



# Officer Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey Descriptive Statistics Summary Report PHYSICAL WELLBEING January 2017

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# 1. FOREWORD

## INTRODUCTION

In recent times policing in England and Wales has experienced unprecedented budgetary cuts, amounting to an 18% real-term reduction since 2010.<sup>i</sup> The impact on police officer numbers has been considerable, with a 14% fall in officer numbers over a seven-year period from a high of 143,734 in 2009,<sup>ii</sup> to 124,066 in 2016.<sup>iii</sup> Evidence from a focus group study conducted by the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW)<sup>iv</sup> highlighted that these reductions may be having a negative effect on officers individual wellbeing. It was within this context that the 2016 PFEW Officer Demand, Capacity, and Welfare Survey took place.

This document is derived from the initial descriptive report<sup>v</sup> and provides a national summary of responses to key questions regarding **physical wellbeing** from the 2016 PFEW Officer Demand, Capacity, and Welfare Survey. Where additional data are available and appropriate, the national results are benchmarked against other comparator populations such as the Armed Forces.\*

Please be aware that the total number of responses for each item may vary slightly as not all items were answered by all respondents, in addition the actual differences between groups may be quite small and these details should be considered when interpreting the data.

## RESPONSE RATES AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Survey responses were gathered on-line, over a four-week period in February 2016. All officers of federated ranks in England and Wales were eligible to participate. Analyses were conducted on a sample of 16,841 responses drawn from all 43 forces across England and Wales.\*\*

14% of eligible officers completed the survey. The respondent sample was broadly representative of the overall federated officer population.\*\*\* Although this is lower than the response rate attained by the annual PFEW workforce survey in 2016, this may be due to the sensitive and specific nature of the survey topic.

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\*Please note that question wording and sample sizes between populations may differ – for full details, please see Houdmont & Elliott-Davies (2016).

\*\*Data were removed where the respondent indicated they were not currently a police officer or they gave implausible answers – for full exclusion criteria, please see Houdmont & Elliott-Davies (2016).

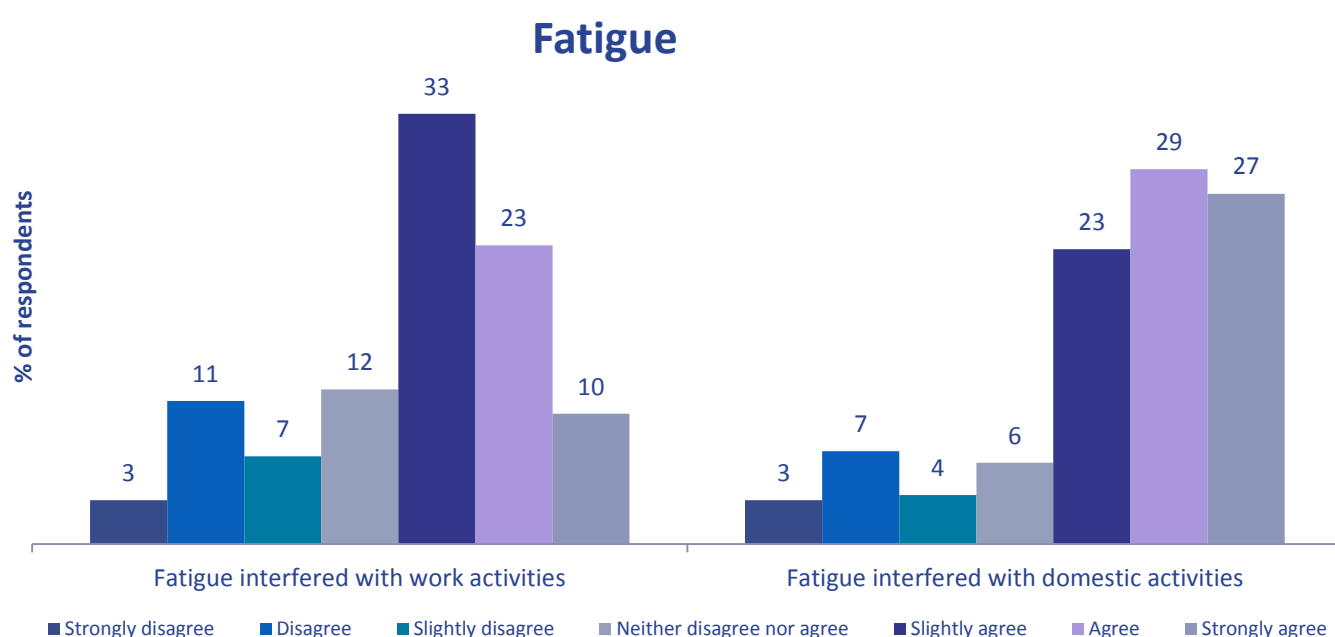
\*\*\* Although some significant differences were observed between the survey sample and the federated ranks population, in percentage terms these differences were small, allowing for the conclusion that the respondent sample was broadly representative of the national federated officer population in terms of its socio-demographic composition – for full details, please see Houdmont & Elliott-Davies (2016).

