

The Police Federation of England and Wales Position on Officers Terms and Conditions to the Police Remuneration Review Body February 2026

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Executive summary

Pay, retention and operational sustainability

Policing in England and Wales is operating under sustained operational demand and increasing complexity. Officers in the federated ranks are managing higher investigative burden, greater safeguarding responsibilities, expanding digital crime and continued public order requirements.

Over the same period, police pay has experienced prolonged real-terms erosion. Pension contributions have increased. Fiscal drag has reduced take-home pay. The cumulative effect has been a measurable decline in purchasing power and financial predictability for officers.

These pressures are material to retention, morale and long-term workforce stability.

The Police Federation of England and Wales therefore submits that:

The annual pay award for 2026/27 should be at least 7 percent and remain at 7 percent for the following three years.

A multi-year settlement is necessary to restore competitiveness and provide certainty. A single-year award would not address cumulative real-terms losses or provide stability for workforce planning.

This submission identifies specific areas within the current framework where adjustment is required to support operational capability and fairness.

Real-terms pay and competitiveness

Since 2010, police pay has not kept pace with inflation. The effect is a sustained reduction in real earnings.

In addition to headline pay restraint, officers have experienced increased pension contributions, stagnation of tax thresholds resulting in fiscal drag, rising living costs, and greater unpredictability in working hours and rest day cancellations.

These factors influence decisions to remain in service, particularly at mid-career stages where officers hold valuable operational experience.

A structured 7 percent award over three years provides a pathway toward restoring competitiveness while allowing forces to plan with certainty.

Retention and specialist capability

Detective and specialist roles remain difficult to recruit and retain in a number of forces. These roles require accredited skills, sustained caseload management and exposure to complex and traumatic investigations. The skills are transferable and competitive within the wider labour market.

Retention in these areas is directly linked to investigative performance, court timeliness and public confidence. Targeted recognition is required to protect this capability.

Supervisory workload and working time

Inspecting ranks carry increasing operational responsibility and accountability. Many routinely exceed 48 hours per week. Current arrangements do not sufficiently recognise excessive supervisory workload or prolonged working hours.

Frequent rest day cancellations and late roster alterations disrupt family life and reduce predictability. Where operational demand prevents time off being taken, officers must retain meaningful choice regarding compensation.

Sustainable policing requires that excessive working patterns are addressed through fair and transparent mechanisms.

Multi-year stability

A three-year settlement at 7 percent per annum would improve retention at experienced ranks, reduce churn and retraining costs, support workforce planning and signal long-term commitment to policing as a profession.

Short-term settlements prolong uncertainty and weaken confidence.

Summary of Recommendations

No.	Recommendation	Rationale	Expected Effect
1.	Annual consolidated pay award of at least 7 percent for 2026/27 and 7 percent for the following three years	Restore real-terms erosion and provide certainty	Strengthened retention and workforce stability
2.	Shortening of the Constable pay scale	Recognition of early in service workloads and responsibility	Improved morale, better recruitment and retention
3.	Introduction of a Detective Allowance	Address recruitment and retention challenges in accredited investigative roles	Improved investigative capability

No.	Recommendation	Rationale	Expected Effect
4.	Extension of workload recognition to Inspecting ranks and additional payment for hours worked beyond 48 per week for Inspecting ranks	Reflect supervisory responsibility and accountability, recognise excessive working time	Improved sustainability at leadership tier, mitigate burnout risk
5.	Simplified system when acting up to be paid from day one which is reckonable and pensionable	Provide appropriate compensation for additional responsibility	Improved fairness
6.	Removal of the South East and London allowance discretion and the allowances to be paid at their top levels	Ensure fair pay for location and remove inconsistency	Increased recruitment and retention for the South East and London
7.	Shift alteration or roster disruption allowance, enhanced unsocial hours payments	Compensate officers for late roster changes and cancelled rest days	Improve fairness and predictability
8.	Retention of officer choice regarding compensation for cancelled rest days and retain minimum compensation for working into a rest day or bank holiday	Protect entitlement where time off cannot be taken	Preserve fairness under operational pressure
9.	Alignment of mutual aid arrangements with equivalent UK provisions	Ensure consistency and equity	Support operational readiness
10.	Continued benchmarking of police pay against comparator professions and recognition of the P-factor	Maintain labour market competitiveness	Protect recruitment and retention capability
11.	Removal of adjusted duties financial penalties to be removed from police regulation	Ensure fair treatment of all officers	Improved morale and retention of vital skills and experience
12.	Increase the protection allowance and recognition that those in receipt of rate 1 are paid appropriately	Ensure protection allowances maintain value	Improved fairness and morale
13.	Targeted Variable Payments and Bonus Payment to have ring fenced money within police budgets	Provide greater use and consistency of the payments	Recruitment and retention in roles and greater recognition of the demands of police work

No.	Recommendation	Rationale	Expected Effect
14.	Increase to annual leave provisions, long service leave, recuperation leave, buy and selling of annual leave and compensation for lost annual leave	Provide better rest and recuperation for officer	Increased retention and improved wellbeing and morale
15.	Rest day compensation (or time of in lieu) to be paid for court warnings irrespective of the 15 days' notice	Compensate officers for frequent court warnings	Improved morale
16.	Family leave to cater for the unique nature of policing and all to be day 1 rights with improvements from statutory pay to full pay	Increased support for officers	Increased retention and promote wellbeing

Conclusion

The federated ranks are operating under sustained demand in an environment of prolonged pay erosion.

A structured multi-year award of at least 7 percent, combined with targeted recognition of specialist and supervisory pressures, represents a proportionate and evidence-based response.

The question for the Review Body is whether the current framework sufficiently supports retention, morale and operational resilience. The Federation submits that the adjustments set out above are necessary to ensure it does.

Section 1 - The Evolving Office of Constable

1.1 Introduction

Modern policing requires far more capability and bears the weight of far more expectation from society than in years past. Yet, our pay framework has remained largely unchanged since its inception in 1920. We do recognise that complete structural reform of the pay system will be a longer-term change, but there needs to be a demonstrable momentum to securing change that reflects the demands of policing in the modern age and provides scope for changes that will undoubtedly arrive in the future. This must be done in tandem with providing relief for officers serving today. It cannot be right that we ask officers to work in an increasingly risky and dangerous profession and not offer the appropriate compensation. It is simply unfair and unjust for police officer to bear the brunt of Government's poor planning and organisation in designing and implementing reform strategies.

Policing, like society, is evolving and the requirements to deliver a police service that has the public's confidence are only increasing. This section will outline and evidence the changing demands that policing faces and the high personal cost to individual officers. Pay needs to reflect these demands and sacrifices.

1.2 An Officer's Role in a Changing Society

Policing holds a different place in society than any other profession. For generations, the status of an officer was undeniable, and the Office of Constable brought with it immediate respect from most of the public. Policing was seen as a respectable and desirable career, with many young people aspiring to join its ranks. In the past, this was evident with the volume of programmes for cadets, new recruits, and plentiful applications of hopeful candidates to join the ranks.

In times gone by, the skills required to be a successful police officer were significantly less than modern policing. This is evidenced in the Home Office's 2023 report¹ into policing productivity as:

¹ Home Office. (2023). *The Policing Productivity Review – Improving Outcomes for the Public*. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/655784fa544aea000dfb2f9a/Policing_Productivity_Review.pdf (publicly available)

“Policing today requires a very different skillset. In 2003, armed with a knowledge of three crime types (burglary, theft and criminal damage), a constable knew how to approach 80 percent of the demand coming their way. In 2023, in order to manage the same proportion of their work, this constable has to be competent across six disparate and wider categories of crime: theft, fraud (including online), violence with injury, stalking and harassment, public order and violence without injury. Non crime demand on officers equally broadened in scope during that time.”

From the Home Office’s 2023 assessment quoted above, a Constable in 2003 could expect to have a deep understanding of burglary, criminal damage, and theft and perform their job exceptionally. There would have been an expectation they treated members of the public with empathy and compassion, of course, but there would not have been the expectation to have plugged the gap left by waning NHS resources to provide support to an individual who needed mental health care – not an arrest. Previously an officer could have reasonably expected a right to privacy, as the threat of videos on social media was non-existent. They could also expect that they would live near to where they worked if they were a Londoner or from the South East, but that is no longer the case, as we will explore later in the report. An officer could also have anticipated an automatic level of respect that their role as an officer held in society.

