

Pay and Morale Survey 2020 - COVID-19 November 2020

Author: Nicola Chandler

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Executive Summary

- Just under half of respondents said that their force had managed officers well during the COVID-19 crisis (49%).
- 65% of respondents said that COVID-19 has had a negative impact on their morale.
- Over a third of respondents (34%) said that they had not had access to adequate PPE when necessary during the COVID-19 crisis.
- Less than a third of respondents said that they have had access to antigen testing via their force (31%).
- The majority of respondents said that they have had changes made to their usual duties or shifts (53%).
- More than three quarters of respondents felt that they were unfairly paid for the risks and responsibilities of their job during COVID-19 (76%)
- 31% of respondents said that their household was financially worse off now than before the COVID-19 crisis.

Introduction

The PFEW Pay and Morale Survey obtains members' views on their pay and conditions, as well as their attitudes to their work and the police service in general. The Pay and Morale survey is an annual survey, which has been conducted each year since 2014. To the best of our knowledge, it is the largest annual survey of police officers in the UK. This report provides a summary of key findings related to the COVID-19 crisis from the Pay and Morale 2020 survey. Specifically, this report covers the management of the COVID-19 crisis within the police, as well as issues relating to officers' terms and conditions. More detailed analysis of findings from this survey will be provided with the full report to the PRRB and will include comparisons of groups such as by rank and role. Findings on how the COVID-19 crisis has impacted officer welfare, and operational policing, will be covered by the PFEW Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey.

Respondents and response rate

The PFEW Pay and Morale Survey 2020 opened on 27th July 2020 and closed on 11th September 2020. During that time we had responses from 26,042 officers, which were reduced to 25,558 after data cleansing¹. The response rate for the Pay and Morale Survey 2020 was therefore approximately 20% of all federated rank officers in England and Wales and in line with previous years.

In order to calculate whether the sample size is representative, margin of error is used to measure the maximum amount by which the results from the sample are expected to differ from those of the actual population². The margin of error for this report is <1% meaning that 95% of the time the results will be within -1% and +1% of the numbers cited. To ensure that each force is proportionally represented within the national sample, data were weighted on the basis of respondents' force³. This is standard practice in survey reporting, and is used by industry leaders such as Ipsos Mori, and in government survey reporting such as the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (run by the Ministry of Defence). More information on weighting and representativeness can be found within the Technical Annex.

¹ Data were removed where the respondent gave implausible answers: e.g. said they had been at the top of their pay scale for longer than they had been a police officer; length of time in role exceeded length of service etc.

² Unless every single person in the population is surveyed, then the results of any survey are estimates, and will vary to some extent from the actual population value. There are standard ways of ensuring the estimate given is accurate enough to be used (i.e. that it is representative enough). These require the researcher to calculate the margin of error and confidence level and ensure these are within certain limits.

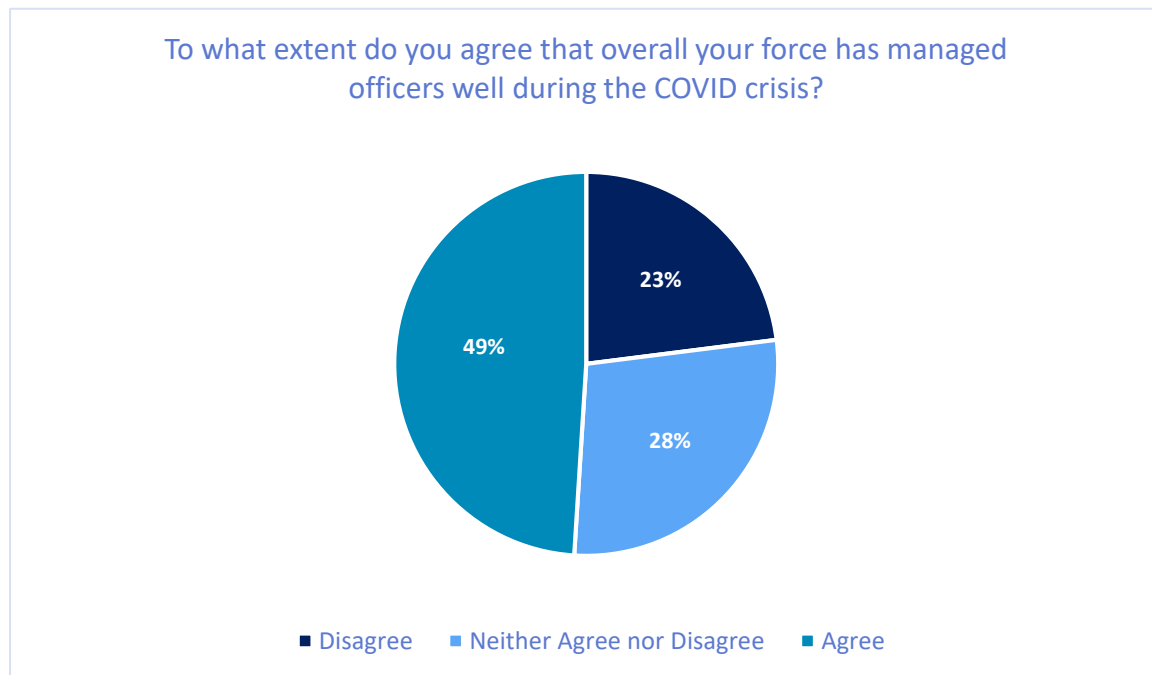
³ The weighting for each force was calculated by dividing the number of federated rank officers in the force relative to the federated rank population in England and Wales as a whole by the number of responses received from officers within the force relative to the sample as a whole.

