



Officer Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey Descriptive Statistics Summary Report CAPACITY 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.ⁱ 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,ⁱⁱ to 124,066 in 2016.ⁱⁱⁱ Evidence from a focus group study conducted by the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW)^{iv} 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^v and provides a national summary of responses to key questions regarding **capacity** 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.

*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. CAPACITY

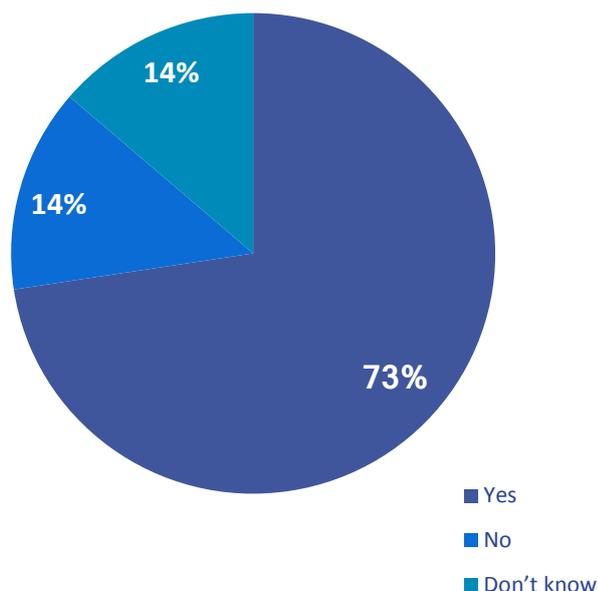
2.1. MINIMUM OFFICER STAFFING

We asked respondents whether or not their team/unit has a minimum officer staffing level. Those who responded affirmatively were invited to respond to two further items; one asking them to indicate the extent to which minimum officer staffing levels were achieved over the previous 12 month period, the other asking respondents to consider the effect that failure in meeting the minimum officer staffing level has on their ability to meet demand.

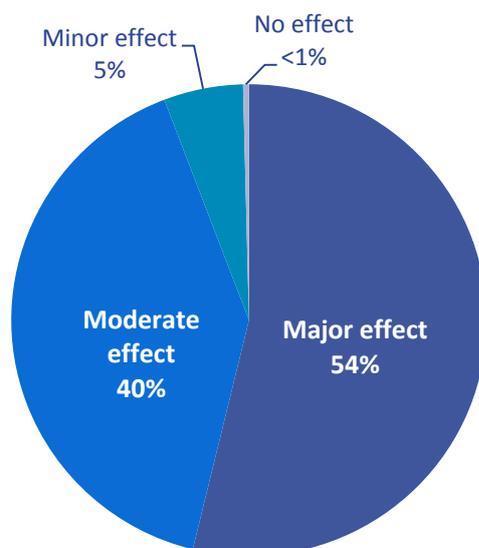
73% of respondents indicated that their team/unit had a minimum officer staffing level. Of those respondents, **one fifth (21%)** indicated that this level was *never or rarely* achieved.

Almost all respondents (94%) considered that failure to meet minimum officer staffing levels had a *major or moderate* effect on their ability to meet demand.

Does your team/unit have a minimum officer staffing level?



If minimum staffing levels are not met, what effect does this have on your ability to meet demand?



2.2. OFFICER STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

Respondents were asked whether they had been told how officer staffing levels in their team/unit were determined and whether they felt it was effective.