Legislative expansion and increasing complexity of policing

Recent legislative developments have significantly expanded both the scope and complexity of policing, increasing the cognitive, technical, and emotional demands placed on police officers. The Crime and Policing Bill 2024–25 introduces a wide range of new criminal offences and enhanced police powers, including offences relating to spiking, child criminal exploitation, retail worker assault, stalking, online crime, fraud, and the safeguarding of vulnerable individuals. These measures materially increase investigative workload, evidential requirements - particularly in relation to digital and forensic evidence – safeguarding responsibilities, and the need for extensive inter-agency coordination.²

In parallel, government strategies on violence against women and girls, domestic abuse, and online harms explicitly place greater responsibility on policing to deliver prevention, victim protection, and enforcement outcomes. These offences are typically high-harm and resource-intensive, requiring specialist knowledge, continuous training, and sustained engagement with vulnerable victims.³ Independent inspection evidence has

² Home Office. (2024). *Crime and Policing Bill 2024–25: Explanatory notes and policy background*. UK Parliament. <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3513> (publicly available)

³ Home Office. (2023). *Domestic Abuse Plan: Supporting victims and strengthening the response*. UK Government. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-plan> ; Home Office. (2022). *Tackling violence against women and girls strategy*. UK Government. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy> (both publicly available)

consistently highlighted that demand in these areas is rising, cases are increasingly complex, and frontline capacity is under sustained pressure, particularly in relation to safeguarding, digital investigation, and public protection functions.⁴

Taken together, recent legislation and policy direction demonstrate that the police role has expanded well beyond traditional crime response to encompass digital investigation, safeguarding, public protection, and mental health crisis intervention – functions historically associated with other public services. This legislatively driven increase in role complexity and professional responsibility has not been accompanied by commensurate reform of police pay structures, despite clear evidence that modern policing requires higher-level skills, greater professional judgement, alongside sustained exposure to complex and high-risk cases.^{2,4}

1.3 Non-Crime Demand and the “Public Service of Last Resort”

As will be outlined further in the report, a Constable now can expect constant scrutiny alongside doing a job that requires far more capability. Independent evidence consistently shows that a growing proportion of policing activity is not driven by recorded crime, but by demand displaced from other overstretched public services. Officers are more frequently expected to deal with a myriad of situations from mental health crisis; safeguarding and vulnerability and even incidents with dangerous dogs and supporting organisations such as the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA).

The Institute for Government’s report in 2025⁵ explains this non-crime demand on policing well:

“There is also demand on policing that is not directly related to crime, including policing protests and other public events, responding to traffic collisions, and responding to non-crime incidents, such as mental health crises. This is extremely difficult to quantify, but the police inspectorate has argued that this area of demand grew during the 2010s, partly in response to cutbacks in other services.”

“This is typical of the way demand on the police is heavily influenced by the performance of, and relationships with, other services, including housing, children’s services and health services, among others. For example, the increase in children in the care system with very complex needs is likely to have a knock-on effect on policing, both in terms of offending and in safeguarding vulnerable children.”

⁴ HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. (2021–2024). *Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) inspections and thematic reports*. HMICFRS. <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/our-work/peel-assessments/> (publicly available)

⁵ Institute for Government. (2025). *Public services performance tracker 2025: The criminal justice system*. [performance-tracker-2025-criminal-justice-system.pdf](https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/2025-01/public-services-performance-tracker-2025-criminal-justice-system.pdf) (publicly available)

HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services has repeatedly concluded that police officers spend substantial time managing incidents where no crime has been committed, particularly supporting mental health assessments and safeguarding vulnerable individuals when NHS services are unavailable or lack capacity.⁶ All over England and Wales, officers live out these observations as they are involved in supporting other stretched services, such as assisting Border Force with the removal of high-risk offenders; supporting social services or NHS colleagues. The support for NHS colleagues has grown from supporting mental health assessments to providing support to medical professions when high-risk individuals need medical attention. At almost any time in any major hospital, there will be a police presence, supporting other professions when they fear attack and injury. Never before has the role of policing been as acutely performing the role as the “public service of last resort.”

The National Police Chiefs’ Council has warned that this diversion of police resources away from core crime-fighting functions increases fatigue, risk exposure, and workforce attrition, especially in high-cost areas such as London. Taken together, these findings underline that police pay must reflect not only crime-related responsibilities, but also the expanding scope, complexity, and risk of modern policing work - particularly where officers are routinely compensating for systemic pressures elsewhere in the public sector.⁷ As this submission will outline further, there is a societal trend of increasing violence. To deal with this, we are seeing the growth of private security and local council enforcement officers to deal with a huge range of issues. All of this results in increased demand for policing. Although the purpose of this extra security or enforcement is clear, they cannot ultimately detain individuals, so police support will be required, again driving up demand for policing. All of these additional demands add up quickly and have a significant impact on local resource levels.

The wide variety of skills and capabilities required to meet these demands for everyday occurrences is astounding. The examples provided above are limited for brevity, but they illustrate the point that the demands on policing are increasing and varied. These limited examples do not even cover the impact of changing and evolving crime types, which will continue to become more complex.

⁶ HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. (2023). *State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales*.
<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/state-of-policing-2023/> (publicly available)

⁷ National Police Chiefs’ Council. (2022). *Policing and Mental Health: Demand, Capacity and Risk*.
<https://www.npcc.police.uk/Our-work/Mental-health/> (publicly available)

1.4 The Impact of Being a High Reliability Organisation

In a report commissioned by the PFEW, Professor Peter Turnbull explores the concept of being a ‘high reliability organisation’. This provides more academic context to why policing is, and will continue to be, the public service of last resort.⁸

“The police service is one of a class of ‘high-reliability organisations; (HROs) where the cost associated with major failures are immeasurably greater than the value of any ‘lessons learned’ from such failures. Simply put, “their work is too important and the effects of their failures too disastrous.” In particular, the HROs provide important public services such as policing and health care, the public has a right to expect ‘failure-free’ performance. This creates a level of scrutiny way beyond that experienced by workers in the other sectors of the economy.”⁸

The concept of a HRO brings about some interesting points for consideration. **Lack of investment will lead to disastrous failures.** This is such a logical point, but yet we have seen the political will to invest and improve policing continually delayed, effectively relying on the goodwill of officers to continue to face the demands of the frontline with very little improvement in return.

The capabilities of officers will only continue to grow as it supports other public services crumbling from lack of investment. Although it is our sincere hope that colleagues in other public services receive investment and start to reverse a decade of disinvestment, improvements will not happen overnight. **The reliance on policing will only increase in the coming years because there are no ‘quick fixes’ to improve other public services.** The PRRB’s recommendations must recognise this burden placed on policing.

Policing is acting as a societal safety-net for public services. Future reliance on policing will only grow. Bold investment decisions need to be taken today to stop early attrition and mid-career leavers. **We cannot wait for reform – we need to support our officers now.**

The impact of scrutiny on officers and benchmarking will be explored in other sections of the report.

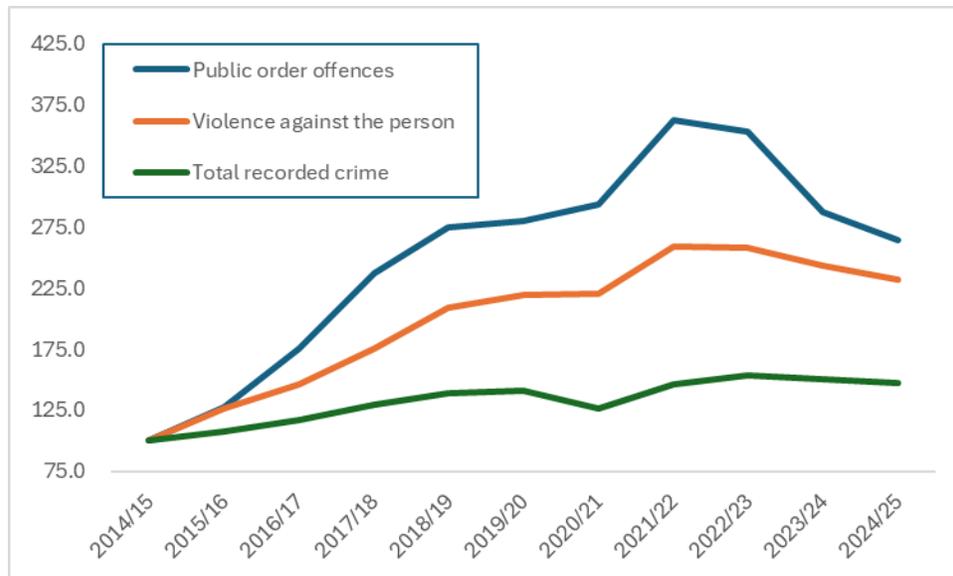
1.5 Society on a Tipping Point = More Expectation of Officers

Public disorder and violence are growing. This of course puts pressure on officers. **The public rightly expect to be protected from violence and disorder.** However, despite this trend, investment has not followed.