This year, 28% of respondents to the survey were female, 72% were male, and the average age of respondents was 41 years. The majority of respondents were Constables (72%) with 20% of respondents at the rank of Sergeant, 7% at the rank of Inspector and 1% at the rank of Chief Inspector. This is broadly representative of the policing population as a whole. Again, further details on demographics can be found within the Technical Annex.

Management of officers during COVID-19

The 2020 Pay and Morale survey shows that just under half of respondents felt that their force had managed officers well during the COVID-19 crisis (49%). However, there was still almost a quarter of respondents who said that they did not feel that their force had managed officers well during the COVID-19 crisis. The findings also highlight the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on respondents' morale, with 65% of respondents saying that COVID-19 has had a negative impact on their morale.

Figure 1. Proportion of respondents who feel that their force has managed officers well during the COVID crisis



Overall, respondents agreed that their force had kept them up to date on COVID-related guidance during the COVID-19 crisis (78%). However less than half (41%) said that they have

received adequate training on the COVID-19 crisis, for example, building public cooperation with the 4Es; Engage, Explain, Encourage, Enforce⁴.

In addition, the proportion of respondents who have had access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and testing was notably low. Over a third of respondents (34%) said that they had not had access to adequate PPE when necessary during the COVID-19 crisis. Furthermore, respondents were more likely to say that they have received access to antigen testing⁵ via their force (31%) than to say that they have received antibody testing⁶ via their force (14%)⁷. The survey asked respondents about their experiences throughout the entire COVID-19 crisis to date, and we are aware that in many forces access to PPE and testing has improved as the crisis has gone on.

Table 1. Proportion of respondents agreeing or disagreeing with statements related to the COVID-19 crisis

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Disagree	Agree
I have had access to adequate PPE when necessary during the COVID crisis	34%	48%
I have had access to COVID antigen testing via my force	42%	31%
I have had access to COVID antibody testing via my force	62%	14%
My force has kept me up to date on COVID-related guidance	8%	78%
I have received adequate training on the COVID crisis from my force	30%	41%

Impact of COVID-19 on Duties and Leave

When asked about changes to duties and leave during the COVID-19 crisis, the majority of respondents said that they have had changes made to their usual duties or shifts (53%), with fewer respondents saying that they have had to take on additional duties or shifts (29%).

⁴ The College of Policing (2020). Engage, Explain, Encourage, Enforce – applying the four ‘E’s’. <https://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/COVID-19/Documents/Engage-Explain-Encourage-Enforce-guidance.pdf>

⁵ Antigen testing is used to detect whether an individual currently has COVID-19.

⁶ Antibody testing is used to detect whether an individual has previously had COVID-19.

⁷ When interpreting these results, it should be noted that only some officers from certain forces were able to access antibody testing due to participation in otherwise unrelated research, such as the Airwave study.

However, of those respondents who said that they are acting up⁸ or on temporary promotion⁹, only 4% said that this was due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Table 2. Proportion of respondents experiencing changes to leave or duties during COVID

As a result of the COVID crisis, have you experienced any of the following?	
I have had changes made to my usual duties or shifts	53%
I have had to take on additional duties or shifts	29%
I have needed to self-isolate at home	27%
I have been unable to book annual leave because of the pressures of work	25%
I have had my request for annual leave refused	18%
I have had my rest days cancelled	13%
I have had my annual leave cancelled	8%
I have needed to take special or dependents' leave	7%
I have needed to work from home as I am considered to be in a high-risk category	7%

Respondents were more likely to say that they have been unable to book annual leave because of the pressures of work (25%), than to say that they have had their annual leave refused (18%) or cancelled (8%). Despite this, respondents were slightly more likely to say that they have had their rest days cancelled (13%) as opposed to their annual leave.

Attitudes to pay in relation to COVID

More than three quarters of respondents said that they felt unfairly paid for the risks and responsibilities of their job during COVID-19. In addition, slightly less than half of respondents said that their remuneration is not fair compared to other COVID-19 key workers (46%).

⁸An officer who is temporarily authorised to carry out duties of a higher rank to meet short term needs.

⁹An officer who is temporarily authorised to carry out duties of a higher rank to meet short term needs.

Table 3. Respondents' attitudes towards their pay in relation to COVID

	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree
I am fairly paid considering the risks and additional responsibilities of the job during the COVID-19 crisis	76%	15%	9%
My remuneration is fair compared to other COVID-19 key workers (e.g. NHS staff)	46%	34%	19%
I have received the allowances I am entitled to during the COVID-19 crisis	44%	44%	12%

Just less than a third of respondents (31%) said that their household was financially worse off compared to before the COVID-19 crisis, with the majority of respondents saying that they feel financially about the same (i.e. not worse off or better off; 64%).

Appendix A

Further information on this survey can be found in the Pay and Morale 2020 Technical Annex, specifically:

- Background to the 2020 Pay and Morale survey
- Key areas the 2020 Pay and Morale survey focused on
- Uses of the survey data
- Distribution of the survey
- Respondents and Representativeness
- Respondents and response rate
- Representativeness
- Demographics
- Analytical approach
- Weighting
- Grouping and aggregation of response options
- Benchmarking

The Technical Annex can be found here: <https://www.polfed.org/our-work/pay-and-morale/>.