## 2. PHYSICAL WELLBEING

### 2.1. FATIGUE

Officer fatigue was assessed using two items developed for the current study. The first item explored the extent to which fatigue had interfered with work activities, whilst the second examined the extent to which fatigue had interfered with domestic activities.

**One third (33%)** of respondents *agreed or strongly agreed* that fatigue had made it difficult to carry out certain duties and responsibilities at work, and **more than half of respondents (56%)** *agreed or strongly agreed* that fatigue had interfered with family or social life.



### 2.2. HEALTH, ACTIVITY AND DIET

**65%** of respondents reported their overall physical health to be *good or very good*, and **68%** of respondents indicated that they had a *somewhat, very or extremely* healthy and balanced diet, whilst **only 24%** reported having engaged in the recommended  $\geq 30$  minutes of exercise on five or more days<sup>vi</sup> over the last week.

However, this is similar to the results found in the UK Civil Service data in 2014<sup>vii</sup> which found that 26% reported having engaged in the recommended  $\geq 30$  minutes of exercise on five or more days over the last week and 64% of respondents responded affirmatively to the statement 'Do you believe that you have a healthy and balanced diet?'

### 3. References

- <sup>i</sup> National Audit Office (2015). Financial Sustainability of Police Forces in England and Wales. Retrieved September 12, 2016, from <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Financial-sustainability-of-police-forces.pdf>
- <sup>ii</sup> Home Office (2010). Police Service Strength: England and Wales, 31 March 2010. Retrieved September 12, 2016, from [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/115745/hosb1410.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115745/hosb1410.pdf)
- <sup>iii</sup> Home Office (2016). Police Workforce, England and Wales, 31 March 2016. Statistical Bulletin 05/16. Retrieved September 12, 2016, from <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2016>
- <sup>iv</sup> Elliott-Davies, M., Donnelly, J., Boag-Munroe, F., & Van Mechelen, D. (2016). 'Getting a battering' The perceived impact of demand and capacity imbalance within the Police Service of England and Wales: A qualitative review. *The Police Journal: Theory, Practice and Principles*, 89, 2, 93-116.
- <sup>v</sup> Houdmont, J. & Elliott-Davies, M. (2016). *Police Federation of England and Wales 2016 Officer Demand, Capacity, and Welfare Survey: Initial Report - Descriptive Results*.
- <sup>vi</sup> Department of Health (2004). *At Least Five a Week: Evidence on the Impact of Physical Activity and its Relationship to Health*. London: Department of Health.
- <sup>vii</sup> Houdmont, J., Clemes, S., Munir, F., Wilson, K., Kerr, R., & Addley, K. (2015). Psychosocial work environment and leisure-time physical activity: The Stormont Study. *Occupational Medicine*, 65, 215-219.