

IN THE POLICE MISCONDUCT HEARING
PURSUANT TO THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE POLICE (CONDUCT,
PERFORMANCE AND APPEALS TRIBUNALS) REGULATIONS 2020

IN THAT MATTER OF

PC Reece Jones

Decision of the Chair

PANEL CHAIR: ACC Trevor Clark QPM

INTRODUCTION

1. This case has been dealt with as an Accelerated Misconduct Hearing (AMH), I was satisfied from the outset of this hearing that the special conditions for an AMH were met, in that –
 - there is sufficient evidence, in the form of written statements or other documents, to establish on the balance of probabilities that the conduct of the officer concerned constitutes gross misconduct, and
 - it is in the public interest for the officer concerned to cease to be a member of the Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) without delay.
2. The special conditions were determined by Deputy Chief Constable Dobinson on 27th April 2026.
3. The hearing took place virtually on 8th July 2026. I presided over the hearing with the support of Natalia Constanine, counsel acting as legal adviser (LQP). The relevant authority was represented by Emily Cambell, counsel. PC Jones was represented by Libby Anderson, counsel.

PRELIMINARY APPLICATIONS

4. As the hearing opened, I dealt with an application to anonymise the complainant and the complainant's mother, using the Cyphers 'Child A' and 'Person A'. It had already been agreed by counsel to redact the identities from the hearing bundle and as there was to be no live evidence to be heard. I agreed to the application for anonymisation, based upon the nature of the allegations and age of the complainant.
5. I dealt with a preliminary application to admit a statement from the RA, specifically T/Detective Inspector Nicola Power. I have considered whether it is appropriate to admit this statement into evidence at this late stage.
6. Having received legal advice pursuant to Regulation 61(11) and Regulation 54(1)(d) of the Ministry of Defence Police (Conduct, Performance and Appeals Tribunals) Regulations, I am satisfied that I have the power to admit this document, notwithstanding that it was not served in accordance with the usual timetable.
7. The statement was produced by the RA in response to the officers' claim in his regulation 54 response, that the photographs alleged to have been sent by him, which he does not recall sending and he *'cannot say if it is him based upon the image,'* may not in fact be him. The statement describes research conducted by the RA, in relation to the home address where the officer was living at the material time. Public sourced photographs (from right move website) show the inside rooms of this address. The décor and furnishings appear to match those in the photographs alleged to have been sent by the officer.
8. Counsel for defence opposed the inclusion, on the grounds of undermining the fairness of proceedings due to the unnecessarily late inclusion of evidence.
9. I find that it is in the interests of justice for the statement to be admitted. It is materially relevant to the matters this hearing must determine, and its exclusion would deprive me of evidence bearing directly on the issues in dispute.

10. I find nothing improper in the conduct of the RA in the timing of its service. Nothing has been sprung on the officer concerned. Fairness is a balancing exercise, and in striking that balance I note that the officer concerned provided his Regulation 54 response on Monday 6th July, two days before this hearing was due to commence. He has therefore had a proper opportunity to consider his position in light of the material now before me, and he remains able to respond to the statement, including by giving evidence himself if he chooses to do so.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

11. I have reminded myself that the purpose of the police misconduct regime is threefold:
- i. To maintain public confidence in, and the reputation of the police service
 - ii. To uphold high standards in policing and to deter misconduct
 - iii. To protect the public
12. I have these principals in mind throughout my consideration of this case, my findings and decision on outcome. In my determination of this case, I remind myself that the burden of proof rests with the RA and the standard of proof is on the balance of probabilities, namely, 'what is more likely than not'.
13. I must then decide if on any facts found proved the professional standards are breached. If I find there has been a breach, I go on to consider if the facts amount to misconduct or gross misconduct. If I find misconduct or gross misconduct, I go on to consider the appropriate Outcome.
14. The RA make the following allegations:
- 1. *On a date in December 2022, you started to send photographs and messages to an individual you did not know from your personal Snapchat account on your personal mobile phone. The recipient of those messages was a 13-year-old girl.*

