive
 - Prompt for understanding of reasonable & excessive
- If you were the police officer, how would you have responded, and why
- What other options do you think they could have considered? *[if not covered in question above]*

- Has this incident, or other similar experiences, had an impact on how you view the police. If yes, how, why?
- What advice would you give to the police in their dealing of similar incidents?

5. Perceptions of police use of force [25 mins]

Purpose: *To explore in detail perceptions of the proportionality of police use of force and the factors that police should consider when using force.*

- What **things** do you think the police should consider when using force
- What do you think are the main reasons officers decide to use force (e.g. to gain compliance, protect self / others, effect an arrest)
- What do you think is a **reasonable** use of force by the police

Researcher to read brief definition of reasonable vs excessive use of force (if necessary)

- *In common with all citizens, the police may use reasonable force where necessary for self-defence, defence of another, defence of property, the prevention of a crime, or during a lawful arrest*
- *Excessive force is illegal and defined as: "a situation in which more force is used than is allowable when judged in terms of administrative or professional guidelines or legal standards"*
- *Even if it was necessary for the police to use force to prevent a crime or make an arrest This decision must take into account*
 - *the nature and degree of force used*
 - *the seriousness of the offence being prevented*
 - *the nature and degree of any force used against an officer by a person resisting arrest*

- Can you think of any scenarios where you think it would be reasonable for police officers to ...
 - Use a Taser
 - Release a dog on a suspect
 - Use CS spray
 - Hit or kick someone
 - Use a baton
- At **what point do you think these types of force would become excessive**, and why

PROMPT

- *number of officers involved*
 - *number of times use of force is used e.g. number of strikes*
 - *location force is used (i.e. in a cell / a public space)*
 - *where force is applied on the individual*
 - *injury sustained*
 - *characteristics of arrestee*
 - *combination of methods e.g. Taser and restraint*
- Should any of the following characteristics influence the response of officers and the level and type of force used and why *[to present SHOWCARD 2 with all listed]*
 - - assaulted the officer
 - mentally ill
 - drunk
 - armed with a knife & is threatening to cut his throat
 -14 years old
 -a woman

6. Proportionality, Accountability & IPCC [5 minutes]

Purpose: *to explore views on recording of the use of force by police, how police accountability should be ensured and the role of IPCC and others in managing and overseeing police use of force*

- Do you think police should change the way / frequency with which they use of force? How do you think they could do this?
- What **measures should be in place to ensure force is used proportionately** by the police
- How **important is it to record** police use of force
- Prompt
 - CCTV, body cameras and recording it in the written sense.
- Whether **all types of force should be recorded**

[TO DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING, IF TIME ALLOWS]

- Have you heard of the IPCC
 - What do you know about it
 - How do you know about it

Researcher to read brief summary of IPCC role:

- *The IPCC's primary purpose is to increase public confidence in the police complaints system in England and Wales. They investigate the most serious complaints and allegations of misconduct against the police.*
- *It also handles appeals from people who are not satisfied with the way police have dealt with their complaint.*
- *The IPCC is independent, making its decisions entirely independently of the police, government and complainants*

- What **types of use of force cases should the IPCC investigate**
 - How do these factors influence this:
 - Situation and location,
 - type of force,
 - injury received,
 - person characteristics and demeanour
 -
- Any other thoughts to feedback to the IPCC

Thanks and Close

Police Officer and Staff - Topic Guide

Aims:

The IPCC's study on police use of force is divided into four key research areas - context, in-depth case analysis, public views and stakeholder input.

The research to explore public and professional views and perceptions on the use of police force will specifically aim to:

- *examine public awareness and understanding of police use of force;*
- *examine public views on fairness and frequency that police use of force - specifically the use of moderate and excessive force in different scenarios and circumstances and views on the IPCC's role in this context*

1. Introduction

- TNS BMRB independent research organisation undertaking research on behalf of IPCC
- Purpose of the research: *To understand public and professional views on the use of police use of force.*
- Length of discussion: 60mins
- Recordings: Only the researcher and the person who types up the notes will listen to the conversation.
- Confidentiality and anonymity: their participation in and contributions to the research are kept strictly confidential, and they will not be identified to IPCC. We will put what everyone says together in a report but we will not say who has said what, or put any names in the reports. It will not be possible for anyone outside the research team to know what you personally have told us.