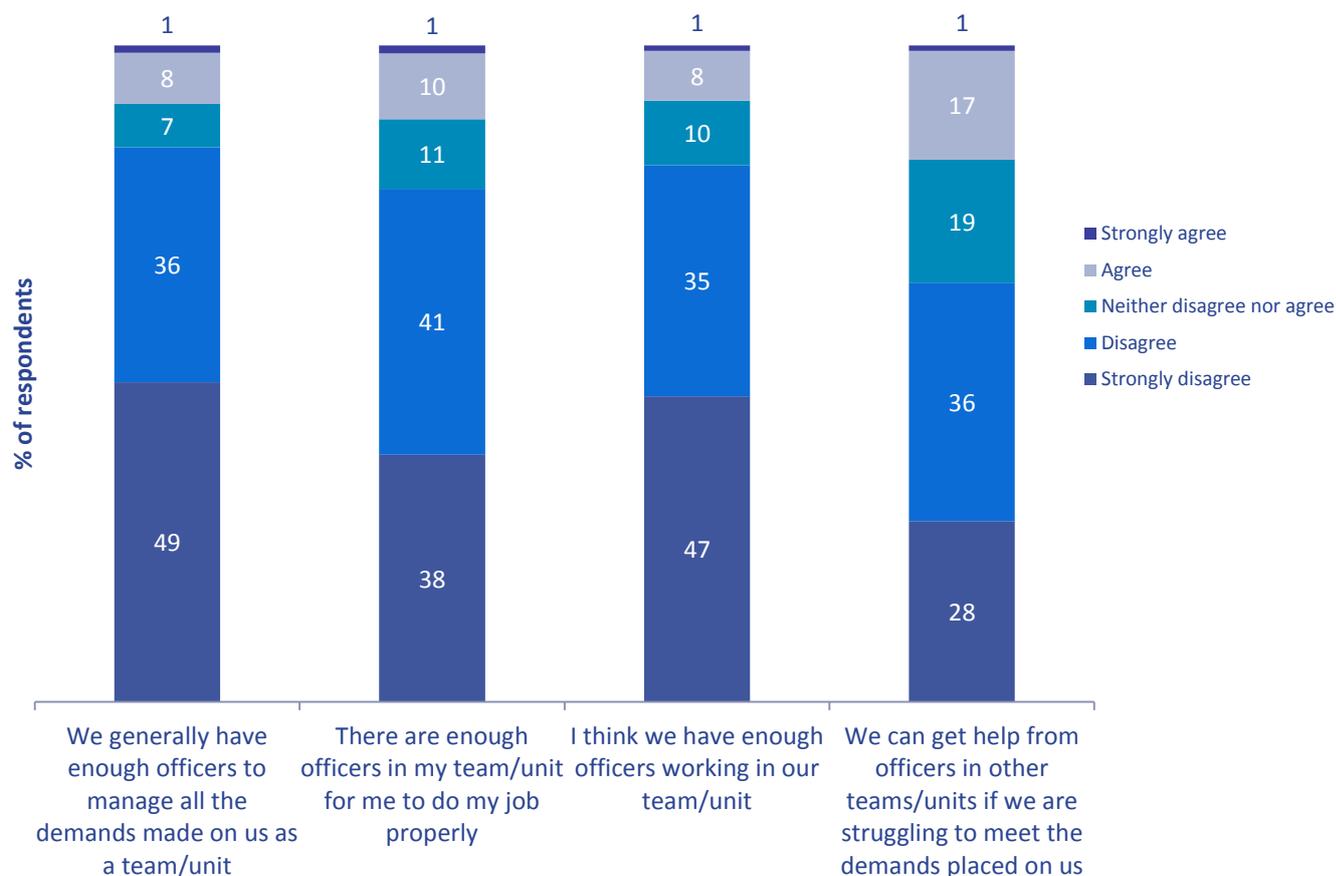
Two thirds of respondents (64%) indicated that they had not been told how officer staffing levels are determined, whilst **71%** *disagreed or strongly disagreed* that the way officer staffing levels are determined seems to be effective.



An additional set of items were developed for the welfare survey to assess aspects of job capacity in relation to demand.

82% of respondents indicated that they don't have enough officers in their team/unit and the vast majority of respondents indicated that they generally don't have enough officers to manage the demands faced by their team or unit (85%) nor to do their job properly (78%). In addition, **two-thirds** (64%) indicated that if their team/unit *were* struggling to meet demand, they could not get help from officers in other teams/units.

