



PFEW Officer Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey 2018 West Mercia Police November 2018

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FOREWORD

INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, the impact of reducing policing budgets on officer numbers has been considerable, with a 15% fall in officer numbers over a seven year period from a high of 142,056 in 2009 to 121,010 in March 2018.ⁱ Evidence from a focus group study conducted by the PFEWⁱⁱ highlighted that these reductions may be having a negative effect on officers individual wellbeing. It was within this context that the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) began a biennial Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey. The 2018 PFEW Officer Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey is the second iteration of the survey.

This report provides a summary of responses to key questions from the 2018 PFEW Officer Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey from respondents in West Mercia Police.

Where appropriate, details of average responses from last year, or the police service as a whole, are also presented. However, differences across these figures have not been tested to assess whether they are statistically significant¹; therefore any and all differences reported are for guidance only and must be treated with caution.

Force rankings have not been included, because not all differences are statistically significant. In addition, forces with fewer than 100 respondents were not provided with a force level report as their sample size was too small to be representative of the force as a whole and may have enabled identification of individuals based on their demographics.

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

¹ As all the data are derived from samples of the population, rather than the whole population, percentage figures calculated are strictly speaking estimates, rather than exact measures. This means that every figure has a margin of error associated with it. Hence a very small percentage difference year on year may be due to sampling, rather than to actual changes.

RESPONSE RATES AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Survey responses were gathered over a six-week period between August and September 2018. All officers of the federated ranks in England and Wales were eligible to participate.

Analyses were conducted on a sample of 18,100 responses drawn from all 43 forces across England and Wales.² The national response rate for the 2018 survey was 15%.

Overall 4% of respondents (n=788) to the survey declined to state which force they belonged to. These responses have been included within the national data but are excluded from force-level analyses.

567 responses were received from West Mercia Police, representing a response rate of around 29%.³ The margin of error for this report has been calculated using the size of the sample and the population. At a 95% confidence level, this force report has a 3% margin of error. If the margin of error is less than 5%, it can be considered to be within the normal bounds of academic rigor.⁴ If this threshold has not been met, the results from this report must be interpreted with caution.

68% of responses from West Mercia Police were received from male officers and 29% of responses were from female officers. The other 3% preferred not to say or identified in another way. In regards to rank, 77% of respondents from West Mercia Police were Constables, 16% were Sergeants, 6% were Inspectors, and 1% were Chief Inspectors. 4% of responses from West Mercia Police were received from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) officers.

² 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 the full report.

³ Based on March 2018 Home Office figures of officer headcount, for full details please see item ii in the reference section.

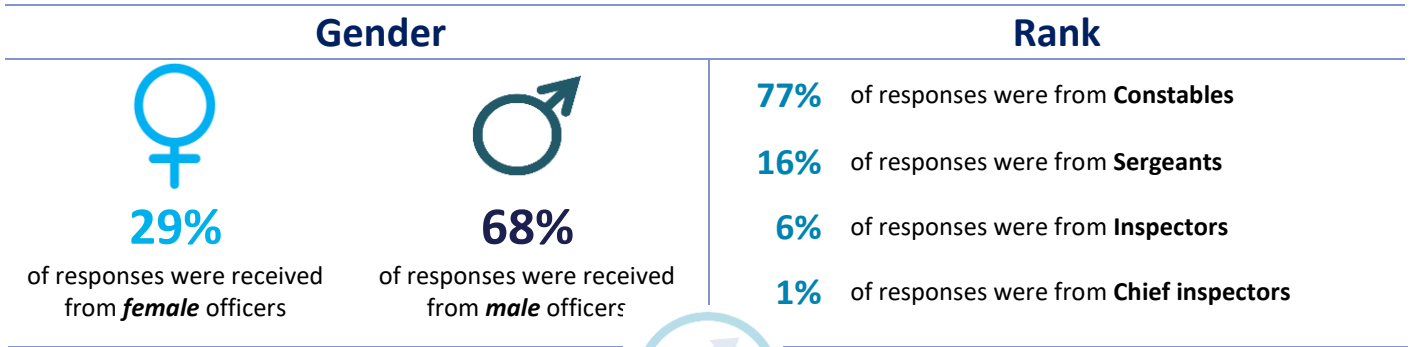
⁴ The generally accepted academic standards is a 95% confidence level with a 5% (or less) margin of error.