⁸ Turnbull, P. (2026). *Pay Transparency and the P-factor*. University of Bristol (Private source of information provided in the Appendix)

Rates per 1,000 population show that offences linked to public disorder and serious violence have increased far more rapidly than overall recorded crime. Public order offences and violence against the person rose sharply from their 2014/15 baseline and remain well above pre-pandemic levels, while total recorded crime increased more gradually. This indicates a shift in policing demand toward more disruptive and higher-risk offending rather than a uniform rise in crime.⁹

England and Wales: Trends in Public Disorder, Violence and Total Recorded Crime (2014/15 = 100)¹⁰



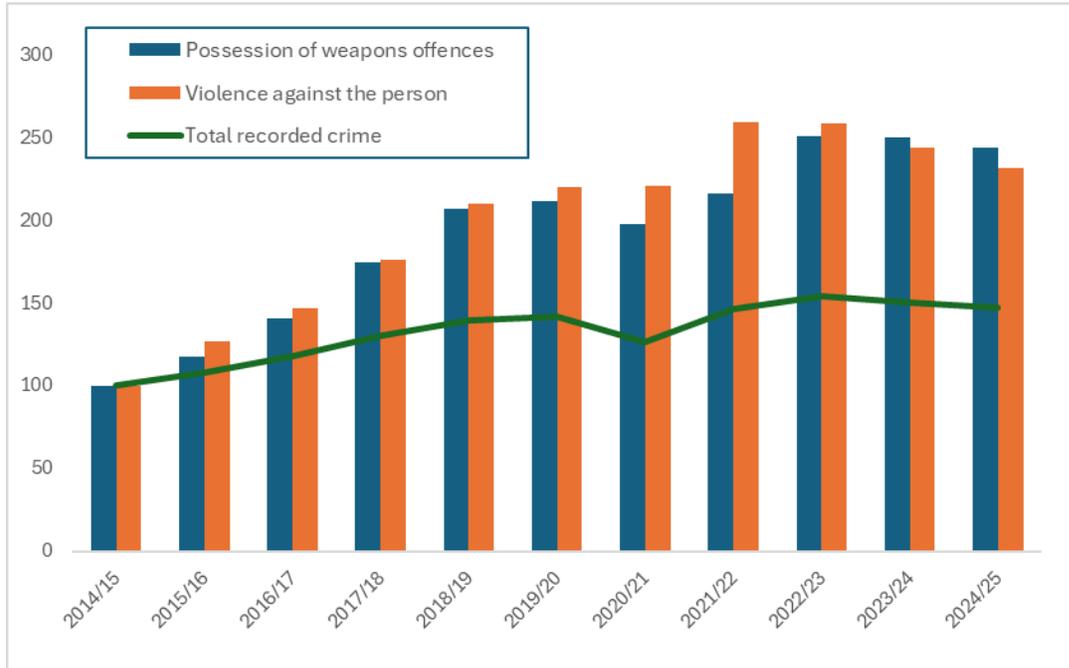
Trends in Gang-Related Serious Violence and Total Recorded Crime

Offences commonly associated with gang-related serious violence include possession of weapons offences and violence against the person. Both weapons offences and violence increased much more rapidly than overall crime from 2014/15, peaking in the early 2020s and remaining well above earlier levels. Although there has been some recent easing, levels of serious violence remain substantially higher than a decade ago. In contrast, total recorded crime has grown more gradually, indicating that gang-linked and high-harm violence has intensified faster than crime overall.

⁹ Home Office. (2025). *Police recorded crime and outcomes open data tables – Police force area data* [Data set]. UK Government. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/police-recorded-crime-and-outcomes-open-data-tables> (publicly available)

¹⁰ This chart shows how different types of crime have changed over time. All the lines start at the same point in 2014/15. This makes it easy to see how much each type of crime has grown, rather than how big it was to begin with. Public order offences (such as protests that turn disorderly) have risen the most. They are now more than twice as high as they were in 2014/15, even after falling from their peak. Violence against people (such as assaults) has also risen sharply. It is now well over double its 2014/15 level. Total crime has increased too, but much more slowly. Overall crime is around half higher than it was in 2014/15.

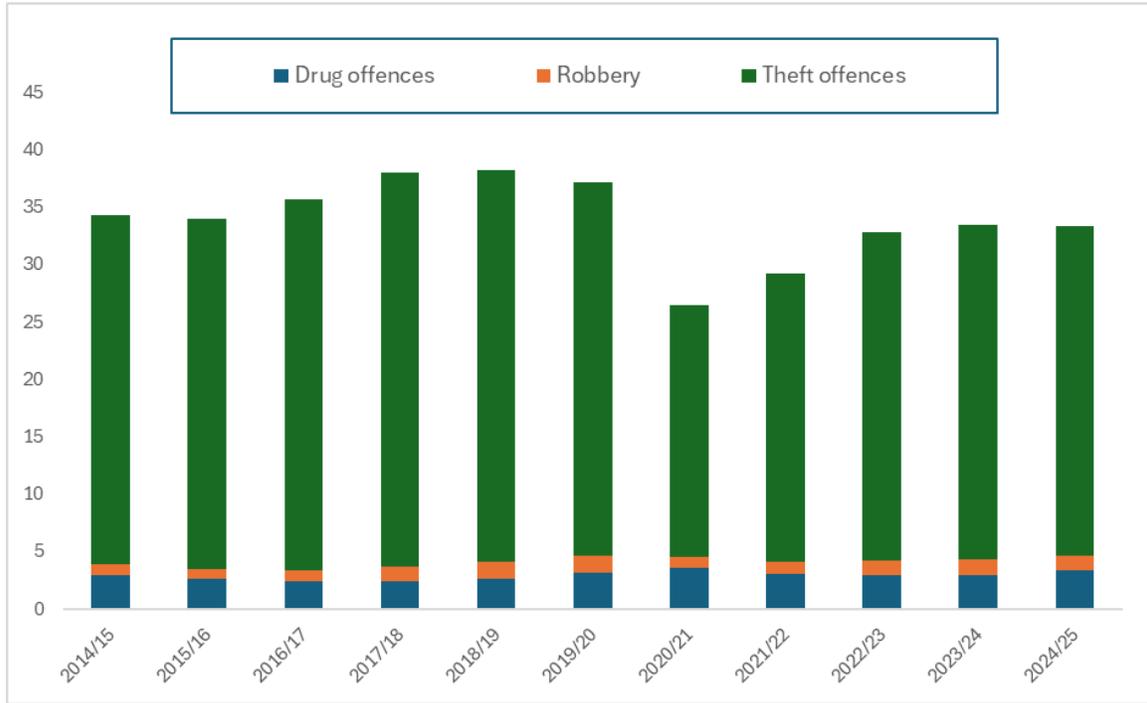
England and Wales: Indexed Trends in Gang-Related Serious Violence and Total Recorded Crime (2014/15 = 100)



Disorder and Organised Crime Take a Growing Share of Police Work

The data shows that offences linked to organised crime – such as drug offences, robbery and organised theft - continue to make up a substantial share of police work. Theft remains the largest element, while drug offences have increased since 2019/20 and robbery remains a persistent high-harm offence. Although total crime levels have been impacted by the Covid pandemic, the burden of organised and complex offending on policing is increasing and returning to pre-pandemic levels.

England and Wales; Organised Crime-Related Offences as a Share of Total Recorded Crime



1.6 - Physical Risk and Trauma

It is undoubtedly a link to both the growing trend in violence and unrest in society and also the amount of work being given to policing from other sectors, that we are seeing an increase of exposure to harm through physical injury and trauma. This increased risk has been progressively worsening in recent years, but the impact has been resolutely ignored and written off as a cost of doing ‘the job’.

