

Research Report R001/2024

Pay and Morale Survey 2023 – Headline Report February 2024

Author:

Police Federation of England and Wales

Social Market Foundation

Security classification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not protectively marked	May be published openly / immediately
	<input type="checkbox"/> Protected	Review whether broader publication
	<input type="checkbox"/> Restricted	Not for open publication. Restricted to:
	<input type="checkbox"/> Confidential	

CONTENTS

ABOUT US.....	6
FOREWORD FROM THE POLICE FEDERATION OF ENGLAND AND WALES	7
FOREWORD FROM SMF.....	9
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	10
INTRODUCTION	16
RESPONDENTS AND RESPONSE RATE.....	17
REPRESENTATIVENESS	17
AVERAGES AND ROUNDING	18
MORALE	20
OVERALL MORALE.....	21
RETENTION	24
PAY AND REWARD	27
VIEWS ON PAY.....	29
VIEWS ON PENSIONS	31
PROMOTIONS, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT	37
SPECIFIC PAYMENTS AND ROLES	40
REGIONAL ALLOWANCES	40
DOG HANDLER’S ALLOWANCE	41
CRITICAL SKILLS PAYMENT	42
CONDITIONS.....	44
WORKLOAD	46
OVERTIME	49
ROSTERING AND NIGHT SHIFTS	51
REST ENTITLEMENT	53
ANNUAL LEAVE ENTITLEMENT.....	53
HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING.....	54
OFFICER MENTAL HEALTH	56
MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT	61
ABSENCE, PRESENTEEISM, AND LEAVEISM.....	69
QUALITY OF EQUIPMENT AND PROCEDURES	72

EQUALITY	73
GENDER.....	75
ETHNICITY.....	76
SEXUALITY	78
AGE	79
MAKING OUR VOICES HEARD	82
THE PUBLIC’S VIEW OF THE POLICE.....	84
THE GOVERNMENT’S VIEW OF THE POLICE	85
CONCLUSION	86

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: PFEW2025 high level summary	16
Figure 2: Respondents' morale since 2019.....	21
Figure 3: Respondents' personal morale by role.....	22
Figure 4: I feel proud to be in the police	24
Figure 5: Factors which have a major impact on respondents' intention to leave the police service	25
Figure 6: Share of members dissatisfied with basic pay and overall remuneration	29
Figure 7: I am not fairly paid considering the.....	30
Figure 8: Share of members dissatisfied with their pension	31
Figure 9: What are the main reasons for opting out/considering opting out of the pension scheme?	32
Figure 10: I am able to cover my monthly essentials... ..	34
Figure 11: Which of the following are you doing because your cost of living has increased?.....	35
Figure 12: What are your main reasons for not applying for promotion?	38
Figure 13: How satisfied are you with the amount of your London or South East Allowance?	40
Figure 14: Excluding the 'kennel hour' (if applicable), on average how long do you spend outside of working hours caring for each of your police dogs per day?	42
Figure 15: What explanation did your force give for awarding a Service Critical Skills payment to you?.....	43
Figure 16: How would you rate your workload over the last 12 months?.....	46
Figure 17: Most frequent reason for paid or unpaid overtime	50
Figure 18: Which of the following best describes the shift pattern you typically work?.....	51

Figure 19: Average life satisfaction out of 10	56
Figure 20: Breakdown of average life satisfaction out of 10.....	57
Figure 21: Aspects of work that impacted mental health and wellbeing.....	59
Figure 22: Type of proactive mental health support offered (of the 46% of respondents who have access to proactive support)	62
Figure 23: Type of reactive mental health support offered (of the 77% of respondents who have access to reactive support)	63
Figure 24: Reason for not telling manager about receiving support for mental health issues	66
Figure 25: Level of access at all times to equipment and procedures	72
Figure 26: Level of morale by gender	75
Figure 27: Level of morale by ethnicity	76
Figure 28: Impact of discrimination at work on mental health	77
Figure 29: Level of morale by age.....	79
Figure 30: Level of agreement that 'members of the Police are respected by the Public'	84

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Key Performance Indicators (KPI) subcategories.....	10
Table 2: Morale	20
Table 3: Impact of factors on morale.....	23
Table 4: Pay and Reward.....	27
Table 5: Training and development.....	37
Table 6: Reason for living out the area	41
Table 7: Conditions	44
Table 8: Frequency of single-crewing in the last 12 months	48
Table 9: Average hours of overtime per 4 week period	49
Table 10: Frequency of roster being changed due to exigencies of duty in last 12 months...52	
Table 11: Annual Leave	53
Table 12: Health, Safety and Wellbeing.....	54
Table 13: Mental health and wellbeing	58
Table 14: In your experience, how well were you supported by the police service after you discussed your mental health and wellbeing with your line manager?	64
Table 15: Culture around mental health and wellbeing in the police serviceThe quotes below also illustrate the issues that officers have in being open with their colleagues about mental health and seeking support.	67
Table 16: Absence and Presenteeism	69

Table 17: Sick leave	70
Table 18: Violence from citizens	71
Table 19: Equality.....	73
Table 20: How respondents find their job by sexuality	78
Table 21: How respondents find their job by age.....	80
Table 22: Making our voices heard.....	82
Table 23: Impact of public treatment of Police on intention to leave the force.....	84

ABOUT US

POLICE FEDERATION OF ENGLAND AND WALES

The Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) is the staff association for police constables, sergeants, inspectors (including chief inspectors), and special constables. PFEW has been successfully representing officers and influencing the policing agenda for over 100 years, having first established in 1919. Voicing the views of more than 145,000 rank and file police officers, PFEW is the official body that exists to represent and support police officers on issues such as pay, allowances, terms and conditions, as well as advising and lobbying on operational policing issues and influencing legislation. It also provides training on equality, promotion, discipline, and health and safety.

SOCIAL MARKET FOUNDATION

The Social Market Foundation (SMF) is a non-partisan think tank. We believe that fair markets, complemented by open public services, increase prosperity and help people to live well. We conduct research and run events looking at a wide range of economic and social policy areas, focusing on economic prosperity, public services and consumer markets. The SMF is resolutely independent, and the range of backgrounds and opinions among our staff, trustees and advisory board reflects this.

FOREWORD FROM THE POLICE FEDERATION OF ENGLAND AND WALES

BY MUKUND KRISHNA, CEO, POLICE FEDERATION OF ENGLAND AND WALES

This report is written in collaboration with the Social Market Foundation (SMF). SMF are the leading cross-party think-tank, and they outline an impartial picture of the issues we face. This collaboration has the aim of providing an outside perspective, which we regard as highly important if we are to have a comprehensive conversation about the conditions in policing.

This report stems directly from our vision, which is about being at the heart of policing, making sure police officers' views are heard, and securing for them the best possible conditions of service through impacting debates directly. By presenting the views of police officers from every Force, we simultaneously address the three main facets of our 2025 Strategy, the Member's agenda, the Federation agenda and the Public agenda. The report presents views related to the five components of the Members' agenda: Pay & Reward; Conditions; Health, Safety & Wellbeing; Equality; and Making our voices heard. It additionally addresses the Federation agenda by improving ways of working, through the timely collaboration with SMF. And it aims to achieve the three key goals of the Public agenda, namely, to have a police service to be proud of, incorporating the view from the front line; to have a partnership with the public; and to set the political agenda by directly influencing public conversations.

The report presents the results of the Pay and Morale Survey, which tackles the key issues by collecting officers' views on their pay and working conditions, and their levels of morale. The Pay and Morale survey is conducted annually since 2014, and is one of the largest surveys of its kind. Considering the importance and the challenges of policing, this survey has been a key and timely contribution to the public debate.

Policing is facing numerous challenges and police officers work in a very demanding context. After years of austerity leading to staff and resource shortages, we have seen a slump in morale in the post-pandemic period. And after a decades-long pay lag depressing real pay, the cost of living crisis has been yet another blow to officers' wellbeing and livelihoods.

Police officers report in the Survey that personal morale has worsened by 2 percentage points from last year, with 58% reporting low personal morale. And this is key because, morale has the biggest impact on retention rates for the police service. Police officers continue to be dissatisfied with their overall career and pay progression within the police

service. A very high share, (77.8 per cent) of police officers are dissatisfied with 'overall remuneration'.

Officers are still struggling with the cost of living crisis, despite the seven per cent pay award last year. Nine in ten, (91 per cent) of respondents reported that their cost of living had increased in the last month. More than half of police officers are not able to cover their monthly essentials and are worrying about money 'daily' or 'almost every day'. Additionally, the stress of the workload and working conditions continues to be a cause of concern for officers. As PFEW we are a strong voice for our members in raising these issues, as shown in our communication to NPCC. We remain watchful of any issues facing our members and diligent in our demands for those issues to be addressed.

FOREWORD FROM SMF

BY AVEEK BHATTACHARYA, INTERIM DIRECTOR, SOCIAL MARKET FOUNDATION

Whoever is in government after the next election is going to face a substantial challenge to repair public services, and restore them to the level of effectiveness and efficiency that the public expects. That is not going to be achievable without addressing the huge workforce challenges in the public sector – improving morale and retention to ensure we have an adequate pool of motivated, qualified experienced staff tackling the country’s big problems.

Given the salience of crime to voters, that is as true for the police force as any other public service. So we at the Social Market Foundation are delighted to be partnering with the Police Federation of England and Wales to provide this unique set of insights into the state of pay and morale in service. Collating the feelings and reflections of over 28,000 officers, it provides robust evidence on how the people behind the uniform are doing.

The results are alarming. 58 per cent say that their morale is low, with an even bigger number feeling disrespected by the government and undervalued by their employer. Police officers are considerably less happy than the rest of society: their average life satisfaction is just 5.2 out of 10, compared to 7.5 in the general public. It should be no surprise, then, that one in six police officers say they want to leave within the next two years, and that 73 per cent would not recommend joining the force to others.

The causes of this distress and dissatisfaction are clear enough from the survey. Inadequate pay, especially in the face of the cost of living crisis. Unbearable workload. The constant risk of abuse and injury, and a perception of a lack of adequate support. Too little help with mental health issues.

The findings are stark, and the urgency of the need for action apparent. The human cost we have documented here should be reason enough to move quickly to fix these problems, but the consequences for long term police capacity if they remain unaddressed do not bear thinking about.

We’ll be back next year to see if any progress has been made.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Table 1: Key Performance Indicators (KPI) subcategories

	Measure	'22	'23	Δ	Commentary
Morale	% who say 'own morale' is low	56%	58%	2%pt	Officers' morale is worse than last year, with well over half of officers having low morale
Pay & Reward	% dissatisfied with 'overall remuneration'	83%	77.8% ¹	-5%pt	Four in five respondents unhappy with pay, far higher than levels seen in mid 2010s
Conditions	Impact of workload & responsibilities on morale (% negative)	64%	66%	2%pt	Workload is having an increasingly negative impact on morale
Health, Safety & Wellbeing	Life satisfaction (out of 10)	5.2	5.2	0	Respondents' life satisfaction is far below the general public (7.5 ²) and armed forces (6.1 ³)
Equality	Difference in % rating morale 'high' or 'very high' between highest and lowest segment (average)	n/a	6%	-2%pt	The morale level is low across all groups; the gap between morale of different groups has widened on ethnicity and marginally narrowed on gender and age ⁴
Making Our Voices Heard	% who disagree that police are respected by the public	79%	85%	6%pt	There was a sharp rise in the sense that the Police are not respected by the public, from an already high base

POLICE MORALE IS LOW AND HAS CONTINUED TO FALL SINCE 2022, DRIVEN BY THE GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC'S TREATMENT OF THE POLICE AS WELL AS PAY

- **The personal morale of officers is low and worsening**
 - 43 per cent of respondents told us that their morale is 'high', 'very high' or 'neither high or low', down from 44 per cent in 2022.

¹ For the purposes of the report we have rounded up this figure to 78%.

² Office of National Statistics (2024). *Public service productivity, quarterly, UK: July to September 2023*.

Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-service-productivity-quarterly-uk-july-to-september-2023> (Accessed: 15 January 2024).

³ Ministry of Defence (2023). *Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey: 2023*. Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/armed-forces-continuous-attitude-survey-2023> (Accessed: 19 January 2024).

⁴ Gender, ethnicity, sexuality and age included for 2023. Sexuality data was not available for 2022. The change 2022-2023 provided is based upon the change in the average difference in morale for gender, ethnicity and age only.

- 58 per cent have 'low' or 'very low' morale.
- **Morale is especially bad in certain roles**
 - Respondents' morale is worst in custody based roles, the Central Communications Unit, road policing, operational support and criminal justice.
 - The only role where more people have high morale than low morale is when they are doing their initial training.
- **Officers with certain backgrounds or sexual preferences also have lower morale**
 - Respondents whose ethnicity is 'Asian or Asian British', 'Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups' or 'other ethnic group' had lower morale than 'White' or 'Black or Black British'.
 - Respondents who identified as bisexual had lower morale than those who identified as gay, lesbian or straight/heterosexual.
- **The treatment of the police by the government and the public are the biggest causes of low morale**
 - 95 per cent said that how the Police are treated by the government had a negative impact on their morale, 86 per cent said the same for the public.
 - Pay and benefits are the next most significant cause of low morale, on 81 per cent of the cases.
 - 31 per cent said they do not feel proud to be in the Police.
 - 95 per cent of respondents said that they do not feel respected by the government.
 - 71 per cent of respondents said that they did not feel valued within the Police.
- **Almost all respondents view morale in their force and Police more widely as poor**
 - 87 per cent of respondents feel that morale within the force is currently 'low' or 'very low'.
 - 91 per cent of respondents feel that morale within the Police service is currently 'low' or 'very low'.
- **Low morale is increasingly impacting prospects for staff retention**
 - 22 per cent of respondents told us that they had an intention to resign from the Police service either 'within the next two years' or 'as soon as [they] can.'
 - The most frequently cited reasons respondents gave for intending to 'resign within the next two years' or intending to resign 'as soon as [they] can' were their morale, how the Police are treated by the government and the impact of the job on their mental health and wellbeing (with 85 per cent, 78 per cent and 73 per cent respectively).

- 73 per cent of respondents said that they would not recommend joining the police to others.

DISSATISFACTION WITH PAY IS A SIGNIFICANT DRIVER OF POOR MORALE, WITH RESPONDENTS STRUGGLING WITH THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS

- **Only 1 in 5 officers are satisfied or neutral on the question of pay**
 - 77.8 per cent of respondents said that they are ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ with their overall remuneration (including basic pay and allowances).⁵
- **The sense that Police pay does not properly cover the risks of the job has increased in recent years**
 - 85 per cent of respondents feel that they are not fairly paid given the hazards they face within their job, up from 78 per cent in 2018.
 - 92 per cent of respondents feel that they are not fairly paid given the stresses and strains of their job, up from 88 per cent in 2018.
- **The cost of living is having a big impact on respondents, with 1 in 5 struggling to cover the essentials**
 - 91 per cent of respondents reported that their cost of living had increased in the last month, with ‘the price of my food shop has increased’ being the most cited reason (85 per cent).
 - 85 per cent of respondents felt that they were ‘worse off’ financially than they were five years ago.
 - 18 per cent of respondents reported ‘never’ or ‘almost never’ having enough money to cover all their essentials.
- **A large share of respondents is not happy with opportunities for development or promotion**
 - 40 per cent of respondents reported being ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ with opportunities for training and 48 per cent reported being ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ with the Professional Development Review (PDR) process.
 - 15 per cent of respondents said that they have applied for promotion to the next rank up from the one they are currently in the last year.
 - 51 per cent of those not applying for promotion said it was not worth it for the pressures and the responsibility, and 46 per cent said it was not worth the salary on offer.

⁵ For the purposes of the report, we have rounded up this figure to 78%.

WORKLOAD REMAINS A SOURCE OF DISSATISFACTION, WITH OFFICERS UNABLE TO TAKE THE BREAKS THEY ARE DUE

- **Respondents' workload is seen as too high, and this is hitting morale**
 - Only about a third, 36 per cent of respondents said that over the last 12 months, their workload has been 'about right' or 'too low'.
 - 34 per cent of respondents feel that their workload and responsibilities have a positive or neutral impact on their morale, down from 36 per cent in 2022.
 - 86 per cent said that they do not feel that there are enough officers to meet the demands of their team or unit.
 - 33 per cent of respondents 'always' or 'often' felt pressured into working long hours over the last 12 months.
- **Police are doing 14 hours of overtime on average over a 4-week period**
 - Respondents did a median of 5 hours of unpaid overtime over a typical 4-week period, the same as in 2022.
 - Respondents did a median of 9 hours of paid overtime over a typical 4-week period, down slightly from 10 hours in 2022.
- **A third of respondents are not able to take all their annual leave, and 63 per cent have had rest days cancelled**
 - 7 per cent of respondents said that they have 'never' or 'rarely' been able to take an 11-hour break between shifts in the last 12 months.
 - 34 per cent of respondents said they were unable to take all the annual leave they were entitled to, and 64 per cent have had at least one request for annual leave refused in the past 12 months.
 - 63 per cent had at least one rest days cancelled.

RATES OF PHYSICAL AND VERBAL ABUSE FROM CITIZENS ARE HIGH, WITH OFFICERS NOT GETTING ALL OF THE EQUIPMENT AND SUPPORT THAT THEY NEED

- **Officers are at risk from injuries on the job**
 - 11 per cent of 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.
 - 15 per cent of 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.