2. Background and general perceptions of police use of force [5 mins]

Purpose: *to get an overview of the participant's background and what police use of force means to them in their role*

- Ask the respondent to introduce themselves

- Job title, role and daily responsibilities (types of situations which typically arise), length of time in role/overall service
- **What types of force are available** to you in your role
 - ASK spontaneous and then PROBE (*for senior offices PROBE ALL*)
 - Physical force, Taser, CS spray, Baton rounds / AEP rounds, Baton, Conventional firearm, Police dog / horse, physical restraint, restraint equipment
 - Rank in order of severity
- **What types of force have you been trained in**
 - Is this kept up-to-date
 - How far do you feel the content / frequency was / is adequate
 - What other use of force training would be necessary / useful

3. Experiences of police use of force [40 mins]

Purpose: *to explore experiences of police use of force and the factors that police use in decision making around type and level of force used in different circumstances*

- **How often do you use force** during your interactions with members of the public / detainees
 - How do you think this compares to frequency of use by your colleagues
 - Differences across roles, differences in same role
 - To what extent do you view the use of handcuffs as a use of force
 - If not seen as force, when, if ever, would it become a use of force
 - How routinely are handcuffs used by you and your colleagues
- In what **types of situations** are you **most likely** to use force
 - SPONTEOUS and then PROBE
 - Are there particular groups where use of force is more common – why e.g. Age, gender, ethnicity, religion, class
 - Football, public protest, violent offender, resisting arrest

Now I'd like you to think of an incident **during the last 12 months where you have used force in a challenging situation** (non-routine)

NOTE to researcher: Aim is to get them thinking of a, challenging situation where they've used non-routine force. Can allow them to go further back than 12mths if recall is good and is the only example they have

- Can you describe the **circumstances of this incident**

PROBE on ALL

- What was the person doing
 - What was the location
 - What was the reason/ aim for using force
 - Type of force, and why
 - Describe decisions to use type of force, were others considered
 - How did you feel (Confident, scared, angry, in control, adequately advised/ supported)
 - What were the consequences / outcome of the decision to use force
 - Any support or discussion of use of force after the incident
 - Would you have done anything differently, what would that be
- Can you think of an example of when you or your colleagues **have used a type or level of force which in hindsight, you may have done differently**. Please describe the circumstances.

- Why did you use that type / level of force in that incident

PROMPT

- trigger points
 - factors
 - demeanour of person
 - your personal circumstances
- Whether it could have been deemed excessive /inappropriate
 - What could you / your colleague have done differently
- At **what point does force become excessive**, and why

PROMPT

- number of officers involved
- number of times use of force is used e.g. number of strikes
- location force is used (i.e. in a cell / a public space)
- where force is applied on the individual

- injury sustained
 - characteristics of arrestee
 - combination of different types of force
- What, if anything, do you think could **change to reduce the risk of officers using excessive force**

PROBE

- Supervision (inc. more effective front line supervision)
- Surveillance
- Deterrents (i.e. sanctions, policy change, training, support, etc....)

I'm now going to ask you about a scenario where force may be used – (*select the scenario which best matches their current role e.g. interaction with individual via arrest or in custody*)

- **Scenario 1** – *custody setting, an individual is acting violently in their custody cell*
- **Scenario 2** – *point of arrest, an individual is acting aggressively and violently during arrest.*

- What would be your **initial response**
- What **factors** would you need **to consider** when making a decision to use force
- What **type / level of force** would you use in this scenario - explain
- What if the person was [*PRESENT SHOWCARD 1*]

No need to go through each one separately if able to discuss as a whole.