1.6.1 Assaults

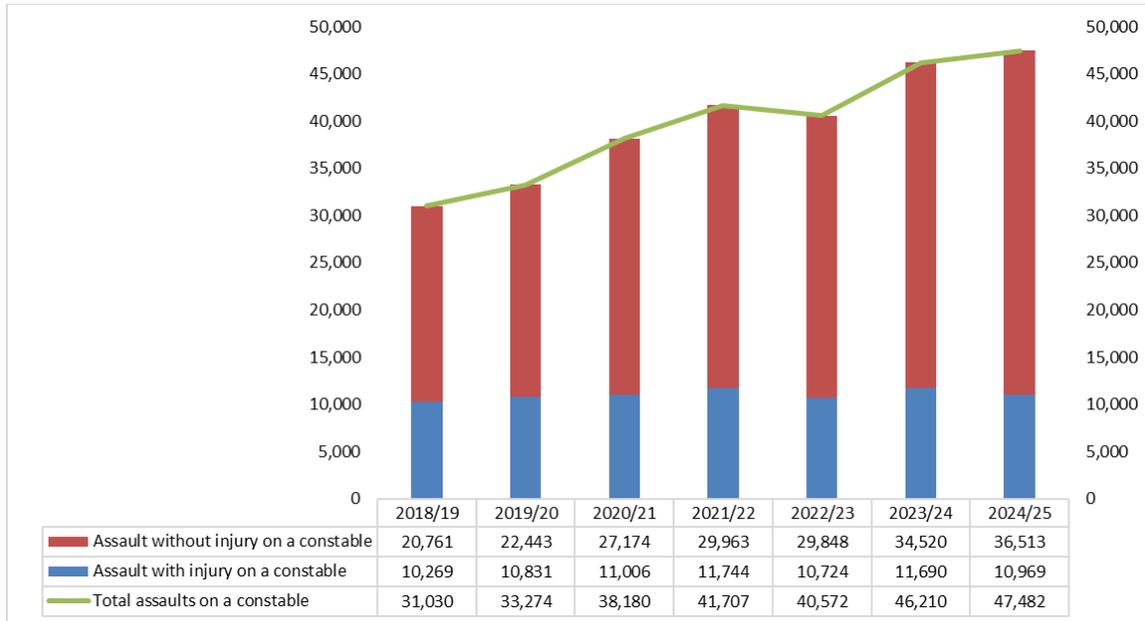
In our report to the PRRB last year, we detailed the trends of assaults on police officers, and how it demonstrated that policing was an increasingly dangerous profession.

Assaults on officers are commonplace and worsening. Policing is increasingly an extremely dangerous profession, with 47,482 assaults on police officers (Constables) recorded by the Home Office for the year ending March 2025.¹¹ This is a 2.8 percent

¹¹ Home Office. (2024). *Official Statistics. Police recorded crime and outcomes open data tables. [Data set]*. Published 25 April 2013. Last updated 24 October 2024. [Police recorded crime and outcomes open data tables - GOV.UK](#) (publicly available)

increase from the previous year. Unfortunately, that is a trend that has continued and demonstrates that **130 officers per day are assaulted with 30 officers a day sustaining an injury from that assault.**

England and Wales: assaults on police officers' figures – Data as of 31 March (by year)



Although the Home Office statistics on assaults clearly indicate the increased danger to officers, the lived experience of our members not just underlines that but demonstrates the personal impact it is having. Their experiences of exposure to violence in their normal day-to-day life is frightening and outlines:

- 60% of members felt that recent changes in society have had an impact on their physical and mental health – demonstrating more risk in their typical duties (source 2025 survey)¹⁵
- 34% of members report being exposed to verbal assaults on a weekly basis
- 21% of officers have reported being threatened with physical assault being a weekly occurrence
- 11% of officers regularly experience physical altercations (struggling to get free, wrestling, kicking, hitting) on a weekly basis.

The last statistic truly brings to life what life on the frontline is like, with many of these officers experiencing physical altercations in their daily work. If this data is expanded, it demonstrates that a frontline officer should expect regular physical violence. What other professional role would expect attacks and altercations at such regular intervals?

Adding to this, our officers are often experiencing these situations as either alone (single crewed) or with just one other officer alongside them, leaving them vulnerable and outnumbered. There is also the intense expectation of the profession and the public that an officer willingly puts themselves in harm's way as they carry out their normal duties. What other profession carries this regular and intense burden of self-sacrifice?

1.6.2 Trauma

Over recent years, society has spoken with more confidence and openly about the impacts of mental health and trauma. For policing, the exposure to trauma is frequent, and the impacts are harsh.

The depth of the trauma linked to policing has been researched in several independent studies. The extensive study by Cambridge University indicates that 90 percent of officer experience trauma, with it leading to PTSD.¹²

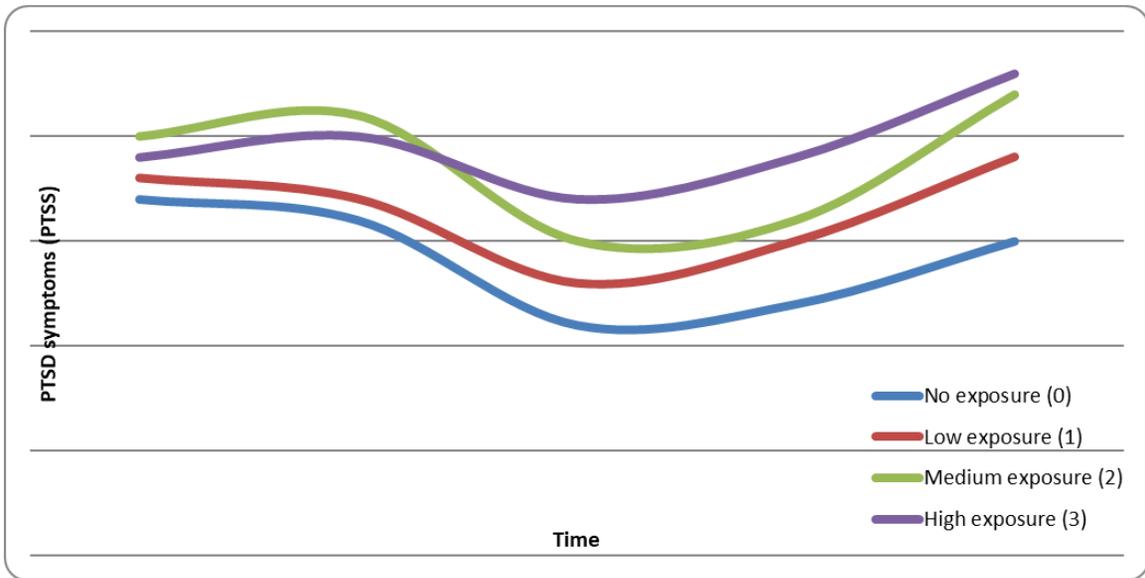
A further study by King's College London examined the relationship between occupational exposure to traumatic events and mental health outcomes with 40,299 UK police officers and found that recent exposure to traumatic incidents was strongly associated with adverse mental health outcomes. Officers who reported recent trauma exposure being six times more likely to screen positive for probable PTSD compared to those not exposed to traumatic events.¹³

Consistent with findings from UK police research, a large prospective cohort study of Danish police officers further demonstrates a clear exposure-response relationship between traumatic incident exposure and PTSD symptoms.¹⁴ Figure 1 in Hansen *et al.*'s study illustrates increasing mean PTSD symptom level across groups with rising cumulative exposure to critical incidents (see adapted illustration below). Although conducted in Denmark, the occupational demands and trauma profiles are comparable to those in the UK, making the observed pattern of symptom escalation relevant for understanding referral and identification of PTSD within UK populations.