INFOGRAPHIC



Who responded?

567 responses were received from West Mercia Police, representing a 29% response rate



Key Findings



Executive Summary

- **567** responses were received from West Mercia Police, representing a response rate of around **29%**.
- The average (mean) rating for overall Job satisfaction for respondents from West Mercia Police was **3/10**.
- Frequent single crewing (often or always) was reported by **87%** of respondents from West Mercia Police.
- **61%** of respondents from West Mercia Police reported *never* or *rarely* being able to take their **full rest break entitlement**; *higher than* the proportion in 2016.
- **81%** of respondents from West Mercia Police said their **workload** was *too high* or *much too high*; *higher than* the proportion in 2016.
- **48%** of respondents from West Mercia Police reported *often* or *always* **having unrealistic time pressures**; *higher than* the proportion in 2016.
- **88%** of respondents from West Mercia Police said there **weren't enough officers to do the job properly**; *higher than* the proportion in 2016.
- **7%** said that they had **enough time engage in proactive policing** in their team/unit; *lower than* the proportion in 2016.
- **5%** of respondents from West Mercia Police indicated that their **overall health** was *poor* or *very poor*.
- **83%** of respondents from West Mercia Police indicated that they had **experienced feelings of stress, low mood, anxiety, or other difficulties with their health and wellbeing** over the last 12 months.
- **55%** of respondents from West Mercia Police reported that their job was *very* or *extremely* **stressful**; *higher than* the proportion in 2016.
- **23%** of West Mercia Police respondents reported that they had suffered **one or more injuries** that required medical attention as a result of **work-related violence** in the last year.
- **16%** of West Mercia Police respondents reported that they had suffered **one or more injuries** that required medical attention as a result of **work-related accidents** in the last year.
- **36%** of respondents from West Mercia Police felt that someone would be **treated differently (in a negative way)** if they disclosed difficulties with their mental health and wellbeing; *lower than* the proportion in 2016.

1. WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

1.1. OVERALL JOB SATISFACTION

Respondents were asked to rate their overall job satisfaction between 0 and 10, where 0 was 'not at all satisfied' and 10 was 'completely satisfied.'

The average (mean) rating for overall job satisfaction for respondents from West Mercia Police was 3/10 (range 0-10), with 51% of respondents reporting an overall job satisfaction rating of 2 or less.

This can be compared to the National average of 4/10, and 32% of respondents reported an overall job satisfaction rating of 2 or less.

1.2. SHIFTS

7% of respondents from West Mercia Police reported that their formal shift duration was more than the 8-10 hours advised by the Health and Safety Executiveⁱⁱⁱ and the Police Negotiating Board,^{iv} and 3% of respondents indicated a shift length of 12 hours or more.

7% of the national sample indicated that their formal shift duration was more than 8-10 hours, and 5% indicated a shift length of 12 hours or more.

1.3. SINGLE CREWING

Among respondents from West Mercia Police, for whom this item was applicable, 87% reported being single crewed either *often* or *always* over the previous 12 month period. This can be compared with 75% of respondents from the national sample.

1.4. BREAKS, REST DAYS AND ANNUAL LEAVE

61% of respondents from West Mercia Police reported *never* or *rarely being* able to take their full rest break entitlement, and 70% reported having had two or more rest days cancelled in the previous 12 month period. In addition, 26% of respondents from West Mercia Police told us that they have not been able to take their full annual leave entitlement in the previous 12 month period.