- **Rates of physical violence from citizens remain high, with 11 per cent of officers facing physical attacks**
 - 11 per cent of respondents have experienced unarmed physical attacks (e.g., struggling to get free, wrestling, hitting, kicking) at least once per week in the past 12 months, the same as in 2022.
 - 1 per cent of respondents have experienced the use of a deadly weapon at least once per week in the past 12 months, the same as in 2022.
- **A third of respondents face weekly verbal abuse**
 - 34 per cent of respondents have experienced verbal insults (e.g., swearing, shouting, abuse) at least once per week in the past 12 months.
- **There is a large gap between what officers want and what they have access to when it comes to equipment and safety procedures**
 - Only 27 per cent of respondents reported having access to double crewing ‘at all times’ whilst on duty, compared to 76 per cent who would like to.
 - Only 58 per cent of respondents reported having access to spit guards ‘at all times’ whilst on duty, compared to 82 per cent who would like to.

POOR MORALE, UNHAPPINESS ON PAY, TOUGH WORKING CONDITIONS AND ABUSE FROM CITIZENS ARE HAVING AN IMPACT ON THE LIFE SATISFACTION AND MENTAL HEALTH OF POLICE OFFICERS

- **Life satisfaction among officers is very low**
 - Respondents give an average 5.2 out of 10 rating for their life satisfaction
 - This is far below that of the general public, who give an average of 7.5, and a tri-forces average in the Armed Forces of 6.1.^{2,3}
- **The stresses of the job are harming officers’ mental health**
 - 43 per cent of respondents said that they find their job ‘very’ or ‘extremely’ stressful.
 - 82 per cent of respondents indicated that they had experienced feelings of stress, low mood, anxiety or other difficulties with their health and wellbeing over the last 12 months.
 - 93 per cent said that these feelings of stress, low mood, anxiety or other difficulties had been caused, or made worse, by work, with ‘workload being too high’ (39 per cent) and ‘having a poor work/life balance’ (34 per cent) being cited as the most common reasons.

- **Discrimination is also playing a part**
 - 15 per cent of ‘Asian or Asian British’ respondents, or respondents of ‘other ethnic groups’ say that discrimination at work has impacted their mental health, compared to 5 per cent of ‘White’ respondents.
 - 8 per cent of respondents who identify as ‘bisexual’ say the same.

THE QUALITY OF SUPPORT PROVIDED BY MANAGERS AND FORCES IS A MIXED PICTURE, AND THE CULTURE AROUND MENTAL HEALTH STILL HAS FURTHER TO GO

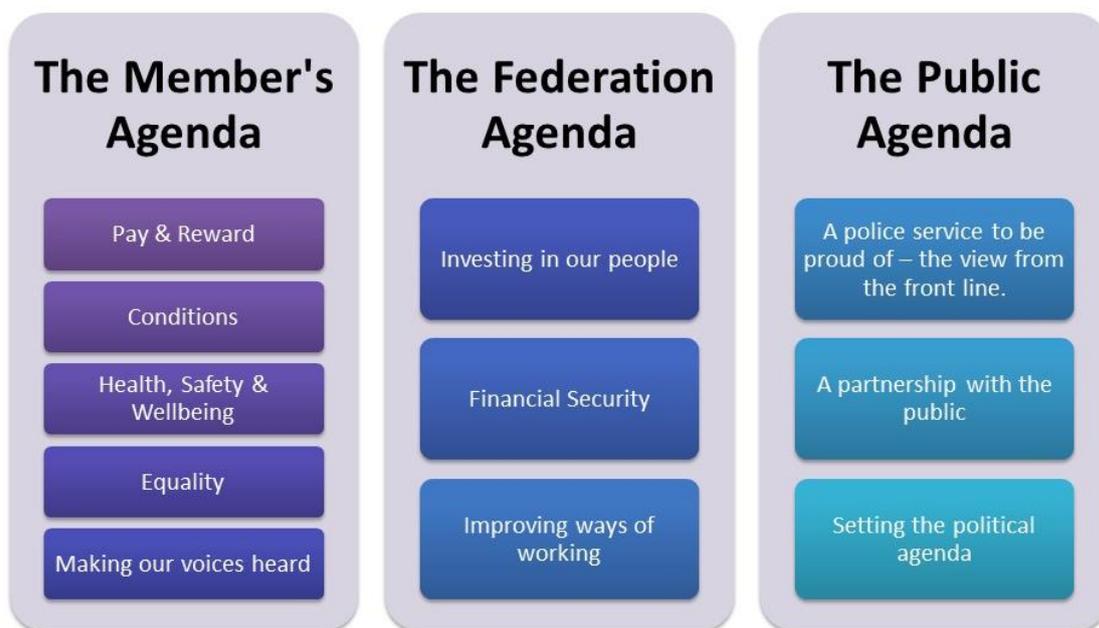
- **A majority of respondents are telling their managers about seeking mental health support**
 - Most of those respondents, 74 per cent, who had had mental health challenges told their manager about it, up from 72 per cent in 2022.
- **But concern about how respondents will be treated is still holding some officers back**
 - 43 per cent of those who didn’t tell their manager said that not wanting to be treated differently, in a negative way, held them back.
 - 35 per cent thought that it would impact their opportunities for promotion or specialising.
- **Mental health support quality is mixed in Police forces**
 - 38 per cent rate it ‘well’ or ‘very well’, and 29 per cent rate it as adequate.
 - 33 per cent rate it ‘poorly’ or ‘very poorly’.

INTRODUCTION

The PFEW Pay and Morale Survey obtains respondents' views on their pay and conditions, 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 survey represents the richest source of data on the state of policing in the country. As such, it is an invaluable way of measuring progress against the PFEW2025 strategy, which is summarised in Figure 1. This report will look and feel a little different to previous years because the structure has been changed in order to use the Pay and Morale (P&M) survey's data to align against the Members' Agenda of the PFEW strategy. The Members' Agenda, which focuses on the well being of police officers, has several goals: a) Pay & Reward - campaign to achieve fair pay increases to achieve the best possible outcomes for members; b) Conditions - secure the best possible terms & conditions of working; c) Health, Safety & Wellbeing - a safe and healthy working environment, with access to first-class welfare provisions; d) Equality - lead the way to deliver an inclusive workplace; and e) Making our voices heard - position ourselves as the undisputed voice of policing.

Figure 1: PFEW2025 high level summary



Another change is that PFEW have analysed and presented the results in partnership with the Social Market Foundation (SMF). SMF are Britain's leading cross-party think-tank. They conduct research and run events looking at a wide range of economic and social policy areas, focusing on economic prosperity, public services and consumer markets. The SMF is resolutely independent, and the range of backgrounds and opinions among its staff, trustees and advisory board reflects this. The collaboration between PFEW and SMF helps to bring an additional, and external perspective to the results of the P&M survey.

As always, this report provides a summary of key findings on respondents' morale, cost of living and attitudes towards pay and remuneration. Findings also cover respondents' intention to stay in the Police service, and indicators of engagement with the service – for example, whether respondents feel proud to be in the Police, and whether respondents would recommend the Police service to others. The report also provides details on how respondents view their working arrangements, workloads, capacity, and working hours, as well as their physical, and mental health and wellbeing.

RESPONDENTS AND RESPONSE RATE

The PFEW Pay and Morale Survey 2023 launched on 6th November 2023 and closed on 11th December 2023. During that time, we had responses from 29,085 officers. After data cleansing, we had 28,070 responses. The response rate for the Pay and Morale Survey 2023 was therefore approximately 19 per cent of all federated rank officers in England and Wales.⁶

REPRESENTATIVENESS

To calculate whether the sample size is representative, it is necessary to take the population size into account, along with the margin of error and the confidence level. In essence, the margin of error measures the maximum amount by which the results from the sample are expected to differ from those of the actual population and is calculated using the sample size (the number of responses from federated rank officers in England and Wales), the population size (the total number of federated rank officers in England and Wales) and the confidence level.

⁶ Home Office. (2023). *Police Workforce, England and Wales, 31 March 2023: data tables* [Dataset]. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2023> (Accessed at: 1 February 2024).

The smaller the margin of error, the more confident we can be that the results are representative of the overall sample. For example: If 60 per cent of respondents answered 'Yes' to one of the survey questions and the margin of error is 5 per cent, we can estimate that 55 per cent - 65 per cent of the whole population would answer the same if asked.

If the margin of error is less than 5 per cent, it can be considered to be within the normal bounds of academic rigour. The margin of error for this report has been calculated, and at a 95 per cent confidence level, this report has a margin of error of less than 1 per cent.

To ensure that each force is proportionally represented within the national sample, data were weighted on the basis of respondents' force.⁷ This is standard practice in survey reporting, and is used by industry leaders, 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.

This year, 30 per cent of respondents to the survey were female, 70 per cent were male, and the average (mean) age of respondents was 40 years. The majority of respondents were Constables (73 per cent) with 19 per cent of respondents at the rank of Sergeant, 7 per cent at the rank of Inspector and 2 per cent at the rank of Chief Inspector. This is broadly representative of the federated rank population as a whole. Again, further details on demographics can be found within the 2023 Pay and Morale Technical Annex.

AVERAGES AND ROUNDING

The "average" can refer to one of three statistics: The mean is the numeric average calculated by adding all the data points together and dividing by the number of data points. Examples a) $10+10+10+10+20+30 / 6 = 15$ - the mean is 15. b) $10+20+30=60$, then $60 / 4 = 15$.

The mode is whatever data point is most often found within the data set Examples a) 10, 10, 10, 10, 20, 30 - the mode is 10. b) 10, 20, 30 – there is no mode. The median is calculated by setting out the numbers in ascending order, and finding the number that separates the top half, from the bottom half Examples a) 10, 10, 10, 10, 20, 30, the median is 10. b) 10, 20, 30 the median is 20. The median is a more appropriate measure than the mean when there are extreme outliers. It is often used in salary or pay / conditions analysis for that reason.

⁷ 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.

Also note that numbers are rounded based upon 1 decimal point, such that 24.5 rounds to 25, because of the data analytics tool used. This means that 24.47 would be 24.5 to 1 decimal point, and would therefore be rounded up to 25, rather than down to 24.

MORALE

Table 2: Morale

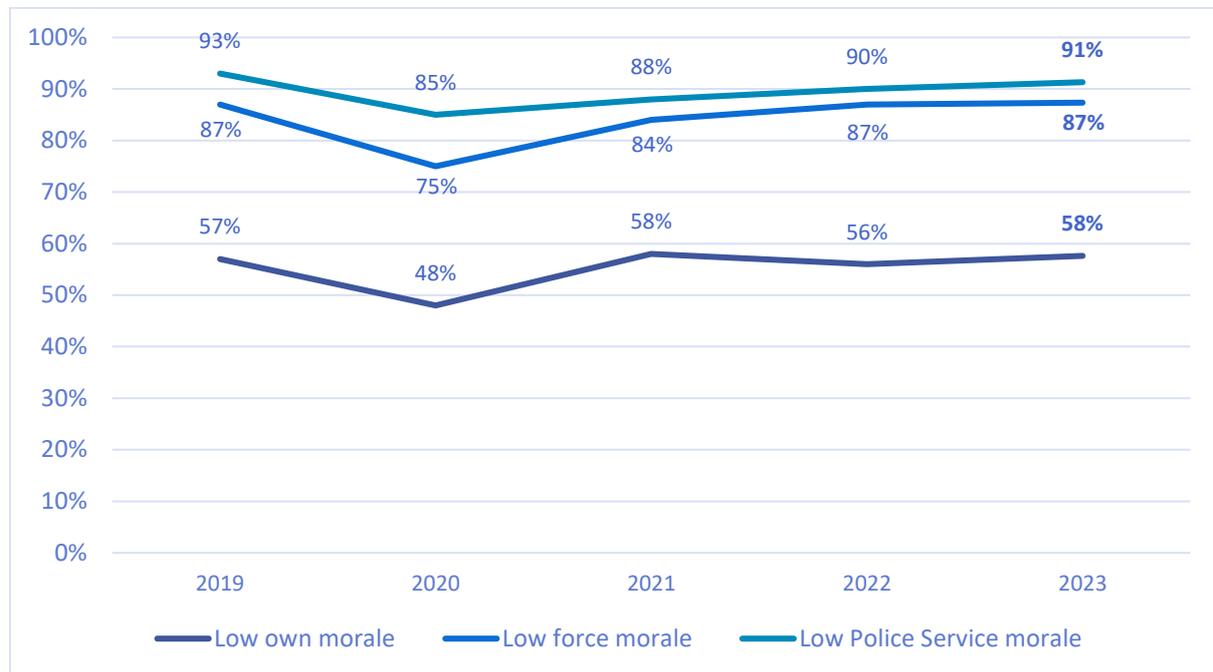
Morale		Measure	'22	'23	Δ	Commentary
		% who say 'own morale' is low	56%	58%	2%pt	Staff morale is worse than last year, with well over half of officers having low morale
>	Overall	% who say 'force morale' is low	87%	87%	0%pt	The view that force morale is low remains widespread
>	Retention	% intending to leave within 2 years	18%	22%	4%pt	The survey suggests that staff retention may worsen

Morale is not a subcategory in the Members' Agenda within the PFEW2025 strategy but is a cross-cutting issue. After all, low pay, or bad terms and conditions, or poor health & safety, or inequality, or a failure to be listened to would all ultimately impact upon morale. During the pandemic, in 2020, morale improved relative to 2019, by nine per centage points, then fell back even further, with the share having low morale dropping by ten per centage points. As table 2 shows, officers' personal morale continues to worsen from that 2020 peak. This is playing through into people's career plans, with more intending to leave the force.

This section of the report presents the findings relating to morale, from the morale of the respondents themselves, to that of their force and the Police service in general. It examines how this differs across officers of different ages, and with different roles. It looks at issues around Police retention, asking them about their intentions to stay in the force, and what is causing those planning to leave soon to do so.

OVERALL MORALE

Figure 2: Respondents' morale since 2019



It is fair to say that the mood across police officers is not a positive one, which is demonstrated in Figure 2. 58 per cent of officer's rate their morale as 'low' or 'very low'. This is in line with figures going back to 2019, except for an improvement in the pandemic year of 2020.

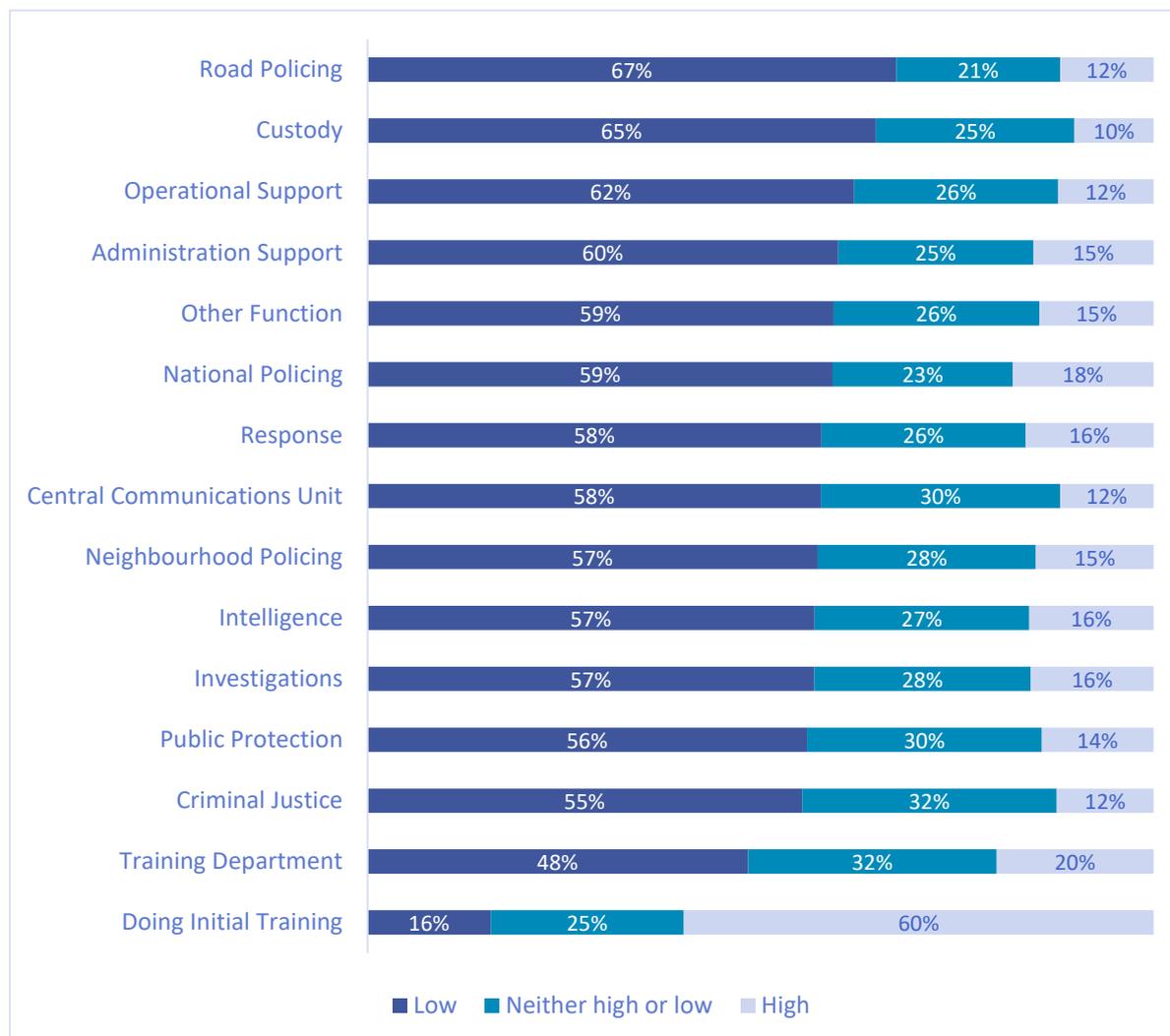
Things look even worse when respondents reflect on the morale of those around them. A very high share, 87 per cent, think that morale within their force is 'low' or 'very' low, and that proportion rises to 91 per cent when survey respondents considered the Police service as a whole.