¹² Brewin, C.R., Miller, J.K., Soffia, M., Peart, A. and Burchell, B. (2020). Posttraumatic stress disorder and complex posttraumatic stress disorder in UK police officers. *Psychological Medicine*, 52(7):1287-1295. doi: 10.1017/S0033291720003025 (publicly available)

¹³ Stevelink, A.M., Opie, E., Pernet, D., Gao, H., Elliot, P., Wessley, S, et al. (2020). Probable PTSD, depression and anxiety in 40,299 UK police officers and staff: Prevalence, risk factors and associations with blood pressure. *PLoS ONE* 15(11): e0240902. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0240902> (publicly available)

¹⁴ Hansen, N.B., Andersen, L.L., Møller, S.R., Elklit, A., and Pihl-Thingvad, J. (2025). Exposure to critical incidents at work and development of posttraumatic stress among police officers: a 2-year prospective cohort study. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 34(4), 451–473. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2025.2509679> (publicly available)



Since our last submission to the PRRB, another troubling trend has become clear. We are having more officers take their own lives. We will cover the issue of suicide more thoroughly in another section of the report. It is important to note here there is an irrefutable link between trauma, mental health deterioration and suicide, and we are starting to see this play out with the most horrific of consequences.

1.7 Section One Conclusion

The changes to the demand in policing, through crime and non-crime demands has massive impacts on the frontline. In this section we have evidenced these changing demands and crime types that are requiring holders of the 'Office of Constable' to know more, do more, and cover demands that other public services cannot support due to their own under-investment. We have also evidenced how this is resulting in the everyday experience of officers including exposure to trauma and physical injury. All this has very real consequences for the individual officers carrying out their duties. In the next section, we will explore the personal impacts on those officers and the changes in the policing workforce.

Section 2 - Increased Scrutiny and the Personal Impact to Officers

In any avenue of life, we must adjust to changes. Change is inevitable. Perhaps one of the most frustrating features of policing to officers is that changes in the expectation, workload and impact to them is often unrecognised and undervalued – despite being the providers of the ‘social safety net’, as outlined above.

It is, of course, not within the scope of the PRRB’s remit to make changes to all the various factors that are making policing more complex, more demanding, and more violent. However, it is important that in considering remuneration that the PRRB are fully aware of how changes outside the control of policing are impacting officers. The PFEW feel strongly that one of the major reasons for policing disinvestment has been tied to the lack of industrial rights our members face. After all, every public service has had to use their right to strike in recent years to secure a fair pay deal - which is an option not available to police officers.

We will provide evidence below to show the impact that increased scrutiny has brought to policing.

2.1 Police Officers Under Increased Scrutiny

Police officers are enduring a much harsher lens of scrutiny than ever before. This is against the backdrop of more demand and the variety of skills required to meet that evolving role of policing, as evidenced earlier in the report. Rightly, some of the change has been brought about by reviews into conduct and misuse of power of police officers. Policing has, and should be, held to account for these negative aspects. It is right that the standards applied to police officers are high, and that society is vigilant in calling out breaches. It is not right, however, for the scrutiny officers are placed under to go unrecognised.

In December 2025, we surveyed our members on a variety of topics to ensure our submission to the PRRB was informed by the most current views of our membership.¹⁵ One of the survey questions explored the impact of recent social and political changes and what officers felt the truest impact was on them doing their job. The responses, based on a large sample of 5,689 PFEW members, adjusted to reflect rank and geographical distribution across England and Wales, demonstrate that the impact of societal change is very real in policing:

- 85% of our officers felt respect for their profession is reducing

¹⁵ Ip, A. (2025). Pulse Survey Key Findings: December 2025. *Police Federation of England and Wales*. (Private source of information included in the Appendix).

- 60% of officers felt the increased demand from safeguarding and protection of vulnerable people
- 60% of officers indicated an increased negative impact on their own health and wellbeing
- 57% of officers felt that the public was getting more confrontational and intentionally trying to 'catch officers out'
- 56% of officers have felt the pressure on the NHS, especially with the increased demand on policing due to mental health support

In the next section we will explore the trends of public complaints and misconduct matters, which is the best source to evidence scrutiny. In reviewing the evidence, we encourage the reader to also consider the impact on the individual officer. What it must feel like for them to undergo these lengthy and intrusive investigations - how it impacts on their right to privacy and how they can be portrayed and villainised in the press and social media. And, as will be evidenced, all of this with no increase in findings of serious wrongdoing. The vast majority of these investigations result in 'no case to answer'. There is no other profession that faces this level of scrutiny, and it is taking its toll on individuals.

2.2 Growing Exposure of Officers to Complaints and Allegations

In Professor Turnbull's 2026 report, he does mention that scrutiny is a feature of working within a high-reliability organisation.⁸ He indicates that "this creates a level of scrutiny way beyond that experienced by workers in other sectors of the economy". The data in this section supports that statement and demonstrates the increased strain and scrutiny that officers are under in relation to complaints and investigations.

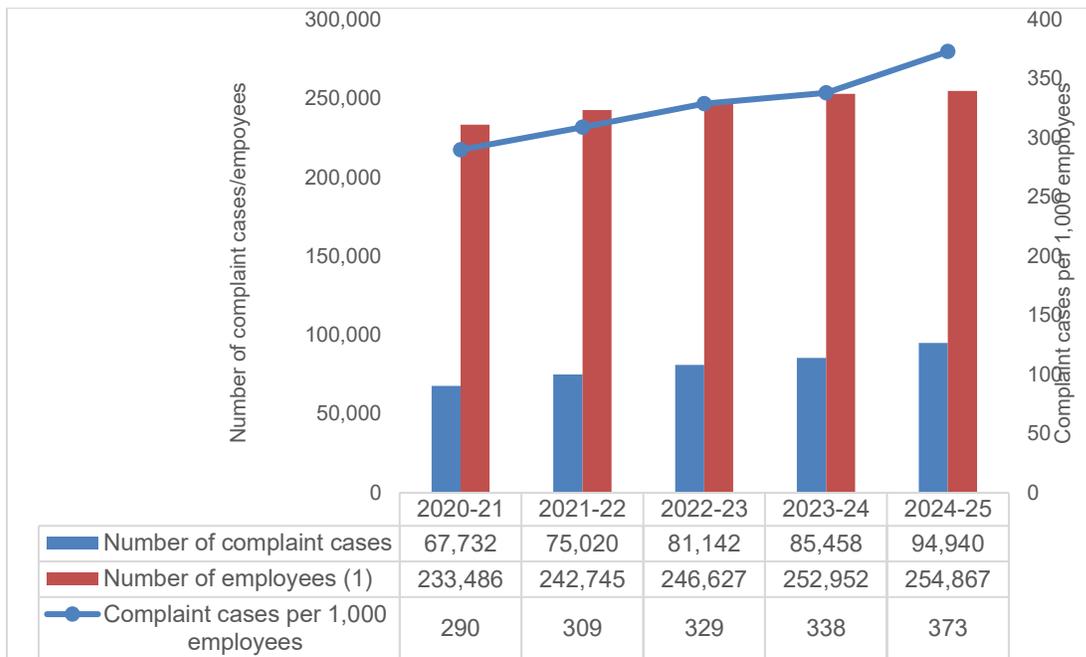
There has been a marked increase in complaints and misconduct proceedings, demonstrating that officers are always under the spotlight from the public and internally. As the PFEW, we support the removal of officers who are abusing their powers and not conducting themselves with the high standards expected of the Office of Constable. **However, available evidence does not suggest that this heightened scrutiny is driven by a rise in serious or substantiated wrongdoing.** Our officers are facing the impact of under-resourced investigative departments. That means lengthy periods of time, often of over a year, being left in limbo, with ultimately "no case to answer" being found. This not only has severe cost implications for the force, but it also has lasting mental health implications for the officers themselves.

2.2.1 Public Complaints Trend

Public complaints represent the most direct measure of external scrutiny of policing by members of the public. They capture concerns raised regardless of whether they ultimately result in disciplinary action.

Complaint rates per 1,000 officers have increased even after controlling for workforce size, indicating that officers now operate under higher levels of public challenge and external scrutiny as a routine feature of the role. This suggests growing public willingness to challenge police conduct and increased visibility of police activity. It also represents an increase in exposure to complaint-driven stress, time burden, and reputational risk, regardless of the outcome of the complaint.

England and Wales: Number of complaint cases logged per 1,000 employees per year¹⁶



Data from our December 2025 survey of members echoes this trend.¹⁵ When asked about how recent social changes have impacted their role:

- 85 percent of our members indicated that the respect for policing has gone down.
- 57 percent of our membership feel that the public are becoming more confrontational and deliberately trying to ‘catch them out’.