Historical comparison for items relating to breaks, rest days and annual leave for **West Mercia Police**, are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Force level figures for breaks, rest days and annual leave	2016	2018
Reported being <i>never</i> or <i>rarely</i> able to take full rest break entitlement	56%	61%
Reported having 2 or more rest days cancelled in the previous 12 months	67%	70%
Reported being unable to take their full annual leave entitlement	19%	26%

Historical comparisons for items relating to breaks, rest days and annual leave for the **police service as a whole**, are provided in the table below.

Table 2: National figures for breaks, rest days and annual leave	2016	2018
Reported being <i>never</i> or <i>rarely</i> able to take full rest break entitlement	53%	52%
Reported having 2 or more rest days cancelled in the previous 12 months	76%	67%
Reported being unable to take their full annual leave entitlement	33%	31%

2. DEMAND

2.1. WORKLOAD

81% of respondents from West Mercia Police told us that their workload is currently *too high*, or *much too high* – *higher than* the proportion from the national sample (72%) and *higher than* the proportion reported by West Mercia Police in the 2016 Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey.

2.2. HSE MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

The UK Health and Safety Executive published the Management Standards Indicator Tool (MSIT) to assist organisations in the assessment of workers exposure to dimensions of the psychosocial work environment that, if not properly managed, can lead to harm to health.^v The 25-item version of the MSIT^{vi} contains four items that measure job demands, which were included as part of the Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey.

45% of respondents from West Mercia Police told us that they *often* or *always* have unachievable deadlines, and 64% that they *often* or *always* have to neglect some tasks because they have too much to do.

Historical comparisons for the MSIT job demand items for **West Mercia Police** are provided in the table below.

Table 3: Force level figures for HSE MSIT job demands	2016	2018
<i>Often or always</i> have unrealistic time pressures	32%	48%
<i>Often or always</i> pressured to work long hours	26%	34%
<i>Often or always</i> have to neglect some tasks because they have too much to do	42%	64%
<i>Often or always</i> have unachievable deadlines	24%	45%

Historical comparison for the MSIT job demand items for the **police service as a whole**, are provided in the table below.

Table 4: National figures for HSE MSIT job demands	2016	2018
<i>Often or always</i> have unrealistic time pressures	35%	40%
<i>Often or always</i> pressured to work long hours	26%	29%
<i>Often or always</i> have to neglect some tasks because they have too much to do	43%	54%
<i>Often or always</i> have unachievable deadlines	29%	38%

2.3. AMOUNT AND PACE OF WORK

83% of respondents from West Mercia Police *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* that they were able to meet all of the conflicting demands on their time, whilst 7% *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that they had enough time engage in proactive policing in their team/unit. The proportion of officers from West Mercia Police reporting to have enough time to engage in proactive policing is *lower than* the proportion in 2016.

Across the police service as a whole, 74% of respondents *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* that they were able to meet all of the conflicting demands on their time and 90% *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* that there are enough officers to manage all the demands made on their team/unit.

3. CAPACITY

3.1. MINIMUM OFFICER STAFFING

60% of respondents from West Mercia Police indicated that their team or unit had a minimum officer staffing level.

Among respondents whose team or unit had a minimum officer staffing level, 43% indicated that this level was *never* or *rarely* achieved. This can be compared to 2016 where 16% of respondents from West Mercia Police indicated that the minimum officer staffing level was *never* or *rarely* achieved.

3.2. OFFICER STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

85% of respondents *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* that the way officer staffing levels are determined in their team/unit seems to be effective; *higher than* the proportion reported in 2016.

Historical comparisons of two key items relating to capacity to deal with demand for **West Mercia Police** are provided in the table below.

Statements	% of respondents who disagreed with the statement	
	2016	2018
There are enough officers in my team/unit for me to do my job properly	65%	88%
In my experience, we generally have enough officers to manage all the demands being made on us as a team/unit	78%	95%

Historical comparisons of the same items for the **police service as a whole** are provided in the table below.