2. *On diverse dates:*
 - a) *You asked her what she was wearing and for her to send you photographs of herself;*
 - b) *On one occasion, you sent her a photograph of yourself which showed your genitals partly exposed with a message which read "wuu2 now haha x".*
3. *The girl sent you a message in which she told you that was 13 years old. As to this:*
 - a. *You were aware of her age;*
 - b. *You continued to communicate with her after she disclosed to you that she was aged 13;*
 - c. *You encouraged her to send you a photograph of herself;*
 - d. *You replied with a message which read "you ain't x. show me you x."*
4. *On 5 July 2023, you were arrested on suspicion of engaging in sexual communication with a child. No further action was subsequently taken by the Crown Prosecution Service in relation to this."*
15. The RA allege that PC Jones breached the following standards of professional behaviour:
 - a. *Honesty and Integrity in that your conduct in sending the aforesaid messages lacked integrity.*
 - b. *Authority, Respect and Courtesy in that it was disrespectful and lacking in self-control to send the aforesaid messages.*
 - c. *Discreditable Conduct in that sending the aforesaid messages in the manner outlined in paragraphs 1 to 3 above is capable of undermining public confidence in, and bringing discredit on, the Police Service.*

16. The RA further alleged that the conduct has fallen below the required standards and is contrary to:
 - a. MDP (Conduct, Performance and Appeals Tribunals) Regulations (SI 2020/1087) as amended by (SI 2024/603).
 - b. The Standards of Professional Behaviour as listed in schedule 4 of these regulations.
 - c. The Police Code of Ethics – ethical policing principles.

BACKGROUND TO THE ALLEGATIONS:

5. On 5 July 2023, the subject officer was arrested on suspicion of engaging in sexual communication with a child. The criminal matter was managed by Thames Valley Police (TVP) and remained under misconduct investigation with the MDP, pending the criminal process. During the TVP investigation, the subject officer's mobile phone was seized and subjected to forensic examination. On 25 November 2025, TVP notified the MDP Investigating Officer that the criminal case had ended, and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) offered no evidence (ONE) because Child A *“is no longer supporting as she did not want to attend court.”*
6. On 23 December 2025, TVP provided further exhibits, including and confirming that the seized iPhone was linked to an email address recorded by the MDP Professional Standards Department (PSD) as belonging to the subject officer. Telecommunications checks on a Snapchat account used in the alleged offending, identified an associated email address, IP addresses and mobile number that, taken together, identified the subject officer as the account holder. The phone and Snapchat handle was accepted by the officer and attributed to him.
7. On 19 October 2023, the subject officer was interviewed by TVP regarding the allegations. He provided a prepared statement denying any intentional

interaction with anyone he believed to be underage and thereafter answered "no comment" to all further questions.

8. Child A's mother provided a statement exhibiting screenshots she had taken of her daughter's phone between 5 and 11 January 2023, which she passed to the investigating officer.
9. The exhibited screenshots show a Snapchat exchange between the complainant, and an account identified as belonging to the subject officer, in which the victim disclosed her age as 13 and the subject officer questioned this and asked for further verification. Further images alleged to have been sent from the account show a person partially unclothed, together with messages asking what the victim was wearing and requesting that she send him images in return.
10. The complainant's own statement describes an unsolicited approach from an unknown male ("the Blonde Male") on Snapchat, in which an initial exchange of photographs was followed, after around 30 minutes, by requests for images of her body, which she understood to be a request for nude images. She declined and disengaged, but the contact resumed over subsequent days, with repeated requests for images accompanied by further images from him. She states she found the messages "weird" and unwanted, and that she had never met the sender.
11. As to age, the victim states she told the subject officer she was 13, and that he told her he was 15, later giving other ages including 17 and 18. The victim's social worker, provided a broadly consistent account stating that the unknown male initially claimed to be 16–17 before disclosing he was 27, and that the victim had at first told him she was 16 before later telling him she was 13.
12. During the TVP investigation, the subject officer's defence solicitor read out a prepared statement on his behalf, and he answered no comment to all questions put to him.