Different roles have differing average levels of morale, as Figure 3 shows. The worst morale is found for those working in road policing, where 67 per cent have low morale and 12 per cent have high morale, and in Custody, where only 10 per cent have high morale and 65 per cent have low morale.

The only group with more people having high morale than low morale is of respondents doing their initial training. This aligns with the age pattern seen in Figure 29, in the section on Equality, where younger respondents are shown to have higher morale.

Among those past training, it is the officers working in the training department itself who have the highest morale. That is only relatively speaking though, the mood is still poor, with only 20 per cent having high morale, and 48 per cent having low morale.

Figure 3: Respondents' personal morale by role



The government’s treatment of the Police is the factor most commonly seen as having a negative impact on morale. The public’s treatment is second, followed by pay and benefits. Over 80 per cent of respondents feel that these three things have a ‘negative’ or ‘very negative’ impact on morale.

Table 3: Impact of factors on morale

Factors on Morale	Negative or very negative	Neither negative nor positive	Positive or very positive
How police are treated by government	95%	4%	1%
How police are treated by public	86%	12%	2%
Pay and benefits	81%	12%	8%
Workload and responsibilities	66%	24%	10%
Pension	64%	23%	14%
Work life balance	61%	23%	16%
Opportunities for training/development	41%	43%	16%

Police pride has fallen sharply since 2022. In 2022, 58 per cent agreed that they ‘feel proud to be in the Police’. By 2023, this had fallen to 51 per cent, with 31 per cent disagreeing or not feeling proud to be in the Police, as figure 4 shows.

Figure 4: I feel proud to be in the police



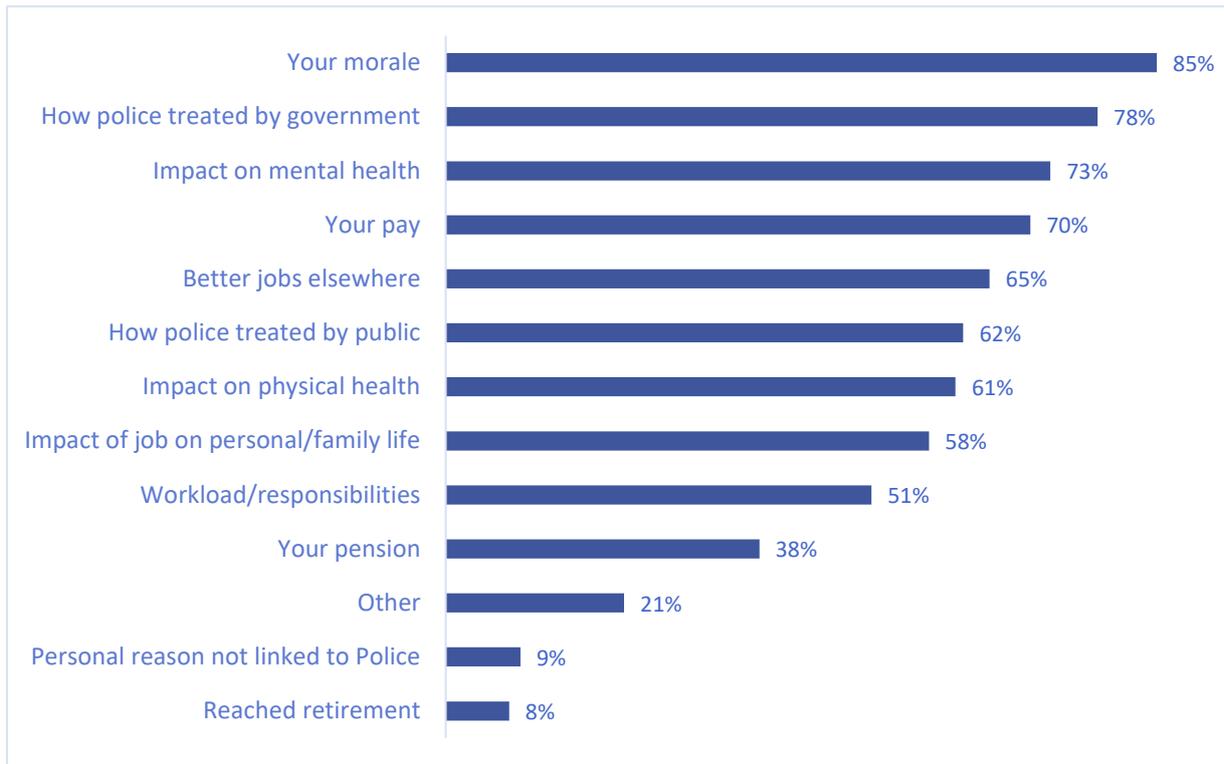
RETENTION

These low levels of morale are, understandably, having an impact on people’s career plans. After all, only 11 per cent of respondents ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ that they would ‘recommend joining the Police to others’, 73 per cent disagreeing.

Twenty two per cent are either already seeking alternative employment or intend to resign within the next two years. These figures are worse than in 2022, when 18 per cent were intending to leave within 2 years or were already looking for other jobs. Even so, 58 per cent of respondents intend to stay in their role until retirement, with an additional 20 per cent planning to stay at least another 2 years.

Respondents who said that they planned on leaving the Police service within two years were asked what factors were the major causes of that. Morale is by far and away the biggest driver of the intention to leave, as shown in Figure 5, with 85 per cent selecting it. The Police’s treatment by the government, and the role’s impact on mental health are the next two most stated factors.

Figure 5: Factors which have a major impact on respondents' intention to leave the police service



Reasons for intending to leave policing

"I've had enough of the year in year out pay cut. In real terms 20 per cent pay cut"

Officer

"Assaulted, poo thrown at officers, spit also. Scapegoat of the countries (sic) issues and the police won't go public and defend us from the government."

Officer

"Australian Police advertisement with greater pay, annual leave, treatment of officers"

Officer

"Poor pay and conditions, seeing lack of support for officers from the management."

Officer

"Being criticized by public, media, government and our own."

Officer

PAY AND REWARD

Table 4: Pay and Reward

	Measure	'22	'23	Δ	Commentary	
Pay & Reward	% dissatisfied with 'overall remuneration'	83%	78%	-5%pt	<i>Four in five officers unhappy with pay, far higher than levels seen in mid 2010s</i>	
>	View on Pay	<i>Impact of pay on intention to leave (% leave)</i>	54%	51%	-3%pt	<i>Pay is increasing intention to leave for more than half of officers</i>
>	View on Pension	% dissatisfied with pension	68%	63%	-5%pt	<i>An improvement on 2022's satisfaction, back in line with 2017-2020</i>
>	Impact of Cost of Living Crisis	% who never or occasionally have enough money to cover all monthly expenses	36%	36%	0%pt	<i>More than a third of officers are struggling to make ends meet during the cost of living crisis</i>
>	Promotions, Training & Development	% dissatisfied with their promotion prospects	34%	36%	2%pt	<i>Respondents are more downbeat on their promotion prospects</i>

This section focuses on the pay and remuneration elements of the PFEW2025 strategy. Satisfaction with pay is slightly up in 2022, but that was a nadir – 2023 levels of satisfaction are similar to 2019 and 2021 and far below that seen during the 2010s. Dissatisfaction with pensions has fallen too. Whilst happiness with pay and pensions has improved relative to 2022, views remain very negative, and the challenge of the cost of living crisis is still leaving a third of respondents without enough resources to regularly cover monthly expenses. Dissatisfaction with promotion prospects is also up in relation to last year.

Actions on Pay and Reward from the PFEW2025 Strategy

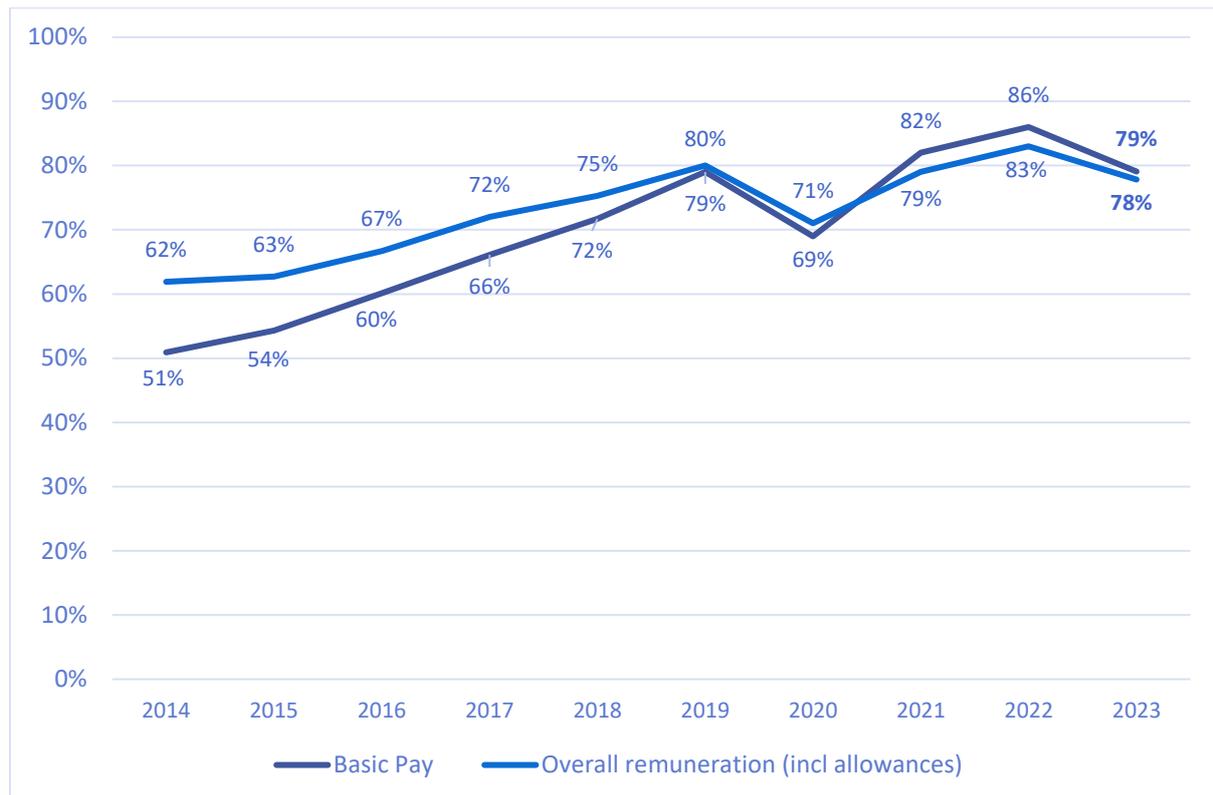
- *We will campaign to achieve pay increases that are fair. We will press Chief Officers and PCCs to back us after all they are the employer. We will press MPs to join our campaign. We recognise this is challenging, but that will not diminish our ambition.*
- *We will provide information on the choices of which pension scheme benefits (Final Salary or CARE) members wish to receive for the period 1 April 2015 31 March 2022.*
- *We will press Chief Officers to use the full range of Regulations available to them where these would allow improvements to members' pay. Where we see fresh opportunities to add new Regulations that will benefit Members we will press the case.*

The results of the survey relating to pay and remuneration are presented across five subsections. The first subsection looks at officers' view of pay, and how it affects their likelihood to stay in the force as well as questions related to the 'P-factor'. The second examines pensions, and what respondents are looking for from theirs. The third subsection, shines a light on the impact of the cost of living crisis on the police and their families. The fourth subsection looks at how officers feel about their promotion prospects, the process around it, and the level of training and development they have access to, in order to help them progress in their careers. This section concludes by presenting respondents' views of the range of specific additional payments that they can be eligible for, such as on-call pay, the London and South-East Allowance and the Dog Handlers' Allowance.

VIEWS ON PAY

Unhappiness with pay is widespread among respondents – 78 per cent are dissatisfied with their overall remuneration. That is nine times as many as are satisfied. Figure 6 presents these results over time. There has been a slight improvement since 2022, especially on basic pay, where the share who are dissatisfied has fallen from 86 per cent to 79 per cent. This dissatisfaction remains, however, extremely high.

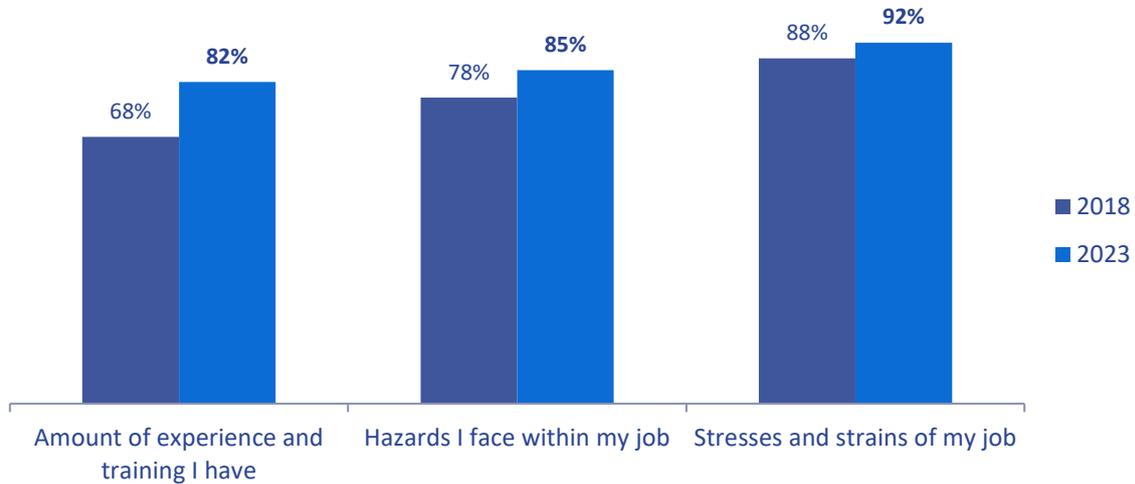
Figure 6: Share of members dissatisfied with basic pay and overall remuneration



Military personnel receive an 'X Factor', which is applied on top of their basic pay to reflect the physical, psychological and other risks inherent to their role. Similarly, discussions of police pay are coming to recognise a 'P Factor', which reflect the additional risks and responsibilities of policing. However, respondents do not feel that such a 'P factor' is being properly represented in levels of pay. Indeed, 85 per cent feel that the hazards they face on the job are not fairly reflected, and 92 per cent held the view that pay was unfair

considering the stresses and strains of a policing role. This view has strengthened over time, as Figure 7 shows.

Figure 7: I am *not* fairly paid considering the..



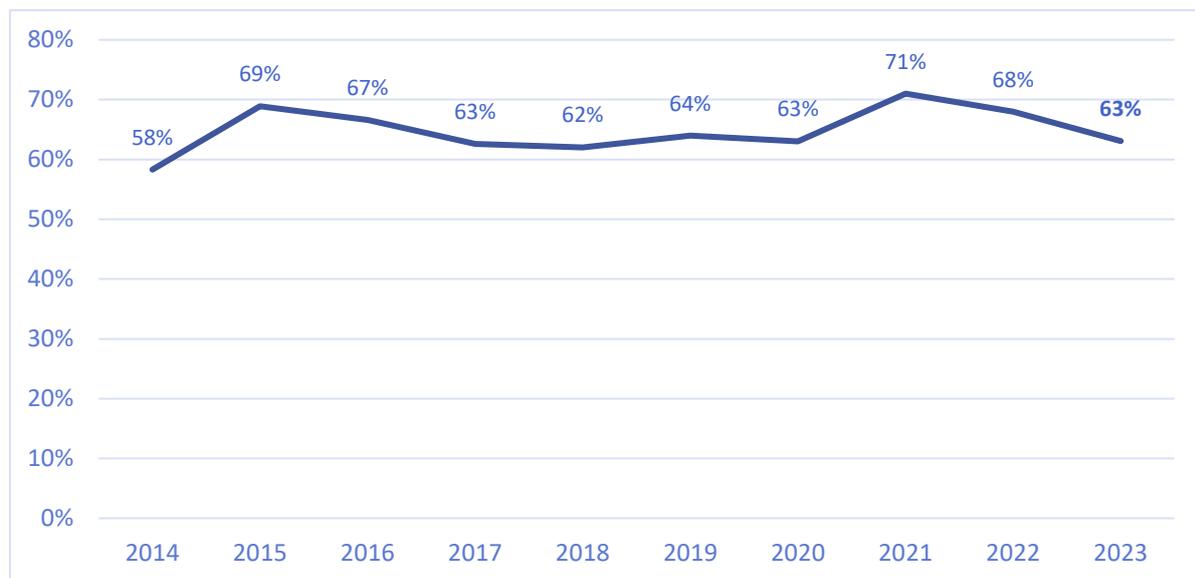
This disgruntlement with police remuneration levels is impacting officer satisfaction, with 81 per cent saying that pay and benefits is having a negative impact on their morale.

There is a risk that this will flow through to staffing levels. Over half, 51 per cent, say pay levels are increasing their intention to leave the police force. Of those already planning to leave policing, pay is the fourth biggest reason, after morale, treatment by government, and the mental health impacts of the job.

VIEWS ON PENSIONS

Pensions are another critical part of the compensation debate, and one that is also a cause for dissatisfaction. Nearly two thirds, 63 per cent, are 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with their pension, and only 37 per cent 'satisfied', 'very satisfied' or 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'. This is, however, better than how officers' felt about overall remuneration and pay, and marks an improvement over 2022, when 68 per cent were 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied', but this figure still considerably higher than dissatisfaction levels in 2014, when we started conducting the survey.