-assaulting you or a colleague
- mentally ill
- drunk
- armed and threatening to harm himself
-14 years old
-in a cell (*if didn't use the custody scenario*)
- ... a woman

..... would this influence the level and type of force you used, please explain

- What are your **views on the following scenarios**; what do you see as the challenges facing officers

- The use of Taser in a police cell, whether this is ever appropriate
- Multiple officers restraining an individual in the prone position [*placing a subject face/chest down and back up in a prone position*] – what would you need to consider
 - SPONTEOUS and then PROBE
 - health conditions
 - length of restraint
 - position
 - nomination of a ‘controller’
- A decision by an officer to hit or kick an arrestee - when might this be reasonable
 - SPONTEOUS and then PROBE
 - location of strike
 - lack of other options
 - personal threat)

- **What is the likelihood of a police officer/staff using force excessively**
 - What would be the outcomes and next steps if a complaint made/or force alleged to be as excessive
- How much **influence do you think the ‘attitude’ of an arrestee** has on an officer’s decision to use force
- To what extent **do you think it’s sometimes acceptable for the police to use more force than is legal to control someone**

4. Views of public perceptions of police use of force [10 mins]

Purpose: *Explore police views on public perception of police use of force, levels of public awareness and community impact*

- **To what extent do you think the public are aware of how much force an officer is lawfully allowed to use**
- **How can the public better understand police use of force**
 - Legality and why they may use it
 - Information/awareness required
 - Who’s responsibility – police, media, government
- **What factors affect your confidence in making decisions about use of force**

- More training, supervision, monitoring
- To what extent do you **feel supported** by the public in the use of force by the police
- **Do you worry about how use of force is perceived** by local communities and what impact, if any, does this have on your relationship with them
- How important is it to **change current public perceptions** on police use of force, if at all

5. Proportionality and Accountability [5 minutes]

Purpose: *to explore views on recording the use of force by police, and how police accountability should be ensured*

- How far do you think there are currently enough **measures in place to ensure force is used proportionately** by the police
- How **important is it to record police use of force** – why / why not
 - All force vs only certain types of force
 - Handcuff use
 - Only certain circumstances e.g. if injury
- Are you clear about what your **force policy is on recording force**
 - What are your views on the policy
- Do you think you and your colleagues **record use of force consistently / accurately**
 - If not, why not
 - How could this be improved e.g. different methods of recording
 - How far do you feel it needs to be improved
- Are there **consequences in misusing force**
 - Nature of consequences
 - Views on whether the consequences are fair and proportionate
- Any other thoughts to feedback to the IPCC
- Whether they have had sight of the IPCC Learning the Lessons Bulletin
 - How useful / practical.
 - How else could the IPCC feedback learning to police forces

TO ASK IF TIME ALLOWS

- What **types of use of force cases should the IPCC investigate**

Thanks and Close

Police Chief Officer - Topic Guide

Aims:

The IPCC's study on police use of force is divided into four key research areas - context, in-depth case analysis, public views and stakeholder input.

The research to explore public and professional views and perceptions on the use of police force will specifically aim to:

- *examine public awareness and understanding of police use of force;*
- *examine public views on fairness and frequency that police use of force - specifically the use of moderate and excessive force in different scenarios and circumstances and views on the IPCC's role in this context*

○ **Introduction**

- TNS BMRB independent research organisation undertaking research on behalf of IPCC
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○ **Background, experience and training [10 mins]**

Purpose: *to get an overview of the participant's background and what police use of force means to them in their role*

- Ask the respondent to introduce themselves
- Job title, role and daily responsibilities (types of situations which typically arise), length of time in role/overall service

6. What types of force are available to you in your role / officers in your force

ASK spontaneous and then PROBE (*for senior offices PROBE ALL*)

- Physical force, Taser, CS spray, Baton rounds / AEP rounds, Baton, Conventional firearm, Police dog / horse, physical restraint, restraint equipment
- Rank in order of severity

7. What types of force have you personally been trained in

- Is this kept up-to-date

8. What types of force are members of your force routinely trained in

- a. What ranks / roles / civilian staff

9. What types of force are only available to certain individuals in your force

- a. How are these officers selected – rank, length of time in role, test, application etc

