

News story: Chief Constable Alfred Hitchcock

Alf became the Chief Constable four years ago and during that time he established strong links and working relationships with a wide range of colleagues across the MOD.

Alf committed the whole of his working life to public service having joined Lancashire Constabulary in 1977 and during the past 40 years he had worked in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), the National Policing Improvement Agency, Bedfordshire Police and, since 2013, the MOD as Chief Constable of the MDP.

In 2005, Alf led the Safer Neighbourhoods Programme within the MPS and delivered the successful roll-out of Neighbourhood Policing across the whole of London by the end of 2006. In 2007, he was appointed as a Deputy Assistant Commissioner within the MPS with responsibility for Operational Services, with portfolios including Professional Standards, Command and Control, Diversity and Citizen Focus.

In 2009, Alf was appointed Deputy Chief Constable at the National Policing Improvement Agency at Bramshill to help set up the new National College of Police Leadership and to review its leadership courses.

Alf was the national policing lead for equality and human rights for four years until 2016. He was also the national police spokesman on Knife Crime, and in 2008 he was appointed by the then Home Secretary, Jacqui Smith, to develop and lead the National Tackling Knives Action Programme.

Moving to Bedfordshire Police in 2011 as the Chief Constable, Alf led a complete restructuring of the force, which resulted in double the national average levels of crime reduction and similar improvements in detection of crimes across the county, whilst meeting the budgetary challenges during this period. It was these skills and qualities that led to his appointment as the Chief Constable of the MDP in 2013.

Mark Lancaster, Minister for the Armed Forces who until recently had ministerial responsibility for the Ministry of Defence Police, said:

I was deeply saddened to hear about the untimely death of Alf Hitchcock. I knew Alf very well in his capacity as the Chief Constable of the Ministry of Defence Police and held him in the highest possible regard. He was a consummate professional and I echo the sentiments that have been made by others. My sympathies go to Alf's family and friends at this very difficult time."

On Alf Hitchcock's contribution to policing within the UK, Andy Adams Deputy Chief Constable for the MDP said:

there are few in policing who won't recognise the name Alf Hitchcock; his impact upon policing has been felt across many police forces as well as at a national level. The sadness felt within the MDP at his loss is palpable – he will be sorely missed as a cop, as a colleague and as a friend to many.

Julie Taylor, Director General Head Office & Commissioning Services commented:

Alf will be sorely missed. He has been an inspirational leader for the Ministry of Defence Police, modernising the force and ensuring they could rise to the new and demanding challenges they face. He was liked and respected by his officers and by everyone who knew him in the wider MOD. Above all, I will remember him as someone who was passionate about public service, relentless in pursuit of excellence and consistently positive and optimistic. Our thoughts are with his family.

David Riddle, the Chair of the Ministry of Defence Police Committee, said:

Alf Hitchcock's sudden death last week after a very short illness was a great loss for everyone who knew him, for the force and for policing as a whole. We will miss him greatly for his kindness, his approachability, his boundless energy and his sense of fun. We will miss him above all for his belief in the importance of policing, and in the police officers under his command who do amazing things day in and day out to deliver security. All the Members of the Ministry of Defence Police Committee send their condolences to Alf's wife and family, and to all in the force.

Alf was awarded the Queen's Police Medal (QPM) in 2008 for distinguished services to policing. He was subsequently made a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the 2017 New Year's Honours list for services to Defence and Policing. Alf is survived by his wife Helen, his two daughters and two grandchildren.