Officer capacity



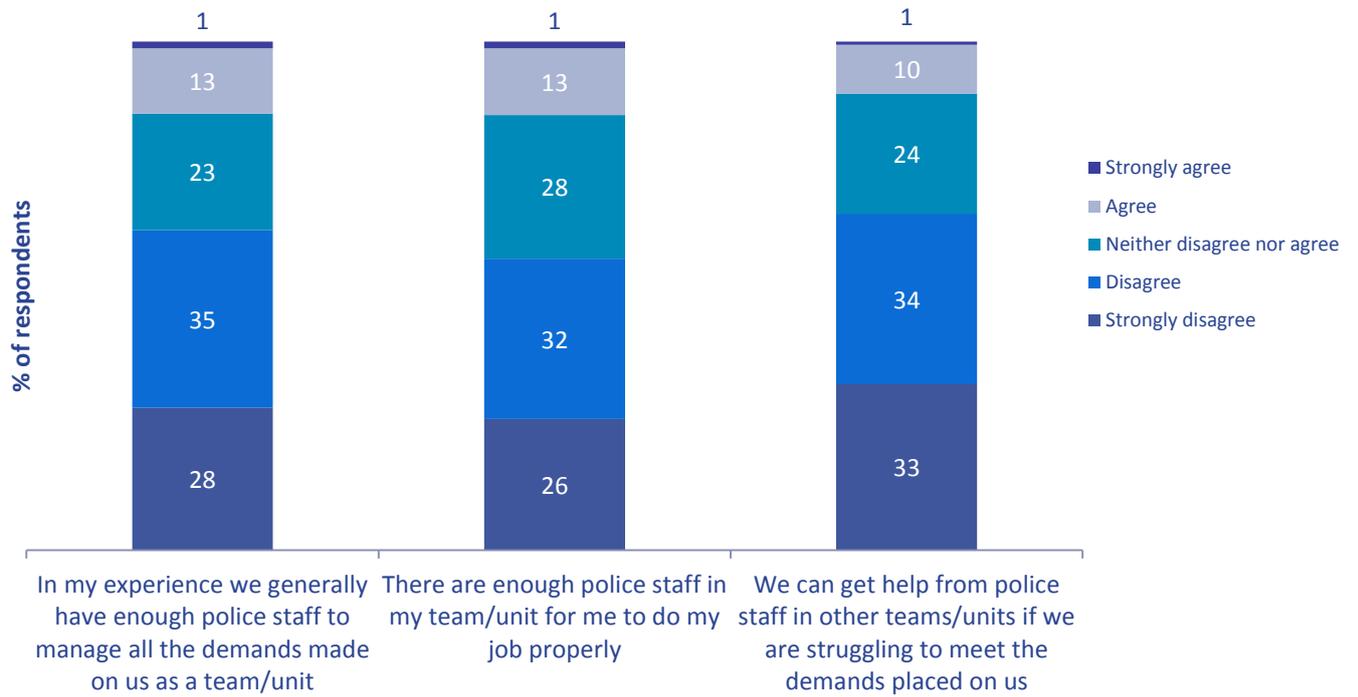
When responding to additional items about staffing, the majority of respondents felt that sickness (68%), annual leave (62%), training (53%), and officers being on limited duties (52%), had had a *major* or *moderate* effect on officer staffing levels.

2.3. SUPPORT STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

63% of respondents *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* that they generally had enough **police staff** to manage the demands made on the team/unit over the previous 12 months and **57%** *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* that they had enough police staff in their team or unit for them to do their job properly.

In addition, **66%** *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* that they could get help from police staff in other teams/units if they were struggling to meet demand.

Support staff capacity



3. References

ⁱ 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>

ⁱⁱ 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

ⁱⁱⁱ 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>

^{iv} 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.

^v Houdmont, J. & Elliott-Davies, M. (2016). *Police Federation of England and Wales 2016 Officer Demand, Capacity, and Welfare Survey: Initial Report - Descriptive Results*.