THE OFFICER'S RESPONSE

13. The officer provided a witness statement providing his response to the allegations. This can be summarised as; The officer, a police constable since 2017 with an otherwise clean record, denies knowingly communicating sexually with a child or anyone he believed under 16. He accepts the Snapchat account is his and accepts responsibility for the 11 January 2023 exchange but has no recollection of anything before that date and disputes gross misconduct. He denies sending any indecent images and specifically denies responsibility for image IMG_7176, arguing the Snapchat sent/viewed indicators that would confirm transmission from his account are missing from the chat log.
14. The officer raises three main points:
 - i. Chronology/metadata; he says the screenshots relied on by PSD are out of sequence, and that message metadata shows a different (and less incriminating) order of events;
 - ii. Age inconsistency; the evidence contains multiple different ages including an account that the victim herself first said she was 16; he argues this undermines any finding that he knew or believed she was 13; his reply "You ain't x" to the age disclosure is offered as evidence of disbelief, not acceptance;
 - iii. Digital forensics; no Snapchat app, no explicit images, and no images of children were found on any of his seized devices.
15. The officer also questions the reliability of 'Person A's' evidence, noting she had contact with the investigating officer before the screenshots were produced. He concludes that, taken together, the evidence doesn't support the allegations and invites the chair to consider his account in full.
16. The officer gave evidence and was asked questions on behalf of his representative, the RA and by the Chair.

17. The officer, PC Reece Jones, aged 32 (29 at the time of the allegations), gave evidence that he joined the MDP in September 2017 and served as a firearms officer throughout, describing the role as central to his sense of identity and vocation.
18. On Snapchat, he confirmed the account "*michaeljonesy07*" was his, explaining the handle derived from his middle name, his nickname and a favourite football shirt number, adopted to avoid disclosing his real name. He described Snapchat's general functionality (friend requests, adding contacts, invitations requiring acceptance).
19. He stated he used his middle name and nickname as a combination to identify himself on Snapchat as he did not wish to reveal his true identity. He also stated he would not disclose his real age but could not recall what age he would give himself and reiterated that in any case he would not pass for anything under 27.
20. On contact with Child A, he accepted in his Regulation 54 response, and in evidence, that he had contact with her from his account and his personal phone, but said he could not recall the circumstances of first contact, including who initiated it, the date, or the content of the earliest messages. He stated Child A initially told him she was 16, not 13.
21. He denied being "reckless," maintaining that had he known she was 13 he would not have engaged and would have ended the conversation immediately. He denied giving her a false age of 15/16/17, or claiming to be from Leeds, and denied ever sending images of his genitals to Child A or anyone else.
22. Going through the exhibited images and messages, the officer made the following admissions and denials:
 - The officer accepted sending the messages/images at -

- page 53, text exchange Child A "No", Michael "Kkkk", Child A "I'm 13 x", Michael "You ain't x", Michael "Show me you x"
- page 54, repeat of part of message at page 53.
- page 56, partial photograph of sender with tiled bathroom background and message "Pls show me really wanna see it on you xx".
- page 57, partial photograph of sender with tiled bathroom background and "Awhhh what u wearing x".
- page 58, partial photograph of sender in same bathroom with more of the face shown, wearing grey hooded top.
- page 59, text message "hey wuu2 x"
- The officer denied sending the image at page 55, which shows the lower half of a body lying on what appears to be a bed, which has light coloured bedclothes and a distinctive leaf type pattern. The body is partially exposed with dark coloured underwear pulled down, with letters 'ein' visible on the waistband and with shaven genitals including the penis visible. The officer assumes the underwear is 'Calvin Klein' which he denies owning and denies this could be him as he was never clean shaven.
- Initially disputed the bathroom images but in evidence accepted the property images were of his home and, when the tile pattern was put to him, accepted it was more likely than not that it was him in the bathroom image.
- Confirmed via metadata that the first message he accepts sending was on 7 January at 12:57 and the last on 11 January at 08:09.

23. On the age disclosure itself, he stated his response "you ain't x, "show me you x" , was intended as a request for clarification/verification born of disbelief that he was speaking to a 13-year-old, not acceptance of her stated age, and that the conversation ended without further images being exchanged.
24. On the wider investigation, he confirmed his arrest, the seizure and forensic download of his devices, and that he was interviewed twice and provided a prepared statement. He raised concerns (reflected in his Regulation 54 response) about delay and the reliability of the chronology relied upon, maintaining the metadata shows the true sequence of events, including that the age disclosure occurred on 11 January.
25. On the Standards of Professional Behaviour, he did not accept that his conduct fell below the standard required, while accepting the general importance of professional standards to public confidence.
26. By way of personal context, he described relationship difficulties, low self-esteem addressed through counselling, and financial pressure associated with his partner's pregnancy and the birth of his child, and the impact of the investigation on his relationship and family.