Figure 8: Share of members dissatisfied with their pension



Despite officers' problems with the pension, it still encourages more officers to stay in the Police service than encourages them to leave it. Some 38 per cent of respondents say it increases their intention to remain, against 22 per cent who say it increases their intention to leave. But it is difficult to discern whether this is due to the existence of the pension itself, or due to the levels of pension contributions.

The type of pension depends on when respondents joined the Police service. Around 31 per cent have only ever been in the 2015 CARE scheme. Another, 22 per cent had been in the

New Police Pension Scheme (NPPC) 2006, and a further 43 per cent had been in the Police Pension Scheme (PPC) 1987.

Figure 9: What are the main reasons for opting out/considering opting out of the pension scheme?



A concerning, seven per cent have opted out of the pension scheme, with more than two and a half times that, that means 18 per cent of respondents, thinking about doing so. Figure 9 explores their reasons for either opting out, or considering opting out, where respondents were able to select multiple options. Whether for those who had opted out, or were considering it, the main driver is finding the pension contributions ‘too high and/or unaffordable’. The changes to the pension in April 2015 or 2022 were the second most popular reason given among both groups.

Reason For Leaving Pension Scheme

“Financially it is unaffordable as I have other financial commitments that have to be filled, so the pension contribution has to give.”

Officer

“Huge breach of trust destroying the pension making payments unaffordable”

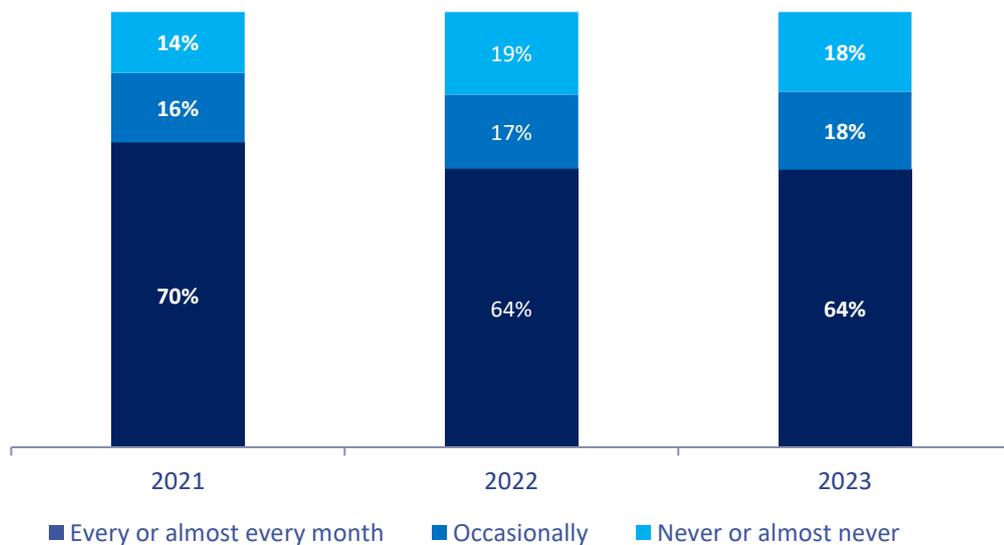
Officer

IMPACT OF COST OF LIVING CRISIS

The cost of living crisis continues to roil the UK, where the price of many essential goods has increased significantly faster than household incomes, resulting in a fall in real-terms pay. The impact of this is being felt by PFEW members. When asked about their cost of living over the past month, 91 per cent say that it has increased, as opposed to only 8 per cent who found that it stayed the same, and just 1 per cent for whom it had fallen. Only 3 per cent feel that pay increases have helped them to maintain their standard of living, against 90 per cent who think that pay increases have not allowed them to do so. A very large share, 85 per cent, of officers feel worse off than they did 5 years ago.

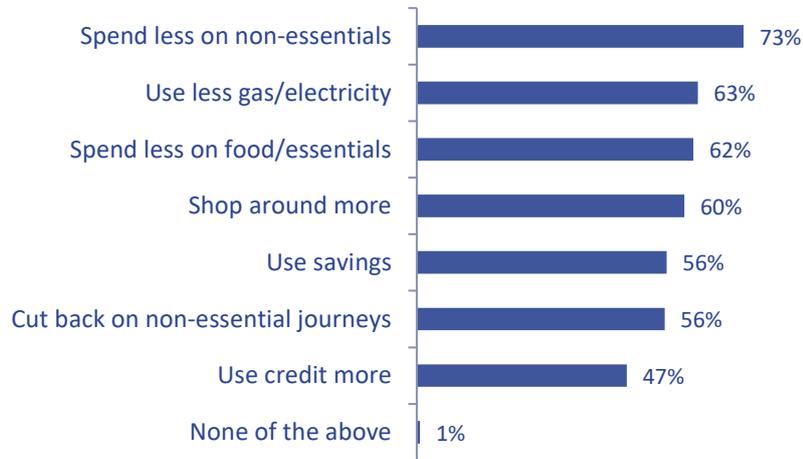
Respondents are struggling to cover their monthly essentials - nearly one in five 'never' or 'almost never' do so, as shown in Figure 10. These figures are in line with 2022, which was a marked worsening compared to 2021.

Figure 10: I am able to cover my monthly essentials...



This is taking a toll on officers. And 58 per cent are worrying about money 'daily' or 'almost every day'. This is at least better than in 2022, when 71 per cent of respondents were worrying that frequently, but still represents a significant share of the Police service.

Figure 11: Which of the following are you doing because your cost of living has increased?



Officers are having to deal with the cost of living crisis in various ways, as shown in Figure 11. Worryingly, many households (63 per cent) are cutting down on their usage of energy, as well as their food spend (62 per cent). A significant share of more than half (56 per cent) are having to draw on their savings to get by. Nearly three quarters, are trimming their spend on non-essentials. Additionally, 14 per cent of respondents had sought financial advice, and 14 per cent had received financial support within the last 12 months. In many cases, as seen in their own words below, the impact on officers has been severe.

Impact Of Cost Of Living Crisis

"Absolutely everything has gone up no matter how small and seemingly insignificant. It all adds up and my wage 'increase' simply hasn't matched or even come close to matching that."

Officer

"Insurance has tripled, council tax up"

Officer

"The new 7% pay increase has been wiped out in our household with the increase in our mortgage renewal."

Officer

"2 weeks after pay day, I am in my overdraft. I can not pay for essential house repairs"

Officer

How Officers Are Dealing With Cost Of Living Crisis

"Additional work outside the police"

Officer

"I go days without eating or eating food that is out of date which means I don't have to spend money"

Officer

"I have at the age of 51 had to apply for Universal Credit, as a full time employee in a professional role I am appalled that this should be the case."

Officer

"I have already blown through my savings and I borrow money from my partner each month. I don't remember the last time I went out for lunch or dinner or drinks with friends. No events. I can only afford the essentials. I have no fun outlets in my life other than walking my dogs."

Officer

"Increased overtime where available."

Officer

PROMOTIONS, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Officers were asked about their satisfaction with training and development opportunities, and their promotion prospects, as shown in table 5. Overall, 36 per cent of respondents said that they were ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ with their promotion prospects and 38 per cent said they were ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ with their opportunities for continuous professional development.

Most (89 per cent) of forces have a Professional Development Review (PDR) process but 48 per cent of respondents were ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ with the PDR process in their force. Issues in this area are having an impact on morale, with 41 per cent of respondents saying that their opportunities for development and promotion have a ‘negative’ or ‘very negative’ effect.

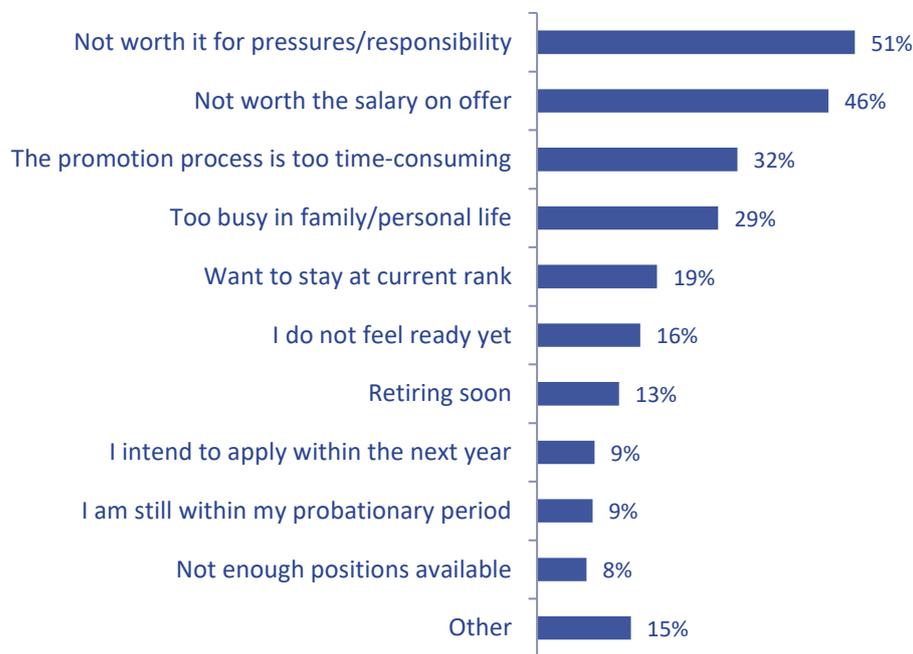
Table 5: Training and development

Training and Development	<i>Proportion of respondents who are ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ with...</i>	
	2022	2023
Professional Development Review (PDR) process	48%	48%
The training they are given	41%	41%
Their opportunities for training	42%	40%
Their opportunities for continuous professional development	38%	38%
Their promotion prospects	34%	36%

Of all the respondents, 15 per cent were involved in the promotion process in the year running up to the date of the survey. Breaking that down, two per cent were successful, and six per cent were unsuccessful. The remaining seven per cent were still in the process of completing the promotion process.

Among those who did not apply for promotion in the last year, over half (51%) declined to do so because they felt it was not worth it for the ‘responsibilities and pressures of the job’, and on a related note, just under that (46 per cent) viewed the promotion not worth the salary on offer, as shown in Figure 12. The promotion process itself was a barrier for a significant proportion of respondents, with 32 per cent citing that as a reason for not going for promotion in the reporting year.

Figure 12: What are your main reasons for not applying for promotion?



Reasons For Not Applying For Promotion

"1 - I don't have the time to commit to revision for the exam. 2 - Having done the NPPF qualification when I was promoted to Sergeant I have absolutely no desire to do it again to become and Inspector. It hasn't assisted me at all in the rank or role, has no bearing on how effective I am as a Sergeant and was a huge waste of time."

Officer

"I have attempted the Promotion exam three times and sadly failed. Since this I have been diagnosed with dyslexia and ADHD. The support prior to me knowing this was very poor so I have never attempted the exam again."

Officer

"I find the promotion process terrible. And the prospect of being placed in any role in any department is ridiculous."

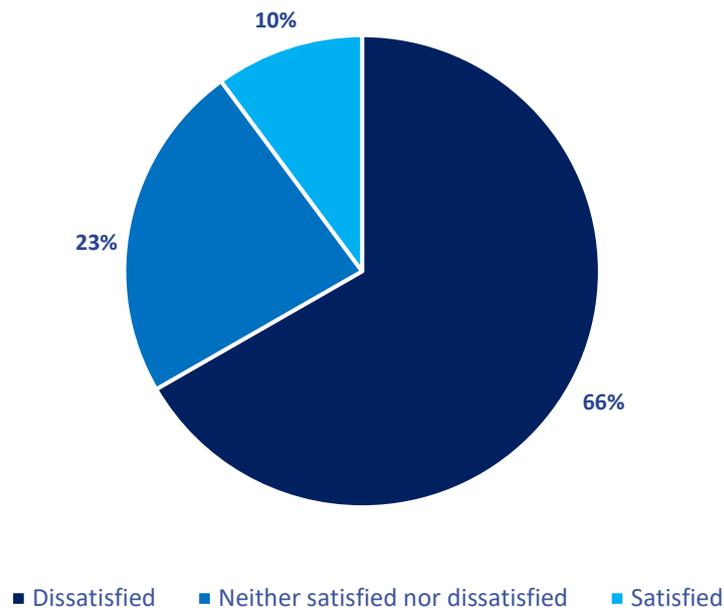
Officer

SPECIFIC PAYMENTS AND ROLES

REGIONAL ALLOWANCES

Police officers who work in London and the South East are entitled to a regional allowance in recognition of the additional cost of living in the South East of England.

Figure 13: How satisfied are you with the amount of your London or South East Allowance?



Respondents in receipt of the London or South East allowance were then asked whether they are satisfied with its amount; 66 per cent said they are 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with their allowance, compared to just 10 per cent who said they are 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'. This compares to 70 per cent who were 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with their allowance in 2022 and 8 per cent who were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'.

Table 6: Reason for living out the area

Table 6: Reason for living outside force area ⁸	2023	2022
I cannot afford to live in my force area	78%	79%

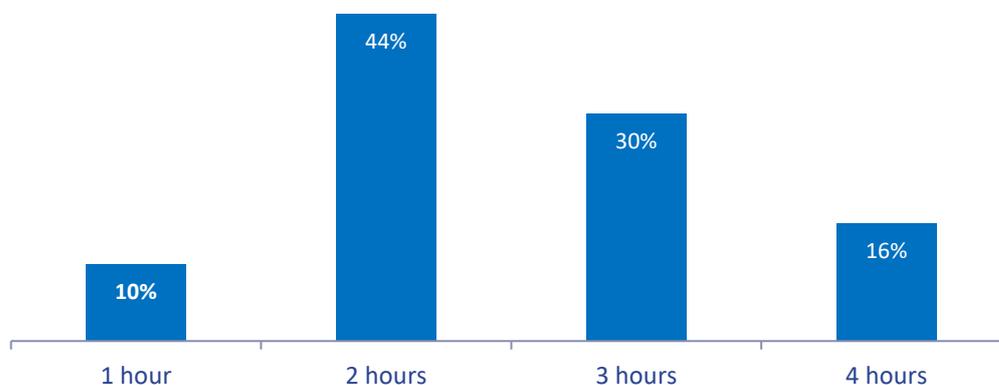
Those working within London or the South East were also, then, asked whether they live within their force area; 46 per cent said that they do not currently live within their force area. Of those who do not currently live in their force area, the vast majority (78 per cent) said that this was because they cannot afford to live there; this proportion is in line with 2022.

DOG HANDLER'S ALLOWANCE

A number of officers take Police dogs home, to care for them when they are not working. Only a small number of respondents do so – around 0.8 per cent of those who took part in the survey. Two Police dogs is the most common number to care for - 54 per cent of this group do so. 35 per cent look after one, and 11 per cent support 3 or more.

⁸ Please note: This question was only asked to those who answered that they work within London or the South East.

Figure 14: Excluding the 'kennel hour' (if applicable), on average how long do you spend outside of working hours caring for each of your police dogs per day?



To help them carry out this role, these officers receive Dog Handler's Allowance. Only seven per cent of those receiving it feel that it is 'sufficient to cover care of your police dog on public holidays and rest days'.

Some forces provide a 'kennel hour' which allows a reduction, per working operational shift, of 1 hour for care of their police dog(s). Two thirds (67 per cent) of respondents say that they have a 'kennel hour' every shift, and a further 24 per cent have them for 'some but not all' shifts. On top of this (if applicable), respondents are often spending several hours outside of the working day caring for the Police dogs, as shown in Figure 14.

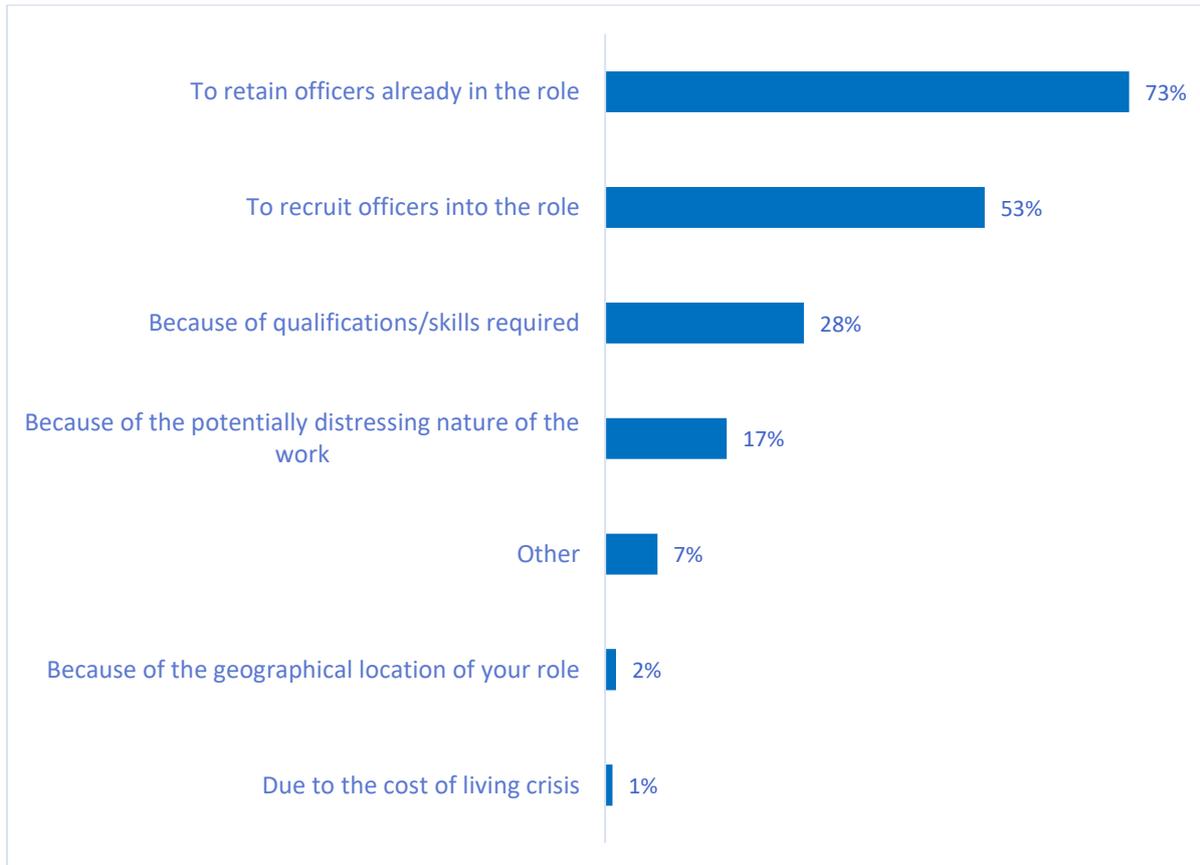
CRITICAL SKILLS PAYMENT

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) recently introduced Service Critical Skills Payments (also known as Targeted Variable Payments; TVPs). These are discretionary payments made by the force to support recruitment or retention into specific (hard-to-fill) roles or against particular skills.