Statements	% of respondents who disagreed with the statement	
	2016	2018
There are enough officers in my team/unit for me to do my job properly	78%	83%
In my experience, we generally have enough officers to manage all the demands being made on us as a team/unit	85%	90%

4. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

4.1. OVERALL LIFE SATISFACTION

Respondents were asked to rate their overall life satisfaction between 0 and 10, where 0 was 'not at all satisfied' and 10 was 'completely satisfied.'

The average (mean) rating for overall life satisfaction for respondents from West Mercia Police was 5/10 (range 0-10). 17% of respondents reported life satisfaction rating of 2 or less.

These results can be compared to the National average of 6/10, with 15% of respondents reporting an overall life satisfaction rating of 2 or less.

4.2. OVERALL PHYSICAL HEALTH

Participants were asked to rate their overall health on a scale from *very good* to *very poor*. An historical comparison for both national and local figures for this item are below.

Table 7: Self-rated overall physical health		2016	2018
Force level figures	<i>Very poor</i>	0%	0%
	<i>Poor</i>	4%	5%
	<i>Neither good nor poor</i>	25%	18%
	<i>Good</i>	55%	51%
	<i>Very good</i>	16%	26%
National figures	<i>Very poor</i>	1%	1%
	<i>Poor</i>	11%	6%
	<i>Neither good nor poor</i>	23%	17%
	<i>Good</i>	53%	54%
	<i>Very good</i>	13%	23%

4.3. SINGLE ITEM INDICATOR OF STRESS

Work related stress was measured using a single-item measure. 55% of respondents from West Mercia Police presented with a non-diagnostic case of work-related stress.^{vii}

This is *higher than* the proportion reported in the 2016 iteration of this survey and *higher than* the proportion reported in this year's national results.

Stress outside of work was assessed using an adaptation of the work-related stress measure. 11% of respondents from West Mercia Police presented with a non-diagnostic case of stress outside of work.

4.4. SINGLE ITEM INDICATOR FOR MENTAL HEALTH

A top-level broad overview of mental wellbeing was established using an item that asked respondents to indicate whether they had experienced feelings of stress, low mood, anxiety, or other difficulties with their health and wellbeing over the last 12 months.

83% of respondents from West Mercia Police indicated that they had experienced feelings of stress, low mood, anxiety, or other difficulties with their health and wellbeing over the last 12 months; with 97% also indicating that these feelings were caused, or made worse by work.

4.5. MENTAL WELLBEING

Mental wellbeing can be broadly conceptualized as having two dimensions. The first concerns positive affect (i.e. pleasurable aspects of wellbeing such as feelings of optimism, cheerfulness, and relaxation). The second concerns psychological functioning (i.e. such as clear thinking, self-acceptance, personal development, competence, and autonomy).

To investigate mental wellbeing in more detail the two-dimensional structure of mental wellbeing described above was assessed using the short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS).^{viii} The scale asks individuals to rate their experience during the last two weeks for seven positively framed statements.

SWEMWBS findings for **West Mercia Police** are presented in the table below alongside those for national sample for 2016 and 2018.

Table 8: % of respondents that reported experiencing the following positive aspects of wellbeing *rarely or none of the time* over the previous 2 weeks

SWEMWBS item	National figures		Force level figures	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
I've been feeling optimistic about the future	62%	36%	58%	48%
I've been feeling useful	28%	25%	17%	33%
I've been feeling relaxed	60%	48%	52%	56%
I've been dealing with problems well	20%	19%	17%	23%
I've been thinking clearly	16%	16%	15%	18%
I've been feeling close to other people	34%	28%	30%	29%
I've been able to make up my own mind about things	13%	10%	11%	12%

4.6. HELP SEEKING

A question was applied to identify those who had ever **sought help** for feelings of stress, low mood, anxiety, or any other difficulties with mental health and wellbeing. Examples of sources of help were provided including GP, occupational health department, psychologist, therapist, and counsellor.

43% of responses from West Mercia Police had previously sought help for feelings of stress, low mood, anxiety or other difficulties with their mental health and wellbeing, 57% of which had done so within the last 12 months.