Cross-Examination

27. Under cross-examination, the officer accepted: he was an experienced officer since 2017 with public-facing duties; that a serving officer should exercise caution both on and off duty, in what is said and sent, including online; that caution is particularly warranted when interacting with strangers whose vulnerabilities are unknown; and that Snapchat allows images to be viewed and replayed, with photographs taken to show an exchange requiring a deliberate act to be saved to a camera roll.
28. He accepted that some of his communication on snapchat was sexual in nature and confirmed Child A was not someone known to him outside Snapchat.

29. Challenged on his evidence that he would have ended the conversation immediately on learning she was a child, he accepted he did not immediately cease contact and had no recollection of blocking her. He did not accept that he failed to exercise self-control and maintained that "show me you" was intended as a request for validation/clarification of identity.
30. On the disputed genital image (IMG_7176), the officer maintained his denial that this image was him or sent by him. It was put to him that he had previously stated that *"He does not, and has never, owned bedding of the material and colour shown in the photograph"*. He then stated there was some confusion and although he accepted that was what was said in his defence, what he meant was he *"did not recognise the bedding"*. When it was put to him that it was very similar and was the same bed linen (as in the disputed photograph), the officer replied, *"sure, I don't know what to say to that"*. He did continue to deny the photograph (IMG_7176) could be him.
31. In relation to the previously disputed images taken from a bathroom, upon being questioned about his change in evidence the officer stated *"I could never 100% say that that is me. Having received the information today, in regards of my property, I'm happy to say that more likely than not, the image of the bathroom is myself."*
32. He accepted, when asked directly, that sending images of that nature would not be conduct befitting a police officer but maintained throughout cross-examination that he did not accept discreditable conduct or misconduct.

DISCREDITABLE CONDUCT

33. I have reminded myself that the Standards of Professional Behaviour are a statement of the expectations that the police and the public have of how police officers should behave. They enable everybody to know what type of conduct by a police officer is acceptable and what is unacceptable.

34. Discreditable Conduct is defined as, 'Police officers behave in a manner which does not discredit the police service or undermine public confidence in it, whether on or off duty'. Discredit can be brought on the police by an act itself, or because public confidence in the police is undermined or is perceived to be undermined.

DECISION ON FINDINGS OF FACT AND BREACHES

35. Before turning to the individual factual particulars, I set out my findings on the credibility of PC Jones as a witness, since this bears directly on my assessment of the disputed facts.
36. I do not find PC Jones to be an honest or credible witness. Where it suited his account, his evidence was vague and equivocal, in particular as to whether he could or could not recall what he was asked in relation to the snap chat contact. He also did not previously recognise his own property, and particularly the bathroom shown in the exhibited photographs and the covering on his own bed. I do not accept that this vagueness reflects a genuine difficulty of recollection. Having heard him give evidence, and having observed the confidence and clarity with which he was able to assert that other images were, or were not, him when directly confronted, I find that his equivocation on the disputed points was deliberate, and calculated to serve his own narrative rather than a genuine attempt at honest recollection.
37. I do not find it credible that an individual who lived in a property for some four years would be unable to say with confidence whether a bathroom shown in a photograph was his own, nor do I find it credible that a person would fail to recognise their own physical features. Some of the photographs sent to Child A show part of the sender's face including hair style, eye and ear shape. To maintain his assertion until the hearing that this may not be him, is not in my view demonstrable of an honest witness.
38. When asked to explain the impact this investigation has had on him, an impact he says has been considerable, I find it inconsistent that the same officer would

then assert an inability to recall or confirm matters that, on his own account, ought to be memorable to him precisely because of that impact. His response to such challenges was, in each case, that I (the Chair) lacked "context", a response I find was itself a deliberately ambiguous device rather than a substantive answer. I found his tendency to speculate about his own conduct and his own recollection, rather than simply giving a direct account of it, to be bizarre and further undermines his credibility.