Overall, five per cent of respondents said they currently receive a Service Critical Skills Payment (or have received a one-off payment), up from four per cent in 2022. Some 20 per cent were satisfied with the level of their payment.

Respondents were asked what reason they were given when awarded Service Critical Skills Payments, which is presented in Figure 15. They are predominantly used to retain officers already in the role (73 per cent). Over half of those surveyed (53 per cent) said that they were related to recruitment. Around 17 per cent said they were related to the potentially distressing nature of the work.

Figure 15: What explanation did your force give for awarding a Service Critical Skills payment to you?



CONDITIONS

Table 7: Conditions

	Measure	'22	'23	Δ	Commentary	
Conditions	<i>Impact of workload & responsibilities on morale (% negative)</i>	64%	66%	2%pt	<i>Workload is having an increasingly negative impact on morale</i>	
>	Workload	<i>% who rate workload as being 'too high'</i>	66%	64%	-2%pt	<i>Views of workload have slightly improved since last year, but are worse than other sectors, e.g. the armed forces</i>
>	Overtime	<i>Average unpaid overtime per 4 week period</i>	5 hrs	5 hrs	0 hrs	<i>Rates of unpaid overtime are similar to 2022</i>
>	Rostering and Night Shifts	<i>% who have worked more than 4 night shifts in a row</i>	38%	38%	0%pt	<i>38% of officers have still had to do more than 4 consecutive night shifts</i>
>	Rest Entitlement	<i>% who had at least 1 rest day cancelled in last year</i>	68%	63%	-5%pt	<i>Slightly fewer officers are having rest days cancelled</i>
>	Annual Leave Entitlement	<i>% who had at least 1 annual leave day cancelled in last year</i>	39%	34%	-5%pt	<i>Over a third of officers are not able to take all of their annual leave</i>

This section focuses on the '(working) conditions' subcategory of the PFEW2025 Member's Agenda. Levels of workload remain a major concern and are a cause of low morale for two thirds of officers. Police officers are more likely than those in the armed forces to find their workload 'too high', with 64 per cent finding this, compared to 46 per cent in the tri-services. There has been little change to rates of unpaid overtime on average. There has been a slight improvement in the extent to which respondents are able to take their entitlement of rest days and annual leave.

Actions on Conditions from the PFEW2025 Strategy

- *We will hold Forces to account and, amongst other things, that*
 - *All leave entitlements should be taken and officers receive uninterrupted leave and rest days*
 - *Part time working arrangements are clear and where additional hours are worked these are being paid*
- *We will challenge Forces who say the right thing but do not deliver it in reality. We will:*
 - *Expose misuse of Regulations – such as the blanket use of exigencies*
 - *Shame Forces if poor equipment and uniforms are provided*
 - *Use the law to leverage our case*

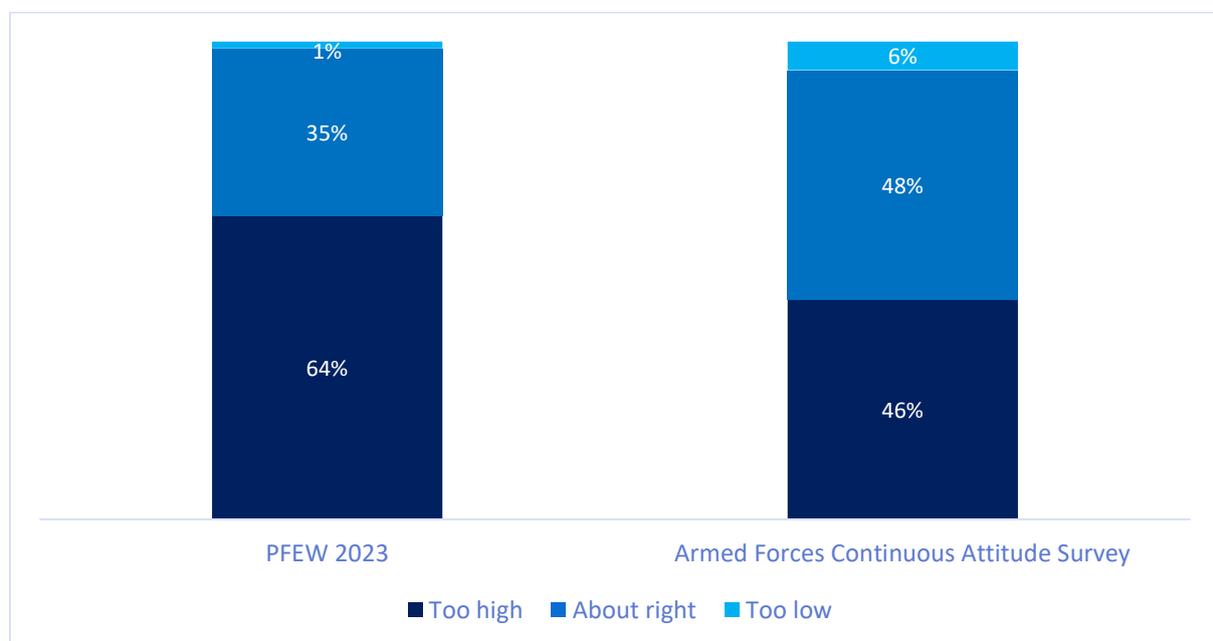
The next section, on Health, Safety & Wellbeing presents the results from the Pay & Morale 2023 survey that relate to conditions around terms of work and shifts. This section looks across five topics. It examines their workload and some possible causes of high workload. It then steps through rates of paid and unpaid overtime, shift patterns and the extent to which respondents are able to take their rest day and annual leave entitlement.

WORKLOAD

The overall workload of a policing role has a largely detrimental effect on morale. A total of 61 per cent of respondents feel that work-life balance has a negative or very negative impact on their morale. The 'workload & responsibilities' of the role has an even worse effect, with 66 per cent saying that it has a negative or very negative impact (up from 64 per cent in 2022).

Around two thirds (64 per cent) of respondents rate their workload as being too high. This is significantly higher than in the Armed Forces, where 46 per cent find their workload too high. Figure 16 presents these results, comparing the PFEW 2023 Pay and Morale survey against the latest data from the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey, done for the MOD and completed by around 9,000 personnel.³

Figure 16: How would you rate your workload over the last 12 months?



Going into respondents' view of workload in more detail, a third are 'always' pressured to 'work long hours'. Some 40 per cent 'always' or 'often' have 'unrealistic time pressures' and 33 per cent 'always' or 'often' have to take work home that 'cannot be completed in [their] normal working hours'. Only 11 per cent of officers 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that they

had time to engage in proactive policing within their team/unit, against 73 per cent who disagreed.

What may be causing these issues? Staffing levels are one possibility. Around 86 per cent of respondents 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' that there are enough officers in their force to manage all the demands made on them. Some 85 per cent also 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' that 'the way officer staffing levels are determined seems to be effective'.

Table 8: Frequency of single-crewing in the last 12 months

Frequency of single-crewing in last 12 months	2022	2023
Always or often	66%	63%
Sometimes	20%	21%
Never or rarely	14%	17%

Single-crewing is when an officer is deployed without a partner. Table 8 shows that nearly two thirds of officers are ‘always’ or ‘often’ single-crewed. Only for 17 per cent of them this happens ‘never’ or ‘rarely’. There is slightly less single-crewing reported than in 2022’s survey results.

OVERTIME

Almost all respondents (90 per cent) have worked overtime at some point in the last 12 months. On average, that has included a median of 9 hours and mean of 14 hours of paid overtime over a 4 week period (See section on Averages, in page 16, on how the mean and median are calculated).

On top of that, there is a median of 5 hours, and mean of 8 hours of unpaid overtime. That number includes the 'half hour disregard of casual overtime' a day.

Table 9: Average hours of overtime per 4 week period

Average hours of overtime per 4 week period	2022	2023
Paid overtime	10 hours	9 hours
Unpaid overtime	5 hours	5 hours

Looking at this from a different angle, the data also shows that 46 per cent of respondents 'always' or 'often' worked more than 48 hours per week. Around 31 per cent 'sometimes' do so, with 24 per cent 'rarely' or 'never' working that number of hours.

Figure 17 presents the most frequent reasons for officers working overtime. Not having enough officers in their team or unit was the most common cause. Wanting to finish work, emergency situations, and understaffing in other units were the next most frequent reasons.

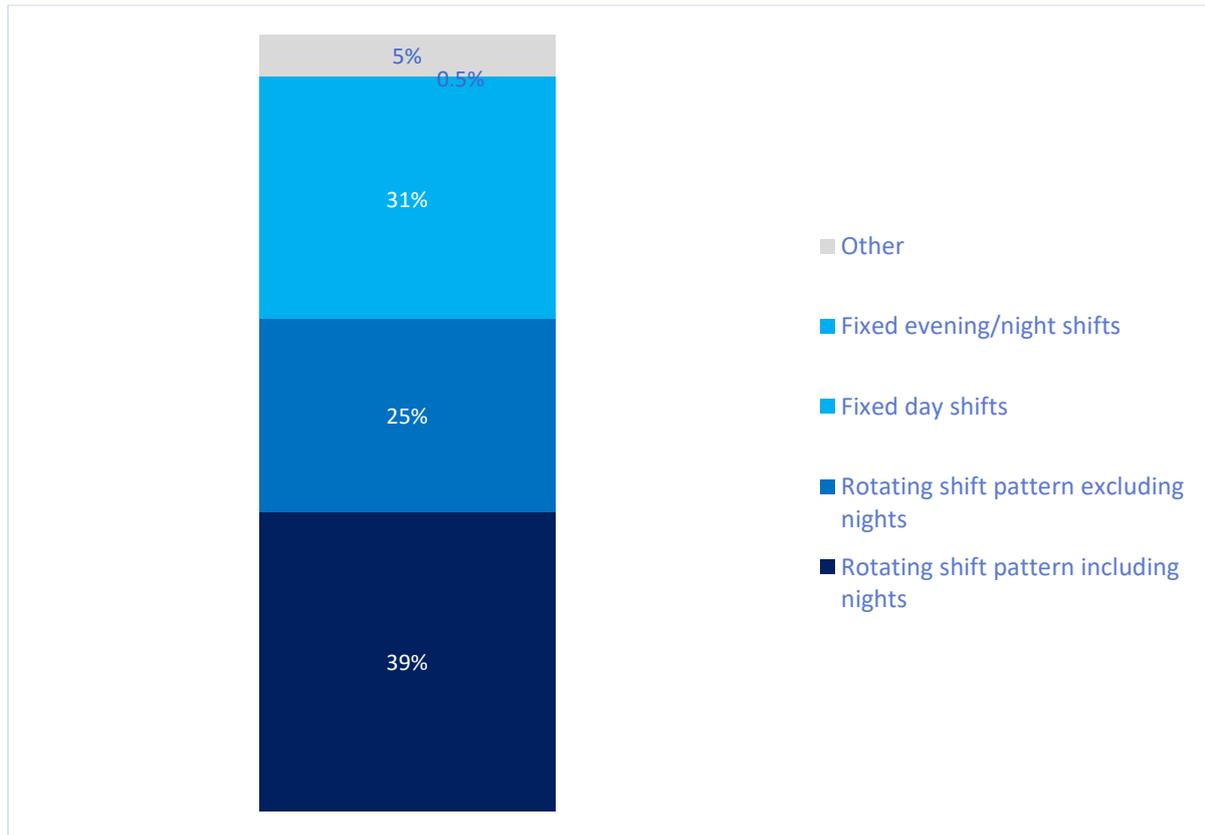
Figure 17: Most frequent reason for paid or unpaid overtime



ROSTERING AND NIGHT SHIFTS

There are a range of shift patterns worked by respondents. The most common is a rotating shift pattern, including nights, which is done by 39 per cent of respondents. The second most common is fixed evening/night shifts, as shown in Figure 18.

Figure 18: Which of the following best describes the shift pattern you typically work?



PFEW recommends that officers are not made to work more than four night shifts in a row. Most (62 per cent) survey respondents have not had to do so over the last 12 months, as in 2022, but 11 per cent did it once, 18 per cent had to do it 2-5 times. The remaining nine per cent worked over four consecutive night shifts more than five times, which is a least once every two months.

Predictable shift rosters are also beneficial to staff, and the further in advance that sight is given of them, the better, so that officers are able to plan. Table 10 shows how often, within the last 12 months, respondents' rotas have been changed. For 1 in 5 officers, the rota had been changed more than 10 times in the past year.

Table 10: Frequency of roster being changed due to exigencies of duty in last 12 months

Frequency of roster being changed due to exigencies of duty in last 12 months	2023
Never	21%
Once	9%
2-5 times	35%
6-10 times	15%
More than 10 times	20%

REST ENTITLEMENT

Only 29 per cent 'often' or 'always' have at least one rest day a week, with 22 per cent 'sometimes' doing so. That leaves 49 per cent 'never' or 'rarely' getting a weekly rest day.

In between shifts, officers are generally getting the 11-hour break that they should be receiving. Over three quarters (77 per cent) 'often' or 'always' do. However, 16 per cent of officers only 'sometimes' get an 11-hour break between shifts, and 7 per cent of them 'never' or 'rarely' do.

Over the last year, 38 per cent of respondents have not had any rest days cancelled. One rest day has been cancelled for seven per cent of officers, and another 30 per cent of officers had had two to four rest days cancelled, whilst 18 per cent of them had between five and ten rest days cancelled. Even more worryingly, eight per cent of officers, nearly one in ten of those completing the survey, had had more than 10 rest days cancelled.

ANNUAL LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

A significant number of officers were unable to take all of their annual leave in 2023. Over a third (34 per cent) did not, with 66 per cent able to take all their leave. As table 11 shows, respondents were slightly more successful at using their leave than in 2022, but with around a third not be able to, there is still further to go.

Table 11: Annual Leave

Annual Leave	2022	2023
Taken all annual leave	61%	66%

Respondents are also having a large number of requests for leave refused. Almost two thirds (64 per cent) have had at least one instance of annual leave being refused, with this happening five times or more for 17 per cent of officers.

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING

Table 12: Health, Safety and Wellbeing

	Measure	'22	'23	Δ	Commentary	
Health, Safety & Wellbeing	<i>Life satisfaction (out of 10)</i>	5.2	5.2	0.0	<i>Officers' life satisfaction is far below the general public (7.5²) and armed forces (6.1³)</i>	
>	Officer Mental Health	<i>% who find work 'very' or 'extremely stressful'</i>	42%	43%	1%pt	<i>More officers are finding work stressful</i>
>	Mental Health Support	<i>% who are 'poorly' or 'very poorly' supported after raising mental health with boss</i>	n/a	33%	n/a	<i>A third of officers are receiving a poor quality of mental health support from the Police service</i>
>	Absence, Presenteeism & Leavism	<i>% taking annual leave due to mental health</i>	42%	42%	0%pt	<i>Four in ten officers are using annual leave to recover from mental health issues</i>
>	Level of Risk from Citizens	<i>% receiving verbal insults once or more a week</i>	37%	34%	-3%pt	<i>Verbal insults are marginally less frequent than in 2022</i>
>	Quality of Equipment and Procedures	<i>% who do not always have access to double crewing</i>	75%	73%	-2%pt	<i>Three quarters of officers do not have access to double crewing at all times</i>

This section focuses on the 'Health, Safety & Wellbeing' subcategory of the PFEW2025 Member's Agenda. Life satisfaction is lower among Police officers than those in the armed forces and the general public. The share of officers finding work stressful is rising, with many blaming their workload for harming their mental health. The quality of support being received by those who report mental health issues to their manager is worsening.

The rate of officers facing risk from citizens is similar to last year, with risk from unarmed physical attacks faced by 11 per cent at least once a week and with risk involving deadly weapons faced by one per cent at least once a week. Over a third of respondents are receiving verbal insults at least once a week (34 per cent). There is still a significant gap between what equipment or procedures officers would like access to, and what they do

have access to. On double crewing, for example, only 27 per cent have access all the time, but 76 per cent would like to.