5. ABSENCE BEHAVIOUR

5.1. ABSENCE

57% of respondents from West Mercia Police reported one or more days of sickness absence and 26% of respondents indicated that at least one day of their sickness absence was attributable to stress, depression, or anxiety.

The national proportion of respondents who had taken one or more days of sickness absence was 56% and 32% of respondents indicated that at least one day of their sickness absence was attributable to stress, depression, or anxiety.

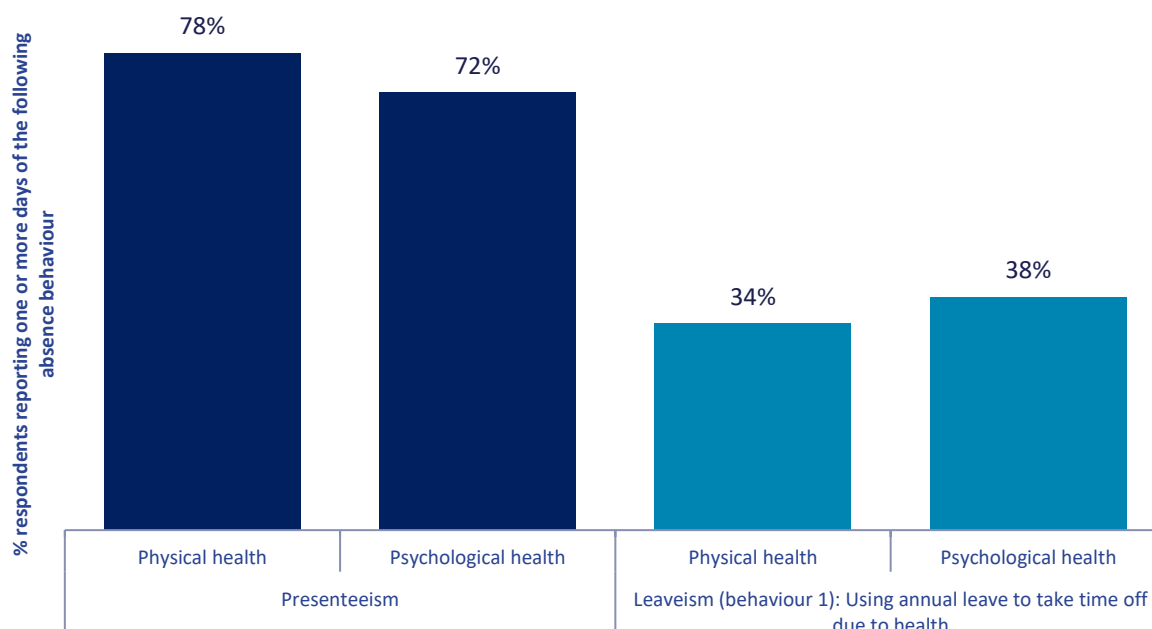
5.2. PRESENTEEISM AND LEAVEISM

Presenteeism is the act of attending work while ill. This has been shown to be associated with subsequent health decline, particularly in relation to burnout,^{ix} and can lead to elevated absenteeism.^x Moreover, evidence suggests that presenteeism can compound the effects of the initial illness and negatively influence job satisfaction, resulting in negative job attitudes and withdrawal from work.^{xi}

Leaveism is a recently coined term to describe hidden sickness absence and work undertaken during rest periods, including using allocated time off such as annual leave entitlements to take time off when they are in fact unwell.

Findings for West Mercia Police are presented in the graph below.

Figure 1: Force level figures for presenteeism and leaveism



6. Violence and physical injuries

6.1. VIOLENCE

Verbal and physical violence was assessed using four questions regarding how often officers received verbal insults, verbal threats, unarmed physical attacks, and attacks with a weapon from members of the public over the previous 12 months. Findings are presented in the table below.