Findings on the allegations and the factual particulars

39. **Factual Particulars of allegation 1** - *On a date in December 2022, you started to send photographs and messages to an individual you did not know from your personal Snapchat account on your personal mobile phone. The recipient of those messages was a 13-year-old girl.*
40. I find this proven, on the balance of probabilities. PC Jones admits to sending photographs and communicating with Child A from his Snapchat account and his personal mobile phone. As a matter of fact, Child A was 13 years old at the material time, whether he believed her to be so or not.
41. **Factual Particulars of allegation 2** – *On diverse dates:*
 - a) *You asked her what she was wearing and for her to send you photographs of herself;*
42. I find this 2(a) proven. PC Jones asked Child A what she was wearing and asked her to send him a photograph of herself. This was admitted in evidence at the hearing, where he stated that he asked Child A what she was wearing and that he asked this as it was "general conversation". The officer further admits that he sent two photographs of himself that were taken in his bathroom to Child A.

- b) *On one occasion, you sent her a photograph of yourself which showed your genitals partly exposed with a message which read "wu2 now haha x".*
43. I find 2(b) proven. The bedding shown in the photograph is of a distinctive shade and pattern combination which is similar if not the same as that shown in the photograph exhibited by DI Power. On the balance of probabilities, I find the photograph was sent by PC Jones; he uses the same language, "WUU2", as is found elsewhere in exchanges he accepts sending. I am of the view that the sequencing and chronology of the messages does not materially matter; the only consideration I am making is whether he sent it or not, and I find that he did. It is improbable to assume that somebody else sent the image. PC Jones relied on the fact that he does not, and has never, owned bedding of the material and colour shown in the photograph. In my view, the photograph exhibited by DI Power shows bedding that is distinctly similar, if not the same. I accept the evidence from Child A's statement, in which she identifies that the picture was sent by the same person she was in conversation with throughout. The officer himself states that he was in contact with Child A and accepts that some messages and images were sent. He states that he does not recall a great deal but is nonetheless very clear that he did not send this image, when in fact Child A is clear in her statement that the person who sent this image was the same person she was speaking to all along. For these reasons, I find this matter proven.
44. **Factual Particulars of allegation 3** - *The girl sent you a message in which she told you that was 13 years old. As to this:*
- a. *You were aware of her age;*
 - b. *You continued to communicate with her after she disclosed to you that she was aged 13;*
 - c. *You encouraged her to send you a photograph of herself;*
 - d. *You replied with a message which read "you ain't x. show me you x."*
45. I will deal with these matters together and find all four (a-d), proven on the balance of probabilities. Once Child A told PC Jones she was 13, he was

thereby made aware of her age, and his response, "you ain't x", "show me you x", is proof of him becoming aware, such that the response in itself is an acknowledgment of receiving the message. The response of "you ain't x" and "show me you x", sent immediately after being told that she was 13, is evidence of continued communication. PC Jones himself, accepted in evidence that he sent these messages.

46. **Factual Particulars of allegation 4** - *On 5 July 2023, you were arrested on suspicion of engaging in sexual communication with a child. No further action was subsequently taken by the Crown Prosecution Service in relation to this.*
47. I find this proven by a matter of fact as on 5 July 2023, the officer was arrested on suspicion of engaging in sexual communication with a child and as per the email from DC Brandon Morley, the CPS re-reviewed the case and made the decision to offer no evidence because Child A did not want to attend court and support the prosecution.

FINDINGS ON BREACHES

48. Having found all of the allegations proven, I further find that PC Jones's manner of conducting himself online, in the respects I have found proven, amounts to sexually predatory behaviour. This is so regardless of whether Child 'A' was 16 as he says he initially understood her to be. The character of his conduct in seeking out and pursuing sexualised communication and images from her was predatory in nature irrespective of the age he believed her to be. When he was made aware that she was in fact 13, he continued that same pattern of behaviour and continued to respond to her.
49. Given these findings, I find it axiomatic that this conduct breaches each of the following Standards of Professional Behaviour:
 - a) **Honesty and Integrity**; in that his conduct in sending the messages lacked integrity.

- b) **Authority, Respect and Courtesy**; in that it was disrespectful and lacking in self-control to send the messages.
- c) **Discreditable Conduct**; in that sending the messages in the manner outlined in the allegations is capable of undermining public confidence in, and bringing discredit on, the Police Service.