Actions on Health, Safety & Wellbeing from the PFEW2025 Strategy

- *We will hold Forces to account and, amongst other things, that*
 - *Good occupational health services are provided and trauma and mental health problems are recognised.*
 - *Quality equipment, PPE and uniform is provided and*
 - *Risks faced by Officers are understood and managed effectively*
- *We will challenge Forces who say the right thing but do not deliver it in reality. We will:*
 - *Expose misuse of Regulations – such as the blanket use of exigencies*
 - *Shame Forces if poor equipment and uniforms are provided*
 - *Use the law to leverage our case*

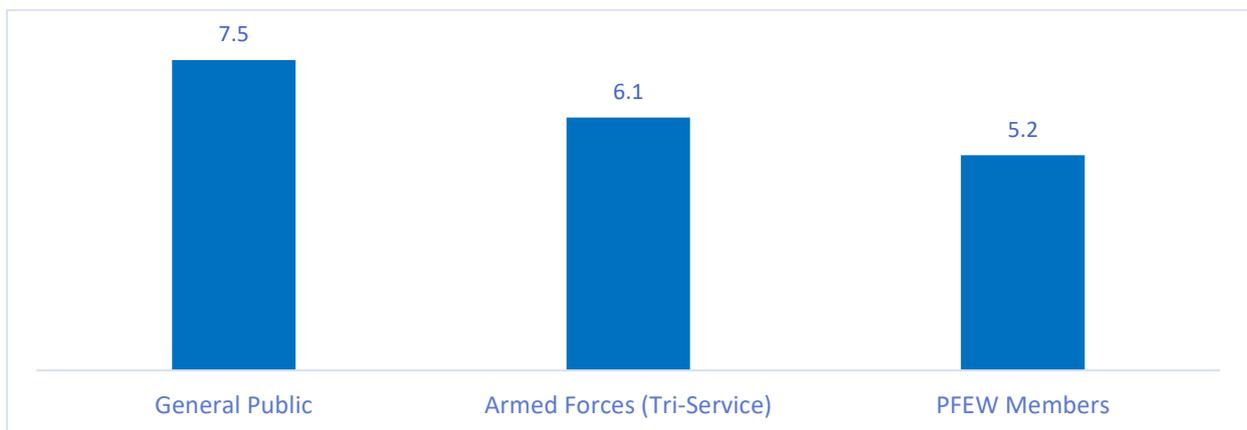
The following subsections look at the state of respondents' mental health, and what police forces are doing to support it. It looks at incidences of people showing up to work when they should not, due to illness, or when they are using annual leave to recover. Next, the data relating to the risks respondents face from citizens is outlined. The section closes with a look at what equipment and procedures respondents have access to by frequency, and how that differs from how often they would like to have access.

OFFICER MENTAL HEALTH

Life satisfaction among those who work in the Police service is relatively low. On a scale that scores out of ten, respondents were asked to answer 'Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?' They scored an average of 5.2. This is the same as in 2022.

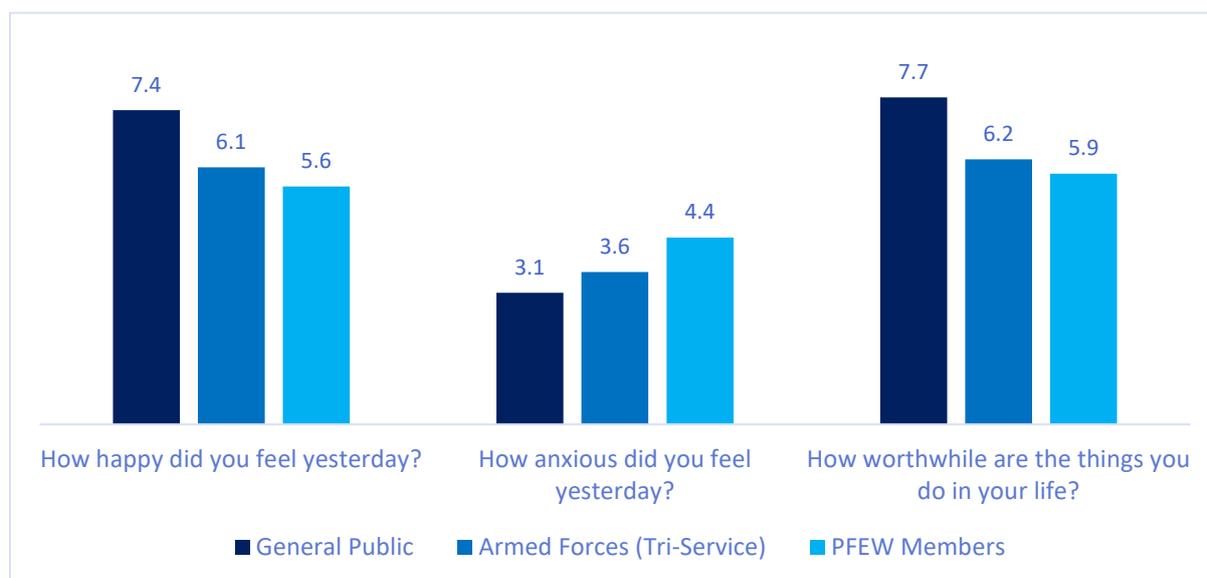
Putting that into context, life satisfaction among the general public is far higher, with an average of 7.5, as Figure 19 shows.² Police life satisfaction is also well below that of the armed forces, who have an average of 6.1.³

Figure 19: Average life satisfaction out of 10



The survey asked a number of other standardised questions around mental health, which allow benchmarks against the general population, and the Armed Forces, as shown in Figure 20. This, as with the life satisfaction data, paints a negative picture of the mental health of respondents. Happiness, and a sense that 'things you do in your life are worthwhile' are markedly lower in the police than the general public, and a little worse than in the Armed Forces. Anxiety levels are much higher among Police officers than among those in the Armed Forces, and the public as a whole.

Figure 20: Breakdown of average life satisfaction out of 10



In 2023, 82 per cent of respondents had experienced feelings of stress, low mood, anxiety, or other difficulties with their mental health or wellbeing, the same rate as in 2022, but up from 77 per cent in 2020.

Fatigue is impacting officers' ability to function socially and at work. The share agreeing that that they 'found it difficult to carry out certain duties and responsibilities at work' because they had been too fatigued was 60 per cent, an increase on 58 per cent in 2022. In their homelife, 73 per cent say that fatigue has an impact.

The role itself is a significant contributing factor in increased fatigue. Among respondents, 43 per cent find their job 'very' or 'extremely' stressful and 39 per cent find it 'moderately stressful'. As table 13 shows, this is a small increase on 2022, but follows a sharp jump from 2020 to 2022. Nearly all (93 per cent) respondents said that these issues were caused, or made worse by, their work.

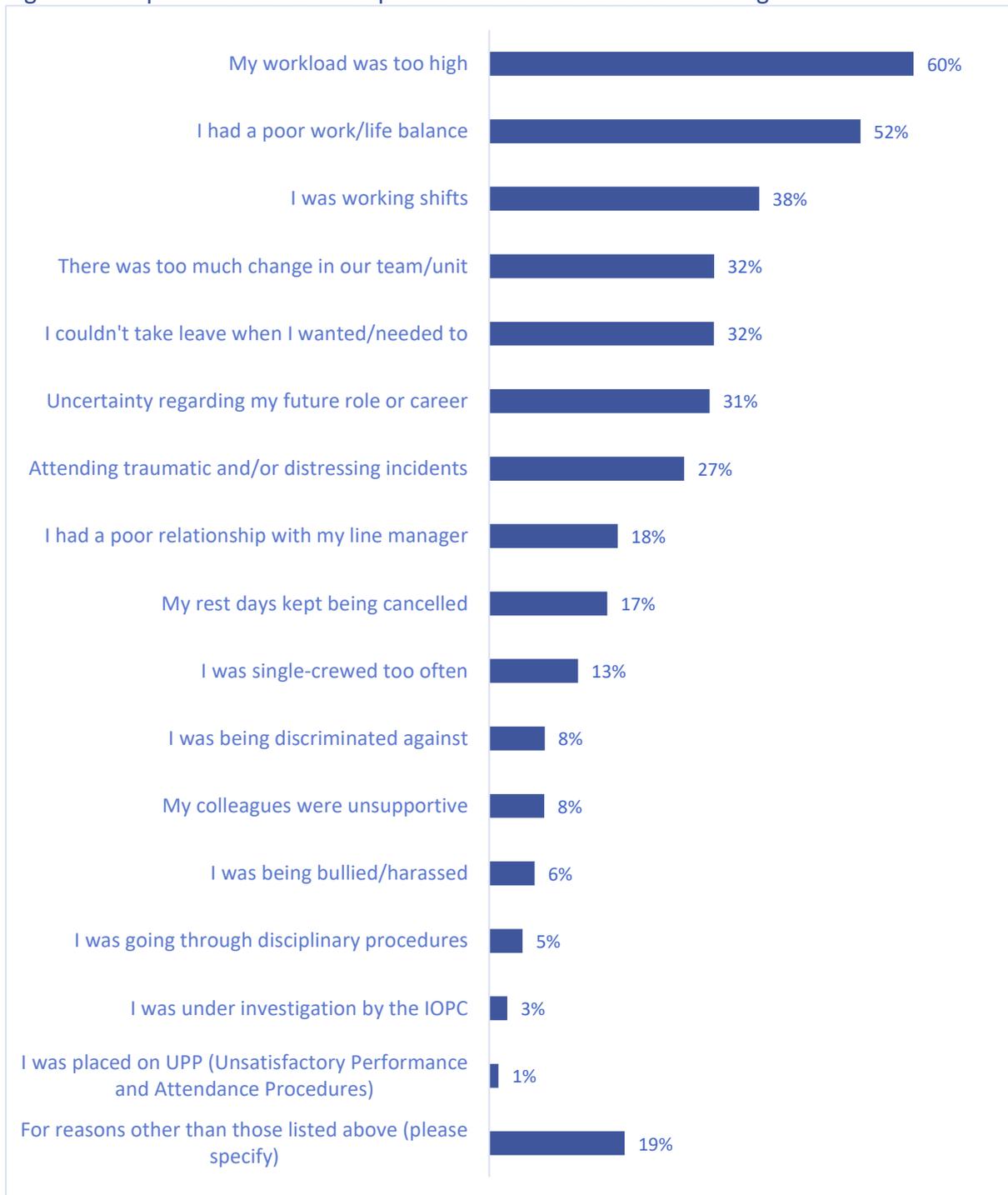
Table 13: Mental health and wellbeing

Mental health and wellbeing	2020	2022	2023
Proportion of respondents reporting that they find their job is 'very' or 'extremely' stressful.	33%	42%	43%
Proportion of respondents reporting that they have experienced feelings of stress, low mood, anxiety, or other difficulties with their health and wellbeing over the last 12 months.	77%	82%	82%

That group was then asked what it is about work that caused those issues. The results are shown in Figure 21. A high workload and a poor work-life balance were the most common contributors to work-related mental health and wellbeing challenges. Shift patterns were third.

These challenges are being felt in staff retention. The mental health and wellbeing impact of the job is the third biggest factor in why people want to leave the Police service, with 73 per cent saying that it had a 'major impact'.

Figure 21: Aspects of work that impacted mental health and wellbeing



Impact Of Job On Mental Health

“A lot of changes that are happening at once and we are expected just to deal with them, without questioning or raising issues.”

Officer

“High pressure roles managing witnesses and victims of serious crime, not being able to switch off from thinking about them and the consequences of a trial collapsing if I can't support them well enough”

Officer

“How the shift pattern affects your sleep and additional hours for training days that sometimes goes from 11hr earlies straight into nights and sometimes completing over 60+ hours in one set as part of normal duties at different hours and then not being able to sleep properly”

Officer

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

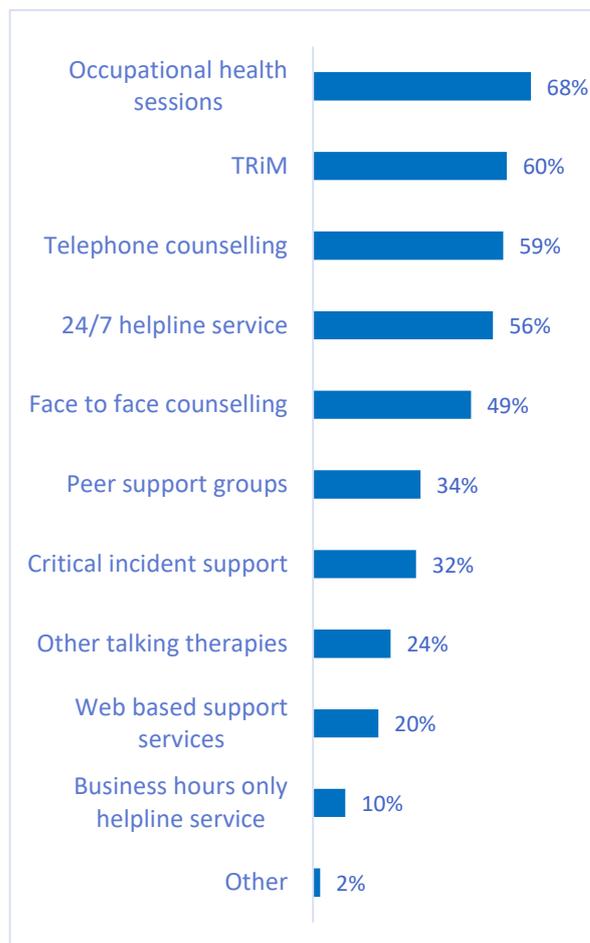
Society-wide, there is an increasing awareness of mental health issues, and how they can impact upon people's lives. As the previous section showed, these issues are especially acute within the Police service.

Some forces offer proactive support to their teams, to act as a preventative measure. Just under half (46 per cent) of officers are aware of this being offered in their force, marginally up on 45 per cent in 2022. Among the 46 per cent who recognised that proactive mental health services were being offered, over two thirds (67%) were aware of existing mental health or wellbeing champions; this being the most common type of support available. Over half (59 per cent) of that group had access to gyms, with 41 per cent not having such access, and 54 per cent had wellbeing rooms, with 46 per cent therefore not having access to them.

Figure 22: Type of proactive mental health support offered (of the 46% of respondents who have access to proactive support)



Figure 23: Type of reactive mental health support offered (of the 77% of respondents who have access to reactive support)



Reactive mental health and wellbeing support is more commonly offered. A clear majority (77 per cent) of respondents have access to some support of this kind. Occupational health sessions are offered to 68 per cent of those who have access to some support. Trauma risk management (TRiM), telephone counselling and a 24/7 helpline service is also widely available. Around half (49 per cent) can access some face to face counselling.

Nearly half (46 per cent) of respondents have sought help for their mental health, from work, the NHS or elsewhere, in 2023, up from 45 per cent in 2022. Management has a significant role to play in supporting officers with their mental health and wellbeing. For that to happen, though, they need to feel comfortable asking for support. Most of those (74 per

cent) who had sought help, told their manager that they had done so. This is an improvement from 2022 when 72 per cent had.

The quality of support that respondents then received was mixed. In total, 38 per cent felt they were ‘well’ or ‘very well’ supported by the Police service after discussing their mental health with their line manager, down marginally from 2022 (see table 14). Meanwhile, 33 per cent found that they were ‘poorly’ or ‘very poorly’ supported.

Table 14: In your experience, how well were you supported by the police service after you discussed your mental health and wellbeing with your line manager?

In your experience, how well were you supported by the police service after you discussed your mental health and wellbeing with your line manager?	2022	2023
Poorly or very poorly	33%	33%
Adequately	28%	29%
Fairly well or very well	39%	38%

Quality Of Support After Disclosing Mental Health Challenge To Manager

“Line manager support was good, occupational health were poor in their assessment and help, 6 session of external help and that was it.”

Officer

“20 years of trauma was dealt with by 6 telephone counselling sessions. There is no correlation here, it's ridiculous”

Officer

“Conversations were shared with the team. I was put under pressure to return to work as quickly as possible.”

Officer

“I informed my colleagues that I was struggling with my workload and feeling overwhelmed/stressed and my DI called me in for a meeting and instead of offering support has said that I might need to go on an action plan.”