Table 9: Force level figures for frequency of verbal and physical violence from members of the public

Type of violent victimisation	% of respondents indicating frequency of experience as at least once a week	
	2016	2018
Verbal insults (e.g., swearing, shouting, abuse)	40%	41%
Verbal threats (e.g., threat of hitting, threat of kicking)	22%	25%
*Spitting assaults (i.e. being deliberately spat upon)	-	2%
Unarmed physical attacks (e.g., struggling to get free, wrestling, hitting, kicking)	17%	17%
Use of a deadly weapon (e.g., stick, bottle, axe, firearm)	1%	1%

*Spitting assaults data was only available from 2018.

6.2. INJURIES

23% of West Mercia Police respondents reported that they had suffered one or more injuries that required medical attention as a result of work-related **violence** in the last year – losing more than 516 days in sickness absence.

This is *higher than* the proportion reporting one or more injuries as a result of work-related **violence** than reported in the 2016 iteration of this survey and *higher than* the proportion compared to this year’s national results.

16% of West Mercia Police respondents also reported that they had suffered one or more injuries that required medical attention as a result of work-related **accidents** in the last year – losing more than 284 days in sickness absence.

This is *lower than* the proportion reporting one or more injuries as a result of work-related **accidents** in the 2016 iteration of this survey and *higher than* the proportion compared to this year’s national results.

7. ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT: MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Participants who indicated that they had sought help for difficulties with mental health and wellbeing were presented with additional questions concerning disclosure to a line manager.

7.1. DISCLOSURE

69% of respondents from West Mercia Police, for whom it was applicable, reported that they had disclosed seeking mental health and wellbeing support to their line managers. This can be compared with 49% from the same survey in 2016.

7.2. REASONS FOR NON-DISCLOSURE

Respondents who did not disclose to their line managers that they had sought mental health and wellbeing support, were asked to indicate why. Findings are presented in the table below.

Table 10: Reasons for non-disclosure

Item	% of total mentions	
	Force level figures	National figures
I was worried that my other colleagues would find out	14%	10%
I thought it would negatively affect my opportunities for promotion and/or specialising	11%	11%
It wasn't affecting my work	5%	7%
I didn't want to be treated differently (in a negative way)	12%	13%
I felt it was a personal matter	22%	20%
I have had negative experiences of disclosing in the past	7%	6%
I thought it would have a negative impact on my career	9%	10%
There is a negative attitude in the police service towards people who experience difficulties with their mental health and wellbeing	15%	12%
I did not think my line manager would treat me with empathy	7%	7%
For reasons other than those listed above	4%	4%

7.3. ATTITUDES TO MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

All respondents were asked about the attitude of the police service towards mental health and wellbeing.

Respondents were provided with a list of statements, and asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement.

The table below shows the percentage of respondents who agreed with three key statements about the police services attitudes towards mental health and wellbeing for both West Mercia Police, and the police service as a whole.

Table 11: Attitudes to mental health and wellbeing		
Statements	% of respondents that agreed with the statement	
	Force level figures	National figures
The police service encourages staff to talk openly about mental health and wellbeing	33%	45%
Someone would be treated differently (in a negative way) if they disclosed difficulties with their mental health and wellbeing	36%	37%

8. Notes for JBBs

Additional findings from the 2018 Demand, Capacity and Welfare survey are available on request from the Research and Policy department. Additional topics include, but are not limited to:

- Morale,
- Fatigue and sleep,
- Managerial mental health and wellbeing support,
- Organisational change, and
- Organisational justice.

The findings of the survey can also be broken down in more detail in terms of different demographic groups, such as rank, role or length of service. However please be aware that we can only go into a certain level of detail with this demographic data in order to preserve respondents' confidentiality.

JBBs wishing to obtain further information can contact ResearchandDataCollection@polfed.org to discuss their requirements.

The Research and Policy Department only has one member of staff responsible for these data requests; please bear this in mind in terms of turnaround times and the amount of data you request when contacting the team.

All other interested parties should speak to their local JBB in the first instance.

9. REFERENCES

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