10. How far do you feel that the content / frequency of use of force training available to employees in your force is adequate; Why / why not

- a. What other use of force training would be necessary / useful
- b. What are challenges in terms of use of force training
- c. What are priorities / requirements in terms of use of force training
- d. How do you think it compares to training resources in other forces

- **Experiences of police use of force [30 mins]**

Purpose: *to explore experiences of police use of force and the factors that police use in decision making around type and level of force used in different circumstances*

- **To the best of your knowledge, in what proportion of interactions with detainees / arrestees do you think your staff use force**

- How do you think this varies across regions / roles / ranks within your force
- How do you think use of force in your force compares with use in other forces
- Based on your experience, do what extent do you think there are any personal characteristics which may make individual officers use force more readily (e.g. age, experience, gender, ethnicity)
- To what extent do you view use of handcuffs as a use of force, and why
 - If not, when, if ever, would it become a use of force
 - How routinely are handcuffs used in your force

- In what **types of situations is force most likely** to be used in your force [name of force]

SPONTEOUS and then PROBE

- Are there particular groups where use of force is more common, and why (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, religion, class)
- Football, public protest, violent offender, resisting arrest
- What **factors affect your confidence in authorising or overseeing decisions** about use of force
- Can you think of an example of when you or your colleagues have **used a type or level of force which in hindsight, you think could have been done approached differently**. Please describe the circumstances.
 - Why type / level of force was used in that incident
 - trigger points
 - factors
 - demeanour of person
 - your personal circumstances
 - The extent to which you think it could've been deemed excessive /inappropriate
 - How could this have been handled differently
- At **what point does force become excessive**, and why

PROMPT

- *number of officers involved*
- *number of times use of force is used e.g. number of strikes*
- *location force is used (i.e. in a cell / a public space)*
- *where force is applied on the individual*
- *injury sustained*
- *characteristics of arrestee*
- *combination of different types of force*

- What, if anything, do you think could **change to reduce the risk of officers using excessive force**
 - Supervision (inc. more effective front line supervision),
 - Surveillance,
 - Deterrents i.e. sanctions, policy change, training, support, etc....)

- What **factors** should be **to considered** when making a decision to use force

- Should any of the following factors affect the decision on the level and type of force used
 - What are the challenges associated with these factors [PRESENT SHOWCARD 1 with all listed]
 -assaulting you or a colleague
 - mentally ill
 - drunk
 -armed and threatening to harm himself
 - 14 years old
 - in a cell
 -a woman

- What are your **views on the following scenarios**, what are the **challenges** for police officers
 - The use of Taser in a police cell, whether this is ever appropriate

- Multiple officers restraining an individual in the prone position [*placing a subject face/chest down and back up in a prone position*] – what would you need to consider
 - SPONTENOUS and then PROBE
 - health conditions
 - length of restraint
 - position
 - nomination of a ‘controller’

- A decision by an officer to hit or kick a detainee – when might this acceptable
 - SPONTENOUS and then PROBE
 - location of strike
 - lack of other options
 - level of threat posed

- **What is the likelihood of a police officer/staff using force excessively**
 - What would be the outcomes and next steps if a complaint made/or force alleged to be as excessive

- How much influence do you think the ‘attitude’ of an arrestee has on an officer’s decision to use force

- To what extent **do you think it’s sometimes acceptable for the police to use more force than is legal to control someone**

- **Views of public perceptions of police use of force [10 mins]**

Purpose: *Explore police views on public perception of police use of force, levels of public awareness and community impact*

- To what extent do you think the public are aware of how much force an officer is lawfully allowed to use

- How much do **you worry about how use of force is perceived** by local communities

- What impact, if any, does this have on your relationship with them

- Whether this has an impact on some communities more than others, and why
- How important is it to **change current public perceptions** on police use of force, if at all
- **What do you think are the factors that influence public perceptions**
- To what extent do you **feel supported** by the public in the use of force by the police
- **How can the public better understand police use of force**
 - Legality and why they may use it
 - Information/awareness required
- **Whose role is it to raise awareness/provide information**
 - The nature role of police
 - The nature of the role of wider society (e.g. Media, Government)
 - **Proportionality and Accountability [10 minutes]**