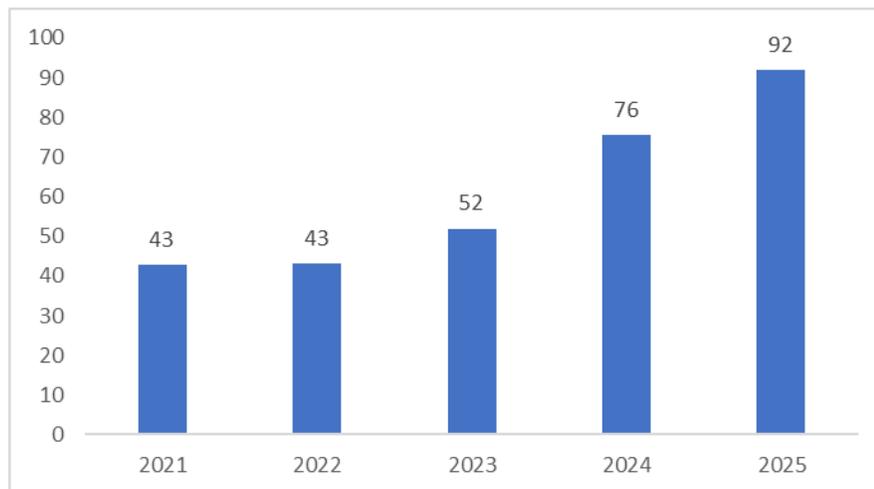
¹⁶ Independent Office for Police Conduct. (2025, February 18). *Police complaints statistics for England and Wales report – 2023/24*. <https://www.policeconduct.gov.uk/publications/police-complaints-statistics-england-and-wales-report-202324> (publicly available)

This more intense scrutiny of the police, and the corresponding increase in complaints, is a natural consequence of high-profile cases where officers have conducted themselves appallingly. There is no support from the PFEW itself, or our members more broadly, for such egregious breaches of our values and, in some cases, the criminal law. However, the impact of those high-profile cases creates consequences that must be borne by all officers, including those who have never in their careers breached the standards that the public and their colleagues expect. We are now seeing significant high levels of criticism. The spotlight on individual officers has never been harsher. The point that we need to ensure we are getting across in this report is there is no comparator, in any profession, who will endure this level of criticism by so many parties. It is a difficult and wearing feature of modern policing.

2.2.2 Misconduct Investigations

Linked to the increase in public complaints, is the marked increase in misconduct allegations and the number of officers who are exposed to misconduct allegations.

England and Wales: Misconduct allegations per 1,000 officers, 2021–2025



Total misconduct allegations increased sharply between 2021 and 2025, reflecting a material intensification of formal internal scrutiny. Allegations per 1,000 officers rose from 43 to 92, demonstrating a substantial increase, even after accounting for workforce growth. Growth is evident in both conduct matters and more serious recordable conduct matters.

The number of officers involved in conduct matters more than doubled between 2021 and 2025. By 2024/25, five in every 100 officers were subject to a conduct matter in a single year, this amounts to over 7,300 officers. This indicates that exposure to formal misconduct processes is no longer exceptional but has become a routine occupational

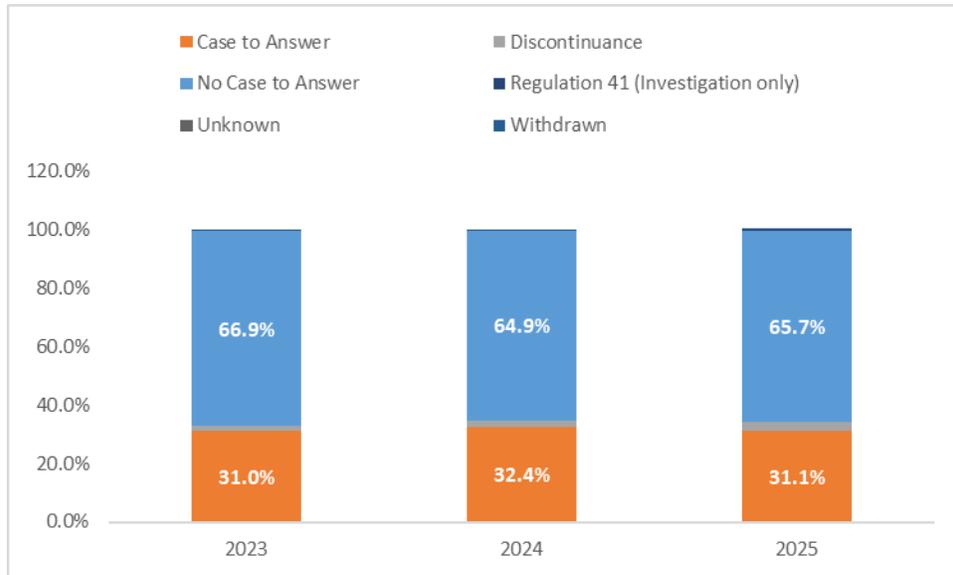
risk for officers. Such exposure carries time costs, stress, career uncertainty, and reputational impact that are not reflected in current pay structures.

England and Wales: Officers subject to misconduct allegations

Year ending March	Officers involved in conduct matters	Officers in post	% of workforce
2021	3,273	137,690	2.4%
2022	3,923	142,505	2.8%
2023	4,504	149,566	3.0%
2024	6,356	149,768	4.2%
2025	7,315	148,452	4.9%

The level of scrutiny is not translating into more serious offences or findings of wrongdoing. What the data indicates is that although more officers are being subject to these proceedings, there are not increased instances of officers who have been found to have undertaken misconduct.

England and Wales: Progression of misconduct allegations



Around two-thirds of allegations result in no case to answer. The proportion progressing to “case to answer” remains stable. This demonstrates that rising allegation volumes do not reflect deteriorating officer conduct, but increased reporting, recording, and scrutiny intensity.

2.2.3 Timeliness of Misconduct

In addition to the volume of misconduct cases being brought against our members, there are also significant concerns over the time that it is taking for these cases to be dealt with. Data taken from PFEW branches confirm that there is a significant issue with the lengthy time delay in dealing with gross misconduct cases in particular. From our internal data, we have gathered:

- There are over 700 gross misconduct cases that are currently open where the matters have already exceeded 12 months
- A further 400 gross misconduct cases are currently between 6-12 months stage

Data taken from PFEW branches has been, for many years, our source of information on the length of time investigations have been taking. More recently, Home Office data on the time it takes to deal with misconduct cases has been published, which we are pleased to see as an additional measure.¹⁷ The data from our branches is similar to the official statistics from the Home Office, which reinforces our view that the issue of lengthy investigations has been left unmeasured for far too long. This measure, we hope, will drive change for the better. For now, however, the statistics tell the tale of investigations that subject officers to lengthy period of investigation, uncertainty, and in most cases, periods of mental health decline.

The Home Office data is broken down into case types:

Conduct matters are cases where there are concerns about an officer's behaviour that are assessed and dealt with internally by the force and may result in management action or disciplinary proceedings.

Recordable conduct matters are more serious cases that must be formally recorded under national regulations and may involve potential misconduct or gross misconduct proceedings, with a higher likelihood of formal disciplinary action.

For clarity, it is the category of 'recordable conduct matters' that draws our concern and is also the source of our own internal data. In practice, recordable conduct matters involve greater procedural complexity and scrutiny and will carry with it the risk of an officer losing their job and livelihood, which naturally introduces a higher level of stress and anxiety.

¹⁷ Home Office. (2026). *Police misconduct, England and Wales: year ending 31 March 2025*. GOVE.UK. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-misconduct-england-and-wales-year-ending-31-march-2025> (publicly available)

England and Wales: time taken to finalise police misconduct investigations- year ending 31 March 2025

A. Conduct matters			B. Recordable conduct matters		
Time to finalise	Number of cases	% of cases	Time to finalise	Number of cases	% of cases
Less than 3 months	2,049	42.4%	Less than 3 months	167	10.3%
3 to <6 months	784	16.2%	3 to <6 months	179	11.0%
6 to <9 months	635	13.1%	6 to <9 months	204	12.6%
9 to <12 months	448	9.3%	9 to <12 months	192	11.9%
12 to <18 months	532	11.0%	12 to <18 months	354	21.9%
18 to <24 months	195	4.0%	18 to <24 months	225	13.9%
24 months or more	186	3.9%	24 months or more	299	18.5%
Total	4,829	100.0%	Total	1,620	100.0%

Source: Home Office Police Misconduct Statistics, YE March 2025.¹⁷

On average, this means:

- Standard conduct matters involving police officers take: 130 median days (around 4½ months)
- Recordable conduct matters (more serious cases) take much longer: 405 median days (around 13½ months)

England and Wales: Median days to finalise misconduct investigations by case type - year ending 31 March 2025



We would ask anyone to imagine what it must feel like for an officer to face these lengthy investigations which could result in the loss of their livelihood. The uncertainty, shame, embarrassment and pressure that puts on their family. Faced with this

situation, the officer is likely to have a minimum of a nine month wait, often more, to secure a conclusion to their case because 57 percent of recordable conduct matters take nine months or longer. The conclusion, in 65.7 percent of cases, is 'no case to answer' leaving the officer to feel they have had their reputation and credibility intensely examined in the public gaze where it is ultimately concluded the officer has no case to answer.

