# Metropolitan Police commander dismissed again over refusal to take drugs test amid disciplinary delays



A senior officer of the Metropolitan Police, Commander Julian Bennett, has been dismissed for a second time after a lengthy and controversial saga surrounding his refusal to provide a urine sample for a drugs test. The culmination of this case reflects wider issues within the police's disciplinary processes and public trust in law enforcement.

Initially dismissed for gross misconduct in October 2023 for declining to take the drugs test, Bennett's dismissal was overturned by the Police Appeals Tribunal (PAT) in July 2024, which stated the penalties imposed were disproportionate. The circumstances of his refusal were significant; Bennett allegedly claimed he was using CBD oil to treat facial palsy, which he feared might result in a positive drugs test. This claim of medicinal use, however, did not absolve him of the serious implications of his actions. Following the PAT's decision, the Metropolitan Police considered a potential judicial review but ultimately chose to conduct a new misconduct hearing in September 2024. This hearing reaffirmed the previous finding of gross misconduct, leading to Bennett’s latest dismissal.

Assistant Commissioner Matt Twist expressed profound concern over the protracted nature of Bennett's case, stating that it should have been resolved much sooner. He highlighted the waste of public resources tied to a senior officer suspended on full pay amidst ongoing investigations. “I am sure Londoners will be as outraged as we are at the utter waste of public funds spent paying a senior officer to sit at home suspended and not work,” Twist remarked, underscoring the broader implications for the Metropolitan Police in terms of public perception and accountability.

Bennett's case is particularly troubling given his history within the force. Appointed a commander in 2017, he was integral to the creation of the Metropolitan Police's drugs strategy for 2017-2021, which aimed to address the impact of drug misuse in communities. His dismissal has raised questions about the integrity of a senior officer who previously chaired misconduct hearings, overseeing nearly 100 cases, leading to 56 dismissals during his tenure.

Remarkably, despite being dismissed for gross misconduct, Bennett will not lose his pension, which amounts to £400,000 in a lump sum and ongoing monthly payments. The Metropolitan Police clarified that pension forfeiture only occurs in cases involving the most serious criminal matters, suggesting that while Bennett’s actions were grave, they did not meet this threshold.

This incident underscores the ongoing challenges facing the Metropolitan Police regarding leadership accountability and public trust. As Assistant Commissioner Twist conveyed, substantial bureaucratic delays have marred the process, raising fears of undermining public confidence in the integrity of the police force.

In summary, Commander Julian Bennett's saga is a reflection of deeper issues within the Metropolitan Police concerning disciplinary practices and the principles of leadership accountability. As the police force addresses its internal challenges, ensuring swift and transparent handling of misconduct cases will be vital to restoring faith among the communities they serve.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/03/senior-met-officer-sacked-for-second-time-after-refusing-2020-drugs-test), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/03/senior-met-officer-sacked-for-second-time-after-refusing-2020-drugs-test)
* Paragraph 2 – [[3]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-67277752), [[4]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cgry27rp2r1o), [[5]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/oct/31/met-police-commander-guilty-of-misconduct-for-refusing-drugs-test)
* Paragraph 3 – [[6]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/11/01/police-officer-julian-bennett-sacked-refused-drugs-test/), [[7]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/met-police-officer-julian-bennett-refuse-drug-test-sacked-pension-payments-b1117348.html)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/03/senior-met-officer-sacked-for-second-time-after-refusing-2020-drugs-test> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/03/senior-met-officer-sacked-for-second-time-after-refusing-2020-drugs-test> - Commander Julian Bennett, a senior Metropolitan Police officer, was dismissed for a second time after refusing to take a drugs test. Initially dismissed in October 2023, his sacking was overturned by the Police Appeals Tribunal in July 2024. However, following a fresh misconduct hearing in September 2024, the gross misconduct finding was upheld, leading to his dismissal and addition to the College of Policing’s barred list. Assistant Commissioner Matt Twist expressed concern over the prolonged process and the impact on public funds.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-67277752> - Commander Julian Bennett, who joined the Metropolitan Police in 1976, was sacked for refusing to provide a urine sample for a drugs test. He was accused by his former flatmate of daily cannabis use before work. Bennett claimed he was taking CBD oil for facial palsy and feared a positive result. The disciplinary panel found his refusal to comply with a lawful order amounted to gross misconduct, damaging the reputation of the Metropolitan Police Service.
4. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cgry27rp2r1o> - Julian Bennett, a senior Metropolitan Police officer, had his dismissal overturned by the Police Appeal Tribunal after he failed to provide a sample for a drugs test. The tribunal quashed the dismissal, but the Metropolitan Police considered a legal challenge, stating that senior officers are expected to 'lead by example'. A new hearing was scheduled, and Bennett remained suspended while the force evaluated its options.
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/oct/31/met-police-commander-guilty-of-misconduct-for-refusing-drugs-test> - Julian Bennett, a senior Metropolitan Police commander, was dismissed after being found guilty of gross misconduct for refusing to take a drug test when accused of smoking cannabis. The disciplinary panel cleared him of using the drug at home but found he breached force standards by refusing to provide a urine sample. Bennett's actions were deemed to have undermined public confidence in the Metropolitan Police.
6. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/11/01/police-officer-julian-bennett-sacked-refused-drugs-test/> - Julian Bennett, a Metropolitan Police commander, was dismissed after a disciplinary panel found he refused to provide a sample for a drugs test when accused of smoking cannabis. The panel rejected allegations of daily cannabis use but found his refusal to comply with a lawful order amounted to gross misconduct. Bennett's behaviour was deemed to have caused harm to the reputation of the Metropolitan Police Service.
7. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/met-police-officer-julian-bennett-refuse-drug-test-sacked-pension-payments-b1117348.html> - Julian Bennett, a senior Metropolitan Police officer sacked for refusing to take a drugs test, will retain his £80,000-a-year pension. Despite his dismissal, Bennett is entitled to a £400,000 pension lump sum and index-linked monthly payments. The Metropolitan Police stated that pension forfeiture applies only in the most serious criminal matters, and this case did not meet that criterion.