In relation to determining the level of misconduct

- 50. Misconduct involving sexual impropriety is serious and can significantly undermine public trust in the police.
- 51. Misconduct which of a predatory nature which involves vulnerable people (either deliberately or recklessly) is also serious. Vulnerability can be by virtue of age and would include children and adolescents.
- 52. For these reasons alone, the breaches of professional standards in this case are found to be so serious as to justify dismissal and therefore constitute **gross misconduct**

DECISION ON OUTCOME

- 53. Having found the allegations proven and having found that PC Jones's conduct amounts to gross misconduct, I now turn to outcome. In reaching my decision, I have applied the three stage approach set out in the College of Policing's Guidance on Outcomes in Police Misconduct Proceedings: first, assessing the seriousness of the misconduct by reference to culpability and harm; second, keeping in mind the purpose for which sanctions are imposed; and third, selecting the sanction which most appropriately fulfils that purpose given the seriousness of the conduct found.
- 54. I have read and acknowledge PC Jones's good character and his references that have been put before me. I also acknowledge the unfortunate

consequence that PC Jones has suffered unwanted behaviour from people known to him, however that is not something that can have any bearing in my decision making.

Culpability

55. I find that PC Jones's culpability in this matter is high. I find that his conduct was intentional, deliberate, targeted and planned. This was not a single lapse of judgement, but behaviour sustained over a period, during which he remained in ongoing conversation with Child A.
56. I find that PC Jones must foreseeably have recognised the risk of harm inherent in his conduct. His behaviour was reckless, and in the circumstances of this case, harm was reasonably foreseeable. Police officers are well aware of the level of scrutiny to which their conduct, both on and off duty, is properly subject, and I find that PC Jones's behaviour, viewed against that background, was reckless.
57. I further find that this case contains an element of sexual impropriety. PC Jones's behaviour was predatory in nature towards a child. At the very least, on his own account, he believed Child A to be 16 years old at a time when he was 29. Once he became aware that she was in fact 13, he continued the communication with her. I find that Child A was vulnerable by virtue of her age, and that PC Jones's conduct exploited that vulnerability.

Harm

58. I find that actual harm was caused to Child A. She reported the communication to her mother, and I am satisfied that she would not have done so had she not found it uncomfortable. She has described the communication as weird and unwanted. I note that PC Jones's response to her, asking her to "*show me you*", was a continuation of the very conduct that caused her discomfort, and that Child A subsequently stopped the communication and reported it.

59. Harm is to be assessed by reference both to harm caused to the victim and to harm that could have been caused in the circumstances. Where gross misconduct is found, I must also have regard to the harm caused, or capable of being caused, to the community and to public confidence in the profession.
60. I find that PC Jones's conduct caused actual harm to Child A and further find that it was capable of causing significantly greater harm than in fact occurred. I find that conduct of this nature, involving a serving police officer engaging in predatory and sexually inappropriate communication with a child, is gross misconduct of the utmost seriousness, and one which is highly damaging to public confidence in the police service.
61. I must also have regard to the wider impact of this conduct on the standing and reputation of the police service as a whole, and not solely its impact on Child A.
62. Members of the public are entitled to expect that a serving police officer will not engage in predatory, sexually inappropriate communication with a child. That expectation applies with force to an officer holding the trust and authority conferred by a firearms role and applies both on and off duty. Conduct of this kind, when it comes to light, is liable to cause significant damage to the confidence which the public places in the police service generally, not merely in PC Jones individually.
63. I am mindful of the current high level of public and national scrutiny concerning police officers and sexually predatory behaviour, and the need for the police service to be seen to deal with such conduct seriously and decisively.
64. I find that if the public were to become aware of the full circumstances of this case, and were to learn that a serving officer's dismissal did not follow proven conduct of this nature, that would be liable to undermine public confidence in the police service's ability to identify, and properly deal with, officers who abuse their position in this way. A fair-minded member of the public, aware of all the facts I have found proven, would expect nothing less than dismissal to follow.

65. I further find that the maintenance of proper standards within the profession, and public confidence that those standards will be enforced, requires that conduct of this seriousness be met with the most severe sanction available. To do otherwise would risk sending a message, both to the public and to other serving officers, that predatory conduct of this kind can be committed by a serving officer without resulting in the loss of that officer's position.
66. For these reasons, PC Reece Jones will be dismissed without notice for gross misconduct.