An additional strain felt by officers is the lack of support they receive following a 'no case to answer' finding and begin their return to normal duties. In many instances, this would be following a long absence due to suspension. Forces are not doing enough to support these officers in rebuilding their trust and confidence in the organisation and managing their return to normal duties. In reviewing misconduct procedures, we would like to see more emphasis on supporting these officers who are making that difficult, and often lonely, return to work.

It is appreciated that it is not in the scope of the PRRB to advise on misconduct proceedings, but it is important for the PRRB to recognise the reality of what police officers are facing in the name of scrutiny. Sadly, we are also seeing the weight of pressure that these investigations have on officers in the number of officers that are taking their own lives.

2.3 Loss of An Expectation to Privacy

Police officers now cannot reasonably expect their right to privacy. The impact of the loss of privacy is significant and stretches far further than the individual officer. It has an impact on their friends and family as well. Many officers give accounts that in everyday interactions, there will be multiple cameras filming them, often for the entire purpose of causing intimidation and incitement. This is a daily occurrence for officers on the frontline. The impact of that can be, as has been seen numerous times before, information being loaded onto social media platforms and edited in a way that suits the narrative of the poster.

The impact on officers is severe, as evidenced by their response to the survey in which the majority of the respondents, 57 percent, felt the public is more confrontational and intentional in antagonizing officers.¹⁵ As can easily be imagined, this has an impact on their friends and families, too. How many other professions can be under so much aggressive judgement and daily scrutiny? How many other professions run the risk of filming, potentially edited, for public consumption? How many other professions must worry about their faces being placed on public forums and links being made to family and friends? It is impossible to think of any other profession that bears this strain. Of course, this has a tremendous impact on officers themselves, their mental health, not just their family and friends.

2.4 Suicide

Suicide of police officers is a growing crisis that is happening in silence. We note that, in spite of rising suicide rates meaning more than 18 officers die by suicide each year, the HMICFRS in its *State of Policing* report for 2025 did not mention it.

Between 2022 to 2025, data collected by the PFEW shows that at least **70 police officers died by suicide**, with a further **236 attempted suicides** recorded in the same period.

We are particularly alarmed at the strong correlation between suicide, attempted suicide and misconduct proceedings. Of the figures above, **47 of the deaths and 173 of the attempts** involved officers who were subject to either criminal or misconduct proceedings.

It is not a mandatory requirement for a force to record either suicide or suicide attempts, so it is impossible to outline a historical trend for this. For this reason, the Office for National Statistics has tended to deem policing a low-risk occupation. We began recording data when we noticed anecdotal reports of an increase in the number of colleagues either attempting to take their own life or sadly succeeding. As any reader of this report will agree, one death by suicide is too much. The numbers are harrowing and paint a bleak picture of the very real impact of police work on officers and the weight of scrutiny they face.

We make this point because it is a number that has grown and it tells us that officers are feeling the weight of their profession at a level that is unacceptable. The impact on all officers when a colleague takes their own life is, as can be easily imagined, horrific.

We have worked with parliamentarians to table an amendment to the Crime and Policing Bill making force reporting of suicide and suicide attempts mandatory. This is the first step to an informed conversation about how we can keep our colleagues, often at the lowest point of their lives, from making this decision.

2.5 Section Two Conclusion

We have shown that the changing role of a police officer ultimately means:

- Increased exposure to violence, threat of violence, assault, and adverse psychological events
- Loss of the right to privacy, with an impact on family life for officers
- Increased exposure to trauma and an increased likelihood of losing colleagues to suicide, which is also hugely traumatic

- More expectation of the capability of officers, including being called upon to support other agencies. This brings a variety of demands that were not commonplace in policing previously.
- Absorbing work and duties from other public services and more use of policing as the 'public service of last resort.'
- A harsh lens of scrutiny placed on all officers, evidenced by increasing levels of misconduct proceedings and public complaints, but without an increase of wrongdoing

In summary, we are seeing more expectation, a higher level of expected capability of officers, more scrutiny, and more physical harm and trauma of individual police officers.

In the next section we will explore the changing attrition and workforce implications. We will also evidence the stark loss of experience and sources of support that culminate in driving attrition.

Section 3 - An Increasingly Inexperienced Workforce

The first five years - A tsunami of exposure with limited support

The changes in policing that have been evidenced in previous sections of this report are having an impact on the workforce composition and planning throughout the entirety of policing. We have significantly less experience in our ranks, and that has an impact on public confidence. We thoroughly evidenced in our report to the PRRB last year the “spiral” that policing finds itself in – recruiting more officers who are much more likely to leave and hemorrhaging experience that provides support to new recruits and is the building block of public confidence in policing. All these factors have a tremendous impact on individual officers - from the workload they carry, the support they receive, the peer training and mentoring that is available, and to the experience profile of their supervision. This is the driver for more officers deciding to leave early in service and also once they rise to a supervisory rank. This is a distinct shift in the police workforce from previous generations, where officers were far more likely to see policing as a ‘job for life.’

The majority of the 4,806 police officers (headcount) leaving via voluntary resignation were newer officers with less experience. 3,208 (67% of all police officer voluntary resignations) had less than 5 years’ service, slightly down from the previous year (3,714 or 72% of all police officer voluntary resignations).¹⁸ This early attrition is undoubtedly a waste of investment and harms the potential in experience and future police leadership.

Sadly, there is a logical conclusion to the fact that we are seeing high levels of attrition in the early years. New officers are exposed to the frontline immediately and with very little support. The harsh reality of frontline working with the public is well understood. The level of assaults has already been outlined but there is also the reality of waning support for these officers. Traditionally, new officers had a support network of experienced Constable colleagues and Sergeants that could support their development. That picture has changed drastically.

Policing is unique in its requirement for a breadth of skills and experience, often in a single shift. This can range from consistent exposure to confrontation and risk, and then immediately needing to provide deep empathy and compassion to a victim. All of this requires a great deal of emotional flexibility, and this ability is often ‘learned by doing’. However, new officers are required to do some of the most operationally intense work at the very beginning of their service, often as young adults, before these skills are

¹⁸ Home Office. (2025, October 9). *Police workforce, England and Wales: 31 March 2025 (second edition)*. GOV.UK. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2025/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2025> (publicly available)

acquired and before the officer themselves has learned to deal with the impact of this on themselves. As any experienced officer will say, learning how to ‘switch off’ from their day is a hard lesson – yet we expect those with the least experience to do this with poor or non-existent support.

3.1 Early Years Attrition

In our submission last year, we made the point of the vast cost and impact of the increased attrition rate of Constables. In the PRRB’s final report, they noted that “any over is a substantial cost to the police service” and made the observation that they felt attrition rate was low. The evidence provided by the NPCC was also highlighted as “attrition in policing compared well with other public and private sector organisations and that the attrition profile remained largely in line with previous years”. It explained that the attrition profile was driven by the service profile and the proportion of the workforce with less than five years’ service.¹⁹

It is the firm view of PFEW that policing should not be compared with public and private sector organisations in terms of attrition, particularly at the rank of Constable. Our concern over attrition levels remains significant because it is having an impact on the frontline. Whilst the cost analysis of recruiting to backfill the loss of officers remains a concern for us, this has been covered thoroughly in our previous submission. We want to now focus on the reality of what the lack of experience means currently and for the future.