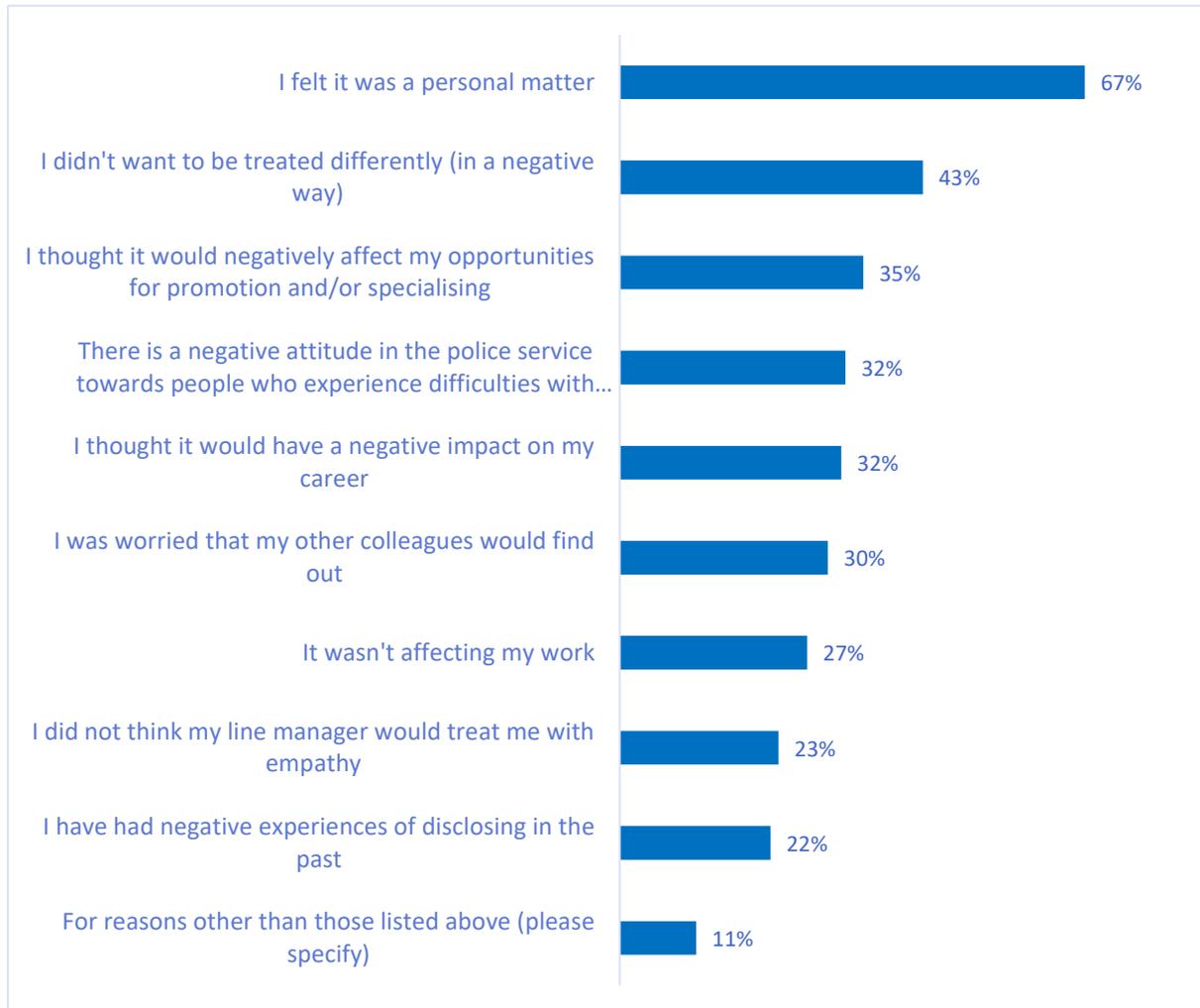
Officer

“I sought assistance through EAP and my line manager has been very supportive.”

Officer

Two thirds (67 per cent) of those who had not told their manager about seeking mental health support said that was because they felt it was a personal matter, as Figure 24 shows. Of respondents, 43 per cent ‘didn’t want to be treated differently’, with 35 per cent worrying that it might affect opportunities for promotion and/or specialising.

Figure 24: Reason for not telling manager about receiving support for mental health issues



Some of this comes down to the culture around mental health in the force. Table 15 shows how respondents feel about a set of statements relating to these matters. Two thirds of respondents 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that colleagues or their line manager would be supportive. Only around half feel that the Police service encourages staff to talk openly about their mental health and wellbeing, and would feel confident in doing so. Around a third (30 per cent) of respondents feel that someone would be treated differently, in a negative way, if they spoke openly about struggling.

Table 15: Culture around mental health and wellbeing in the police service

Culture around mental health and wellbeing in the Police service (% agree or strongly agree)	2022	2023
Colleagues would be supportive if I had difficulties	67%	68%
Line manager would be supportive if I had difficulties	66%	65%
Police service encourages staff to talk openly	52%	51%
Feel confident disclosing any difficulties	45%	44%
Someone would be treated differently (worse) if they disclosed difficulties	29%	30%

The quotes below also illustrate the issues that officers have in being open with their colleagues about mental health and seeking support.

Reason For Not Disclosing Mental Health Issues To Manager

“Concerns over how confidential that information would be kept due to my line manager at the time”

Officer

“Embarrassment, even though I know I wouldn't be treated negatively, I didn't want to raise it”

Officer

“You cant (sic) open up in this job. They can put all the posters they want around the stations but its (sic) obvious by seeing some who have opened up it doesn't matter. Some line managers even use this as evidence for promotion which I find immoral. I have seen colleagues open up and they are moved to another team or hidden in a back office. I heard the way SLT speak of officers who are struggling and in the current climate the police do not want any "restricted" officers. If you open up even if the problem isn't affecting your work most officers feel this is a mark against your future.”

Officer

ABSENCE, PRESENTEEISM, AND LEAVEISM

‘Presenteeism’ is the act of attending work while ill and has been associated with a decline in health (particularly with relation to burnout), negative attitudes towards work, and withdrawal.^{9,10} ‘Leaveism’ is a term to describe hidden sickness absence and work undertaken during rest periods. A core dimension of ‘leaveism’ includes using allocated time off such as annual leave entitlements to take time off when they are in fact unwell. The proportion of respondents who reported experiencing ‘presenteeism’ or using annual leave in this manner are presented in the table below, with comparisons to 2020 and 2022.

There was a big jump in presenteeism on physical health from 2022 to 2023, with 71 per cent. There was an increase in ‘leaveism’ too.

Table 16: Absence and Presenteeism

Absence and Presenteeism		Proportion of respondents reporting the following absence behaviour once or more over the previous 12 months...		
		2020	2022	2023
Presenteeism	Due to physical health	66%	66%	71%
	Due to mental health	66%	67%	68%
Using annual leave to take time off due to health ('leaveism')	Due to physical health	31%	33%	35%
	Due to mental health	42%	42%	42%

⁹ Demerouti, E., Le Blanc, P., Bakker, A., Schaufeli, W., & Hox, J. (2009). *Present but sick: A three-wave study on job demands, presenteeism, and burnout*. Career Development International. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/238406225_Presnet_but_sick_A_three-wave_study_on_job_demands_presenteeism_and_burnout, doi: 10.1108/13620430910933574.

¹⁰ Lu, L., Lin, H. Y., & Cooper, C. L. (2013). *Unhealthy and present: Motives and consequences of the act of presenteeism among Taiwanese employees*. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology. Available at: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24099160/>, doi: 10.1037/a0034331.

Mental health is a bigger cause of sick leave than physical health, according to the 2023 P&M results. Respondents take on average 5.3 days of sick leave a year, with 4 days of that for mental health issues such as stress and anxiety. That suggests that around 75 per cent of sick leave is for mental health issues.

Table 17: Sick leave

Table 17: Sick leave	Days of sick leave	Of Which for mental health
Average days of sick leave over last 12 months	5.3	4.0

VIOLENCE FROM CITIZENS

Verbal and physical violence was assessed by presenting respondents with examples of violence and asking them to indicate the frequency with which they had experienced each in the previous 12 months. This included: verbal insults, verbal threats, spitting assaults, unarmed physical attacks, and attacks with a deadly weapon from members of the public. Findings are presented in table 18 below, which displays the percentage of those who experience these types of violence once a week or more. The findings are presented beside the figures for 2022 for comparison. There is limited change from 2022 – a fall in verbal insults from 37 per cent in 2022 to 34 per cent in 2023, a 1 percentage point fall in the instances of verbal threats, and a 1 per centage point increase in spitting assaults.

Table 18: Violence from citizens

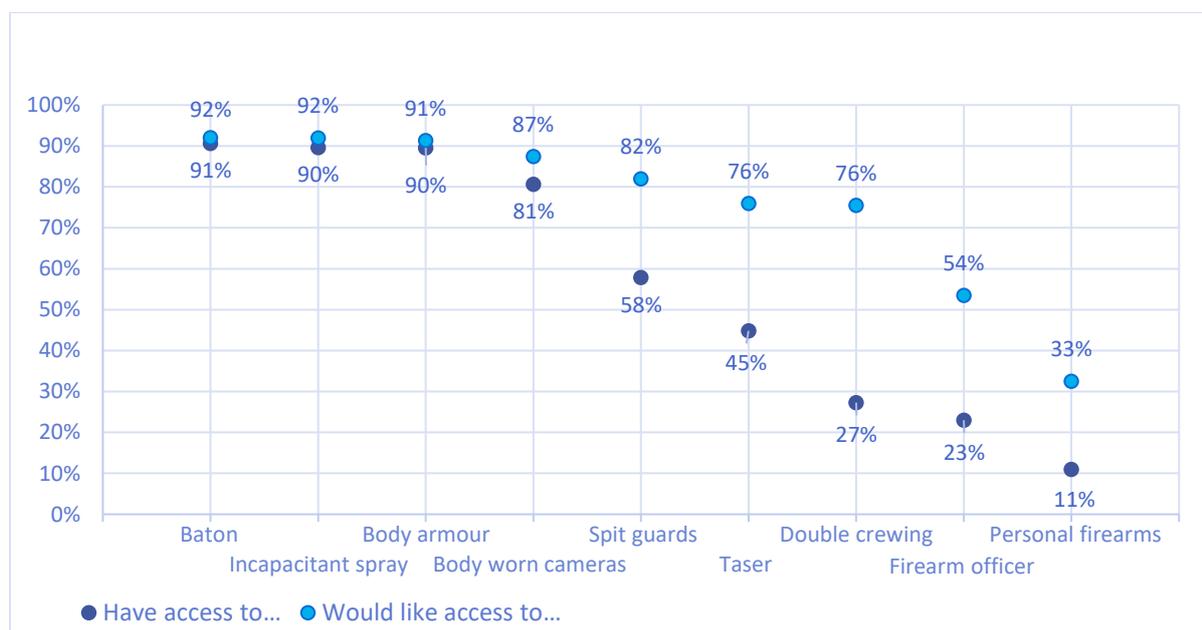
Violence from citizens	<i>Proportion of respondents reporting that they have experienced the following at least once a week over the previous 12 months...</i>	
	2022	2023
Verbal insults (e.g., swearing, shouting, abuse)	37%	34%
Verbal threats (e.g. threat of hitting, threat of kicking)	22%	21%
Spitting assaults (i.e., being deliberately spat upon)	2%	3%
Unarmed physical attacks (e.g., struggling to get free, wrestling, hitting, kicking)	11%	11%
Use of a deadly weapon (e.g., stick, bottle, axe, firearm)	1%	1%

QUALITY OF EQUIPMENT AND PROCEDURES

Respondents were asked to indicate how regularly they had access to various protective safety measures and equipment. They were also asked how often they would *like* to have access to the same things. The answer options ranged from ‘never’ to ‘at all times’ whilst on duty.

Figure 25 presents what proportion of respondents have access to these things ‘at all times’, and what proportion would like to. Nearly all (91 per cent) officers always have access to a baton, and 92 per cent would like to, so the match between those who want access and those who have it is very good. It is a similar story with incapacitant spray and body armour. There is a 6-percentage point gap between those who always have body worn cameras (81 per cent) and those who would like them (87 per cent). The largest difference is found on double crewing. Three quarters (76 per cent) would like access to double crewing all the time, but only 27 per cent are able to have that access. Large gaps between officers wishes for equipment/procedures and reality are also found on spit guards (24 percentage point gap), tasers (31 percentage point gap) and rapid response from firearm officers (30 percentage points). A third of respondents would like access to personal firearms all the time, the lowest proportion across all options, with 11 per cent having that access.

Figure 25: Level of access at all times to equipment and procedures



EQUALITY

Table 19: Equality

Table 19		Measure	'22	'23	Δ	Commentary
Equality		<i>Difference in % rating morale 'high' or 'very high' between highest and lowest segment (average)</i>	n/a	6%	0%pt	<i>The morale level is low across all groups; the gap between morale of different groups has widened on ethnicity and marginally narrowed on gender and age</i>
>	Gender	<i>Difference in % rating morale 'high' or 'very high' between highest and lowest segment</i>	3%	2%	-1%pt	<i>Proportion of women and men with high morale has converged slightly</i>
>	Ethnicity		4%	6%	2%pt	<i>The share of officers with high morale has diverged between officers of different ethnicity group</i>
>	Sexuality		n/a	0%	n/a	<i>No difference in high morale, but a greater share of bisexual officers have low morale</i>
>	Age		17%	16%	-1%pt	<i>There is a very large gap in morale between younger (higher morale) and older (lower morale)</i>

This section focuses on the 'Equality' subcategory of the PFEW2025 Member's Agenda. The Pay & Morale survey data asks about the respondents' personal characteristics, including gender, ethnicity, sexuality and age. Here we examine an intersection of these demographic characteristics with morale, work stress, the extent to which mental health is worsened by work, as well as the impact of discrimination. Table 19, above, looks at the difference in one of these metrics, morale, between the segments (e.g., between male and female). The largest gap is on age, where the youngest have far higher morale than the oldest.

It is important to note that some things measured by the survey, may be affected by societal factors on top of what people experience in their job. So, morale might be lower for certain groups, but that might be because, society wide, morale is lower for that group, rather than because that group faces a more challenging time at work. For example, the Office for

National Statistics did an analysis looking at life satisfaction across different characteristics. On age, it found that those aged 35-64 were more likely to have low life satisfaction than those aged 30-34. Those who identified as bisexual were also more likely to have low satisfaction.¹¹ This demonstrates that further analysis is required to look at the extent to which differences in the measures reported in this section are due to police-specific, or societal factors.

Actions on Conditions from PFEW2025 Strategy

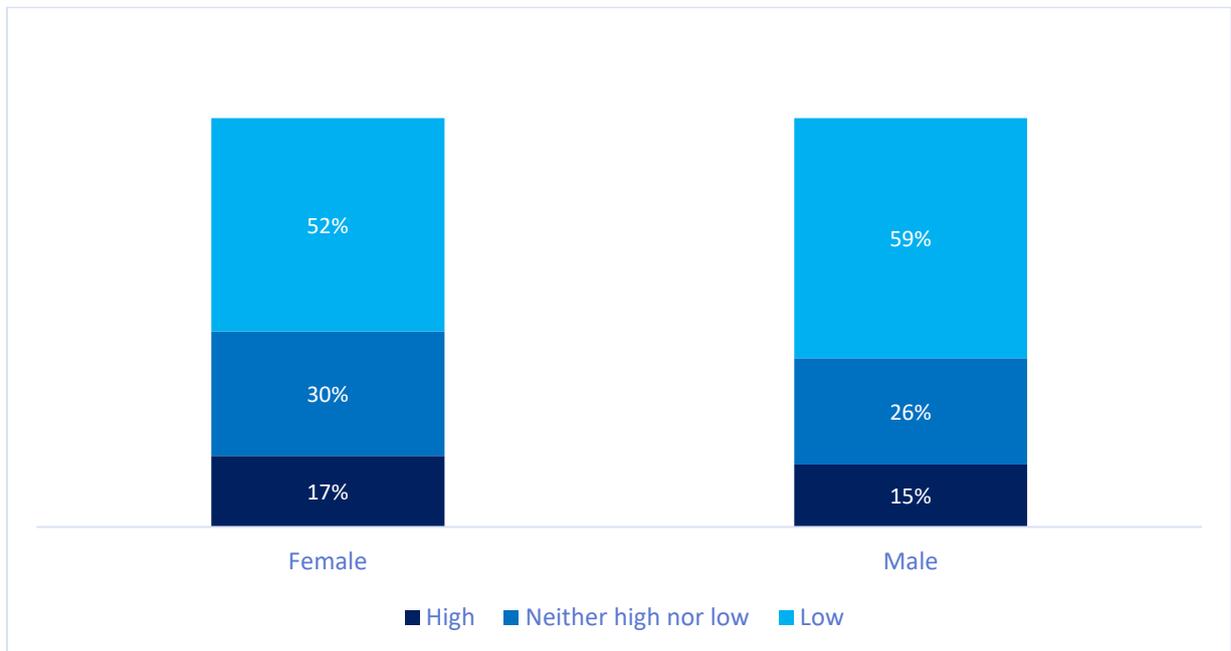
- *We will hold Forces to account and, amongst other things, that*
 - *Policies on equality are delivering what they aim for*

¹¹ Office of National Statistics (2022). *Equality across different areas of life in the UK: 2011 to 2020*. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/methodologicalpublications/generalmethodology/onsworkingpaper/series/equalityacrossdifferentareasoflifeintheuk2011to2020#:~:text=In%202020%20across%20the%20UK,for%20age%20and%20sex%20only> (Accessed on: 23 January 2024).

GENDER

Morale is worse among male respondents than female respondents, as Figure 26 shows. Some 59 per cent of men have low morale, compared to 52 per cent of women.

Figure 26: Level of morale by gender



Perceptions of work stress are very similar, with 42 per cent of women finding their job very stressful, compared to 43 per cent of men. Women are more likely, however, to face mental health impacts due to their jobs. Three quarters (75 per cent) of female respondents have had mental health challenges that have worsened because of work, compared to 70 per cent of men.