Purpose: *to explore views on recording the use of force by police, and how police accountability should be ensured*

- What **measures are currently in place in your force** to ensure force is used proportionately by officers
 - Nature of measures
 - Impact of measures
 - How well are current measures are working
- How far do you think there are currently enough **measures in place to ensure force is used proportionately** by the police
- How **important is it to record police use of force** – why / why not
 - All force vs Only certain types of force
 - Handcuff use
 - Only certain circumstances e.g. if injury
 - View on body cameras, any limitations / benefits
- Do you think you and your staff **record use of force consistently / accurately**
 - If not, why not
 - How could this be improved e.g. different methods of recording

- How far do you feel it needs to be improved
- Are there **consequences in misusing force**
 - Nature of consequences
 - Views on whether the consequences are fair and proportionate
- To what extent do your officers **receive support when a complaint is made**
- Any **suggestions to improve or strengthen current measures**
- Does your force operate a **whistle blowing policy** which would include excessive force
 - Describe the policy (inc. challenges)
- What **types of use of force cases should the IPCC investigate**
- Can you think of any **instances where your force has benefitted from learning from investigations undertaken by your PSD (professional standards department) or by the IPCC**
 - Describe in detail any instances
 - **Whether they have had sight of the IPCC Learning the Lessons Bulletin**
How useful / practical.
 - How else could the IPCC feedback learning to police forces
- Have you got any other concerns or views around police use of force which you think it would be useful to share with the IPCC

Thanks and Close

E – Quantitative Survey Questions

The next set of questions are about circumstances in which the Police in England and Wales may use force.

The Police are allowed to use **reasonable force** where necessary for a number of purposes such as self-defence, defence of another person, defence of property, prevention of crime, or during a lawful arrest. The law states that the person using force must honestly believe that it was justified.

The types of force the police are legally able to use when carrying out their duties, include use of a baton, a Taser, incapacitant spray, a police dog and restraint equipment such as leg restraints.

Q1 [ASK ALL]

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

“The police in England and Wales use force more readily now than they did ten years ago”

SINGLE CODE, FORWARD/REVERSE ALTERNATING SCALE

Scale

1. Strongly agree
2. Tend to agree
3. Tend to disagree
4. Strongly disagree
5. SPONTANEOUS ONLY - Don't know

Q2 [ASK ALL]

How concerned are you about the frequency with which police use force?

SINGLE CODE, FORWARD/REVERSE ALTERNATING SCALE

Scale

1. Very concerned
2. Fairly concerned
3. Not very concerned
4. Not at all concerned
5. SPONTANEOUS ONLY - Don't know

Q3 [ASK ALL]

Armed police are deployed to deal with certain types of incidents in England and Wales. On average, how many incidents do you think there are in a year when the police fire a gun? This excludes incidents where a gun was fired at an animal or where it was fired during training.

INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTIONS: IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE, PLEASE ASK THEM TO GIVE THEIR BEST ESTIMATE

Record a value 0 5000

SPONTANEOUS ONLY - Don't know

Q4 [ASK ALL]

How far do you think it is acceptable for a police officer to use these methods of force against an individual in the following situations?

ASK FOR EACH STATEMENT; BATON; TASER; PHYSICAL STRIKE WITH HANDS; POLICE DOG

STATEMENTS

- A suspect is attempting to escape arrest
- A person is threatening to harm themselves
- A suspect is assaulting an officer
- A suspect is attacking another person with a knife

Scale

1. Always
2. Sometimes
3. Never
4. SPONTANEOUS ONLY - Don't know

Q5 [ASK ALL]

How much do you trust the police to use reasonable force in the course of their duties? Do you trust them...?

SINGLE CODE, FORWARD/REVERSE ALTERNATING SCALE

Scale

1. A lot
2. A fair amount
3. Not very much
4. Not at all
5. SPONTANEOUS ONLY - Don't know