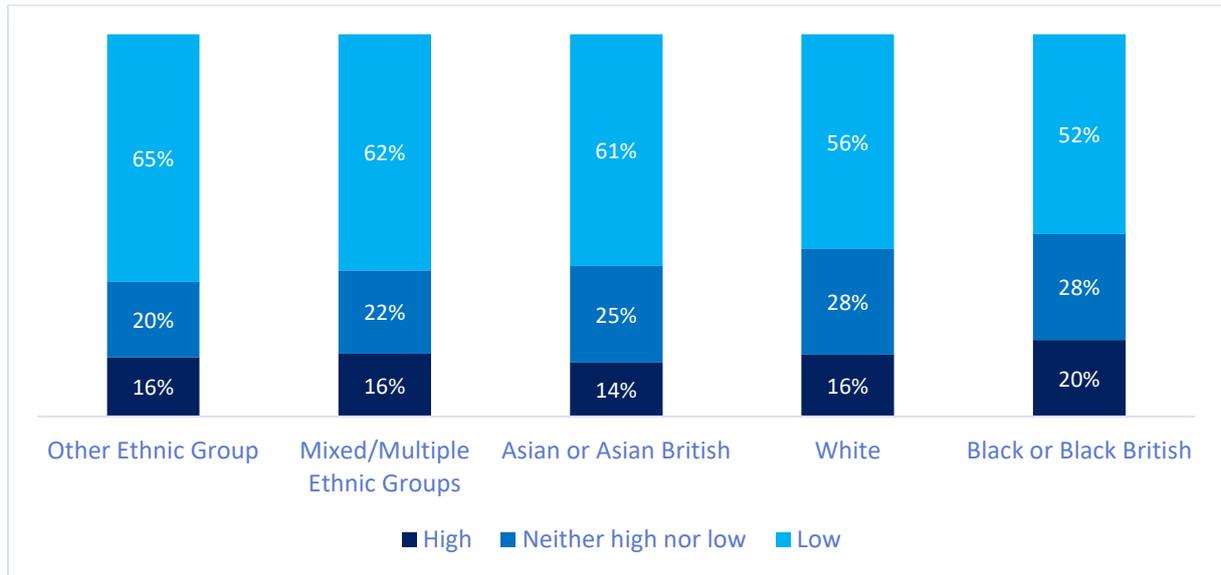
Discrimination is also more of an issue for female officers. Around 6 per cent said that discrimination at work had harmed their mental health, whereas 5 per cent of men said the same.

It is not possible to present results for people who identify as non-binary, or who use a different term to non-binary, male or female, due the amount of data being below the reporting threshold.

ETHNICITY

Those from 'other' and 'mixed' ethnic groups have the lowest morale, overall. Black or Black British officers have relatively better morale than other groups, although over half (52 per cent) of these respondents have low morale.

Figure 27: Level of morale by ethnicity

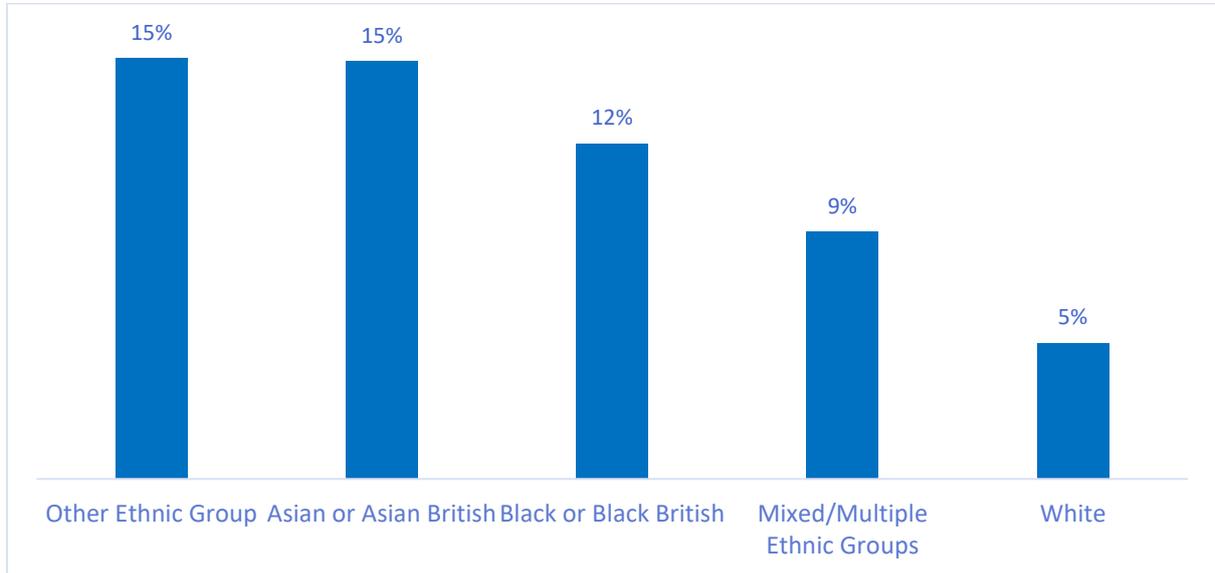


White respondents are the least likely to say that they find their work 'very stressful' (42 per cent). This compares to 52 per cent for Asian or Asian British respondents, 47 per cent for Mixed/Multiple ethnicities, 52 per cent for other ethnic groups and 43 per cent for Black or Black British. Mental health is being made worse by work for 75 per cent of respondents of Mixed/Multiple ethnicities, 74 per cent for other ethnic groups, and 72 per cent White, Asian or Asian British officers. This proportion is slightly lower among Black or Black British respondents at 70 per cent.

The extent to which discrimination at work is harming the mental health of respondents varies significantly based upon their ethnicity, as Figure 28 illustrates. As may be expected, White officers are far less likely to report that 'being discriminated against' is one of the main reasons that mental health and wellbeing were 'caused by or made worse by work'. Whilst 15 per cent of Asian or Asian British and respondents of other ethnic groups experienced this, 5 per cent of White respondents did. In total, 12 per cent of Black or Black

British officers had suffered from these impacts of discrimination, along with 9 per cent of those of Mixed or Multiple ethnicities.

Figure 28: Impact of discrimination at work on mental health



SEXUALITY

Gay or lesbian respondents have similar levels of morale to heterosexual/straight people, with 16 per cent having ‘high’ or ‘very high’ morale, and 56 per cent having ‘low’ or ‘very low’ morale. Bisexual people have a greater share of people with low morale, at 62 per cent.

There are differences in level of work stress too. Respondents who are heterosexual/straight are less likely to find their job ‘very stressful’ (42 per cent), whilst 47 per cent of gay or lesbian respondents and 52 per cent of bisexual respondents would describe their work this way.

Table 20: How respondents find their job by sexuality

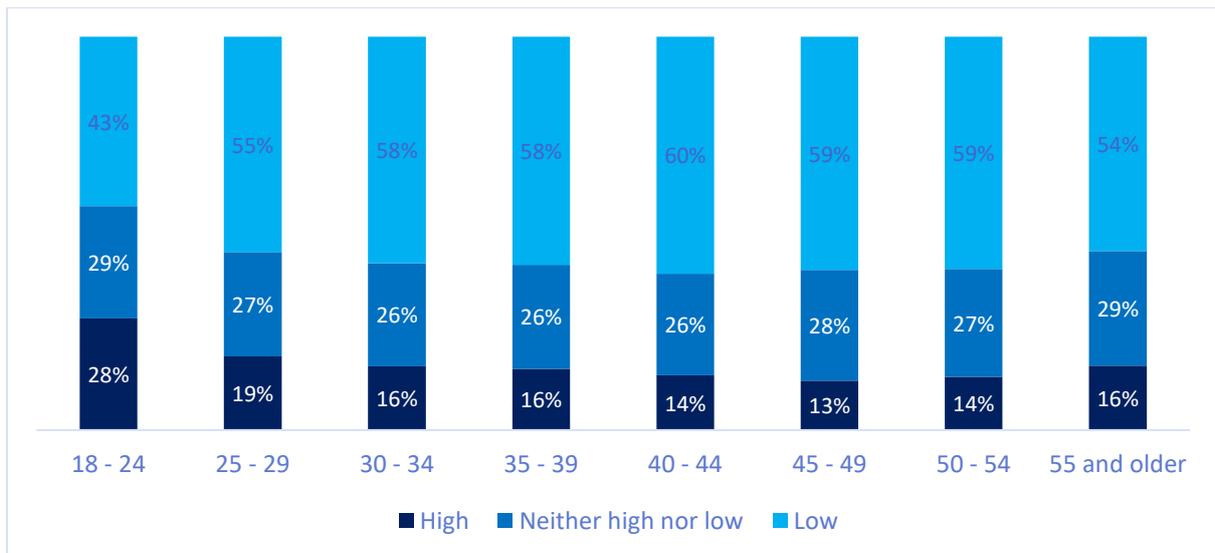
Table 20: How respondents find their job	Heterosexual/ Straight	Gay or Lesbian	Bisexual	I use another term	Prefer not to say
Not stressful	18%	18%	15%	22%	17%
Moderately stressful	40%	36%	33%	34%	39%
Very stressful	42%	47%	52%	44%	43%

Among those identifying as bisexual, 8 per cent suffer from discrimination at work that is worsening their mental health. In other groups, 6 per cent of gay or lesbian people have the same issue, whilst 5 per cent of heterosexual/straight people do.

AGE

There is a clear downward trend in morale with age. Among the youngest age cohort, 18–24-year-olds, 28 per cent of respondents have high morale, and 43 per cent have low morale. After 40, this drops to 13-14 per cent with high morale, and there is an increase up to 59-60 per cent of the share with low morale. Once respondents are 55 or older, however, morale improves, with slightly more high morale respondents (16 per cent) and fewer people with low morale (54 per cent). This is shown in Figure 29, below.

Figure 29: Level of morale by age



Reported stress levels, however, follow the opposite pattern. Younger officers are more likely to find their role ‘very stressful’ than older officers. For example, 54 per cent of 18 – 24 describe their work as ‘very stressful’ compared to 33 per cent of people aged 55 or older, as presented in table 21.

Table 21: How respondents find their job by age

Table 21: How respondents find their job	18 – 24	25 – 29	30 – 34	35 – 39	40 – 44	45 – 49	50 – 54	55+
Not stressful	10%	11%	16%	17%	18%	19%	22%	21%
Moderately stressful	35%	34%	39%	39%	39%	41%	42%	46%
Very stressful	54%	55%	46%	44%	42%	40%	36%	33%

As people get older, they are more likely to report that discrimination at work has made their mental health worse. Just 2 per cent of 18- to 24-year-olds find this, whilst the proportion rises to 6-7 per cent for those aged over 35.

Comments Relating to Equality Issues in Policing

"I feel there is little support for BAME officers and although there are groups and associations. There is little encouragement to apply for senior roles or training."

Officer

"The pay is very low. Moral [sic] is low, Support for BAME officers is low and discrimination is more common place around work place and on the comments on the intranet"

Officer

"In the last few months I have de-transitioned back to male in appearance as quite frankly it's just easier. I don't feel supported by the job as demonstrated by their search policy that is the reverse of that suggested by the NPCC, sacrifices my dignity in order to protect the job against litigation and my requests re awareness training were ignored. Recent diversity training was careful to include the anti-trans 'gender critical' as a protected belief and all the LGBT content was visibly skipped past."

Officer

"Being a woman I feel I still will not be accepted nor respected by my male colleagues."

Officer

MAKING OUR VOICES HEARD

Table 22: Making our voices heard

	Measure	'22	'23	Δ	Commentary
Making Our Voices Heard	% who disagree that police are respected by the public	79%	85%	6%pt	<i>There was a sharp rise in the sense that the Police are not respected by the public, from an already high base</i>
> Public View of Police	% who say treatment by public has a negative impact on morale	81%	86%	5%pt	<i>Morale is being increasingly hit by the public's view of the Police</i>
> Govt View of Police	% who say treatment by government has a negative impact on morale	95%	95%	0%pt	<i>Nearly all officers feel that the government's treatment of the Police negatively impacts morale</i>

This section focuses on the 'Making our voices heard' subcategory of the PFEW2025 Member's Agenda. These measures also relate to the Public Agenda. These two areas of the strategy look at how officers feel that they are treated, and whether they are respected by the public and the government as a proxy for the extent that the Police is successfully making its voice heard with policy and national debates. These results indicate that officers feel that both the government and the public have low levels of respect for the Police service. That feeling, in particular regarding the public's respect of police, has grown since 2022.

Actions on Making Our Voices Heard from PFEW2025 Strategy

Members' Agenda

- 1. We will undertake research to challenge the policy whereby a degree is the only route into policing.*

Public Agenda

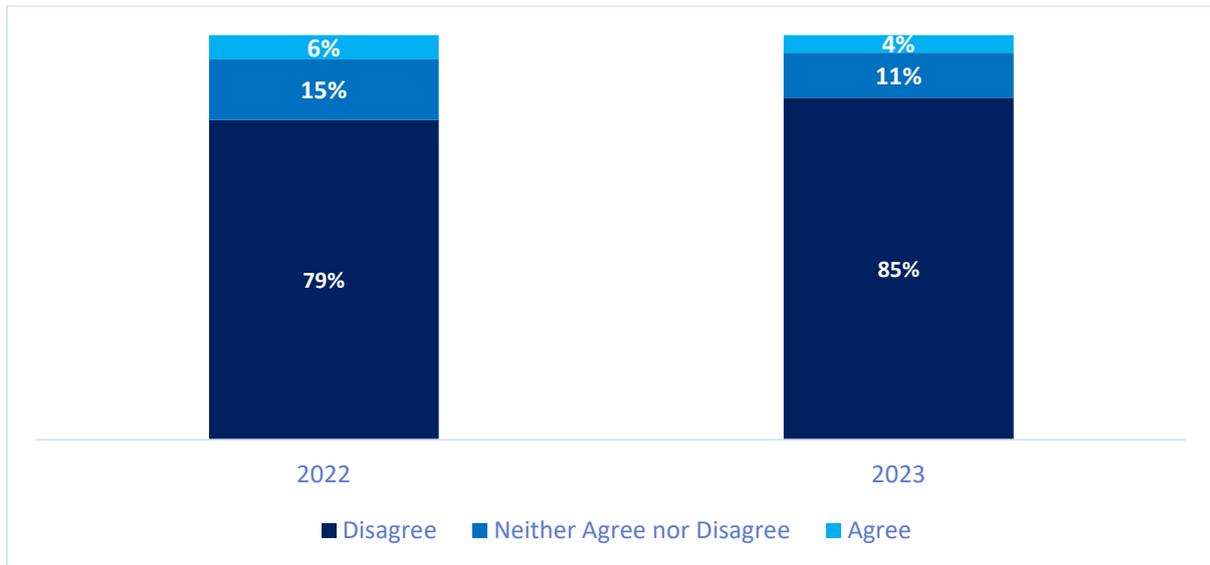
- 1. We will establish a Commission that will develop a vision for the future of policing based on what police officers see going wrong today and what will make for safer streets tomorrow. We will engage independent researchers to help undertake this project amongst rank and file officers who will 'tell it as it is'.*
- 2. We will use this research to produce a major contribution to public debate. Region by Region we will engage the public and build alliances that will strengthen our influence on policy makers and politicians*
- 3. Alongside this we will develop individual contributions to issues such as the use of tasers, knife crime, stop and search. We will be a 'go to' organisation on these issues of public concern.*

The survey results here are divided into two subsections: one relating how officers feel that the general public views the Police, and the other about the government's view of the Police.

THE PUBLIC'S VIEW OF THE POLICE

Although respondents' perceptions of how they were viewed by the public were negative in 2022, things appear to have worsened over the past year. Figure 30 shows how 85 per cent of respondents 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' that Police officers are respected by the public, up from 79 per cent. Just 4 per cent 'agree' or 'strongly agree'.

Figure 30: Level of agreement that 'members of the Police are respected by the Public'



The public's treatment of the police is having an increasing, negative impact on morale. The proportion of respondents saying that this has had a negative impact has increased from 81 per cent in 2022 to 86 per cent this year.

Table 23: Impact of public treatment of Police on intention to leave the force

Table 23: Impact of public treatment of Police on intention to leave the force	2022	2023
% major impact	52%	62%

The public's treatment is becoming a greater factor in people considering leaving the Police. Respondents who were intending to leave the Police service within the next 2 years were

asked what was driving them to do so. The share citing public treatment as having a 'major impact' leapt from 52 per cent in 2022 to 62 per cent in 2023.

THE GOVERNMENT'S VIEW OF THE POLICE

There has been less of a change in the results looking at the relationship between the government and the police. Respondents are nearly unanimous that the government's treatment of the police has a 'negative' or 'very negative' impact on morale, with 95 per cent selecting these options. A majority, 78 per cent of those intending to leave Policing in the next 2 years point to the government's factor on having a 'major impact' on their decision making. Nearly all respondents, 94 per cent, also 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' that members of the Police are respected by the government.

CONCLUSION

Morale among the police force is low and falling, with greater numbers planning on leaving the force within two years. The treatment of the police by the government and the public is one of the main drivers of this. Life satisfaction is very poor relative to the general public, and other professions such as the armed forces.

Dissatisfaction on pay is widespread, with four in five officers unhappy with their overall remuneration. Over a third of officers are often or sometimes unable to cover the cost of their monthly essentials. A majority of respondents are unhappy with the Police pension, too. Nearly half of respondents are unhappy with their professional development review process, with a third dissatisfied with their promotion prospects.

The majority of respondents felt that the workload was too high, and at a higher share than, for example, in the armed forces. Many are having rest days and annual leave cancelled. Officers are at significant risk of abuse from the public; over one in ten face weekly physical attacks. There are big gaps between what equipment respondents feel that they need, and what they end up receiving to protect them.

All of these factors, and others, are contributing to poor mental health. The quality of support received for those respondents who seek help from their management variable.

Mental health and wellbeing are a significant issue and almost all of those who experience stress, low mood, anxiety or other difficulties identified work as a factor making it worse. There are issues of equality in the Police service too. Officers who are Asian or Asian British are three times as likely to have discrimination at work impact their mental health as White colleagues. Bisexual, gay and lesbian officers are also facing greater rates of discrimination than others.

Morale and life satisfaction are extremely low, and dissatisfaction with pay is near unanimous. Officers are having to forsake rest days and annual leave; and to go to work without all of the equipment and procedures in place that they feel they need. Their mental health is coming under increasing strain. These results demonstrate the importance of making progress on the PFEW2025 strategy, without which staff retention may become an increasing issue.