The impact now is that as officers undertake the most public-facing roles with limited experience, they are being left with increased workloads as colleagues resign. In our December 2025 survey of our membership, 62% of respondents have stated that resignations have affected their work, with the main impact being an increase in an already significant workload.¹⁵

Attrition also impacts the future of policing. As policing remains a bottom-fed organisation, recruitment for future leadership will come from the Constable rank. Losing talented and capable officers at the rank of Constable will mean losing great potential for senior ranks in policing in the future. This is a distinct difference between policing and almost all other comparator – it is a crucial feature of policing that cannot be ignored and is a compelling reason why attrition rates of other industries should be used with extreme caution or ignored entirely as they are inadequate comparators.

Although the data above clearly outlines the lack of experience from a workforce data perspective, the reality of the impact of attrition can be best demonstrated from a

¹⁹ Police Remuneration Review Body. (2025). *Police Remuneration Review Body report: 2025 England and Wales*. London: Office for the Pay Review Bodies & Home Office.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/688cca3625ba7325501b096e/PRRB_11th_Report_2025_Accessible_v02.pdf (publicly available)

survey we conducted with our members in December 2025. We asked members, “In your force, is it the case that officers during their probationary period are being tutored by other officers also in their probationary period?” The response was astounding. Only 11 percent of respondents answered that it did **not** occur. 42 percent confirmed this was common practice.¹⁵

Over the last two years, the standard period of probation, there were 17,090 new recruits for policing. Around 60 percent of all constables are deployed in visible operational frontline roles, which are also the primary destination for newly recruited officers. Over the same period, workforce churn was significant, with leavers excluding transfers equivalent in scale to just over one-fifth of the visible operational frontline workforce.

In this context and given that tutoring and day-to-day supervision are drawn from the same frontline cohort, the analysis of Home Office data demonstrates that a substantial proportion of new recruits can only be trained and supported by officers with limited service experience. **This means that over 7,000 of those recruits were trained and tutored by other inexperienced officers.** This supports what our officers are telling us in their survey responses. This limited access to experience and exposure to the front line is perhaps a key driver for early years’ attrition.²⁰

Police constable workforce flows relative to visible operational frontline capacity

Measure	FTE	Description
Total police constables (as of 31 March 2025)	113,225	Total constable workforce
Visible operational frontline constables (as at 31 March 2025)	67,085	Core frontline roles, including response policing
Joiners excluding transfers (2024–2025)	17,090	New recruits over the probationary period
Leavers excluding transfers (2024–2025)	14,135	Workforce exits over the same period
Leavers as a proportion of visible frontline workforce	21%	Scale of churn relative to frontline capacity

3.2 The loss of Constable leadership

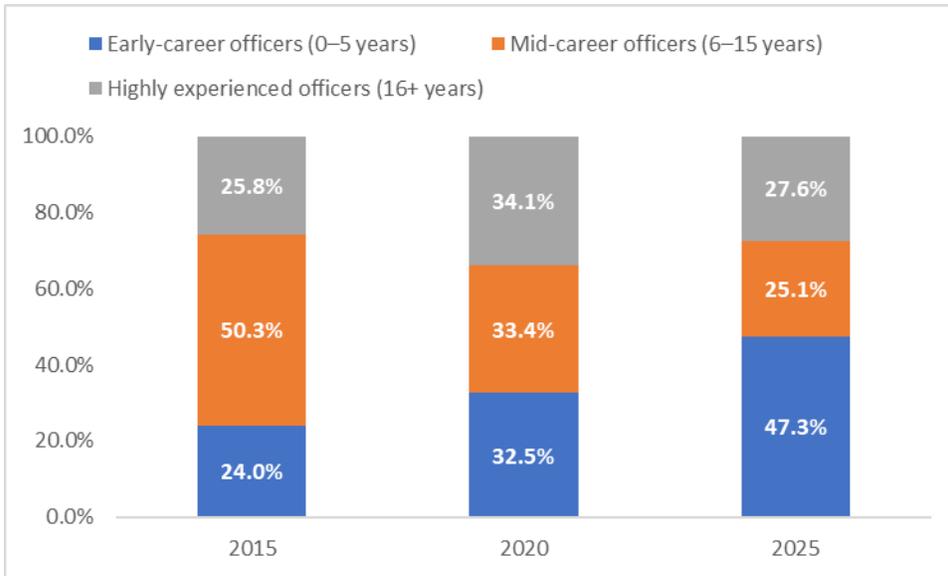
Policing is a practical profession – often an officer must “learn by doing” and will improve their skills through exposure. As evidenced earlier, the skill set required for officers is increasing, exposing Constables to more complex and varied situations.

²⁰ Home Office. (2025). *Police workforce, England and Wales: Open data tables*. GOV.UK. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables> (publicly available)

Having experienced Constables to confidently navigate these daily challenges and support the public is critical in delivering an effective police service.

However, what we are seeing is a clear lack of experience in our ranks. Ten years ago, the average Constable had between 6-15 years of experience. By 2025, the average Constable was in early service.²¹

The Constable workforce has shifted sharply towards early-career officers



The figure shows a clear shift in the experience profile of Constables over the last decade. In 2015, around half of officers were in the mid-career range (6-15 years' service), while fewer than a quarter were early-career. By 2025, almost half of Constables have five years' service or less, and the mid-career cohort has halved. This reduces the level of experience available to support, mentor and stabilise the workforce as policing becomes more complex.

Leadership from the Constable rank is an often-overlooked aspect of policing. This Constable leadership is required in everyday scenarios and supports a positive public perception of the police. On blue light response, it will almost always be a Constable arriving at horrific scenes that need to be immediately contained, de-escalated, and controlled. The public will be looking to the attending officer to provide reassurance and instruction. Doing this well requires the officer to be experienced and confident as these situations are often confrontational, emotionally charged, and dangerous. This is not a quality that can be learned from a textbook – to be confident and knowledgeable in these emotive and pressured situations, the officer must have been exposed to similar situations. Without doubt, operational competence of that officer will always be

²¹ Home Office. (2015, 2020, 2025). *Police workforce census 2014–15, 2019–20 and 2024–25* (Confidential unpublished datasets provided to the Police Federation of England and Wales for analytical purposes). Home Office.

linked to their experience in dealing with these matters before. For a newer Constable, they will often look to their more experienced colleague for direction and leadership in these instances.

Afterwards, it will often be the more experienced Constable that can check in with their less experienced colleagues to feedback, explain, and check on the impact that the incident had on their emotional wellbeing. There are an estimated 34,000 calls to police every day in the UK, making the above scenarios commonplace. Policing, and the public, needs Constable leadership. As the public will most often interact with Constables than any other rank, their confidence is inextricably linked to the experience and actions of Constables.

All of these points evidence why the attrition rate of Constables needs to be focused on more intently and not swept aside by comparisons with inappropriate comparators. Policing will never see the return of Constable leadership if the attrition rate continues to be high. A vicious cycle of attrition creating more cost through recruitment and training and more inexperience in the frontline has already begun. Bold steps must be taken to stop this cycle, as the inevitable conclusion will be a continued drop in public confidence and weaker police leadership in the future.

This evidence also clearly supports the position of the removal of the two lowest pay points for Constables. As shown, there is no 'gentle easing in' of Constables – the requirements of the role demand immediate immersion. As the next section will evidence, Constables carry significant legal, ethical, and emotional responsibility from the outset. We should not be remunerating these Constables as if they were trainees with less expectation and responsibility when that is not the reality.

3.3 More Responsibility and Capabilities, but With Lower Entry Requirements

Policing is no longer the aspirational career it once was, and recruitment is getting more difficult. However, as the PFEW, we strongly maintain that lowering standards of recruits is an ill-thought through 'quick fix' that will only bring problems in the future.

The standards governing police Constables confirm that officers are required to operate as frontline, autonomous practitioners from the earliest point of independent patrol. Probationary and newly confirmed officers exercise personal legal authority, manage risk, deliver victim care, and undertake safeguarding in live operational environments.

Victim care is not an additional or specialist function. It is a core requirement of the police constable role, embedded within entry training and assessed through real-world exposure because of the direct public safety risk.

To bring this to life, the table below evidences the role requirements that a new constable is required to perform and explains what that operational reality means, along with the implication of that for the new officer.

Evidence Table: Role Weight and Assurance

Role Requirement	Operational Reality	Implication	Relevant Guidance (Web)
Autonomous frontline policing from early service	Independent response to incidents involving risk and vulnerability	Personal accountability from the outset	https://www.college.police.uk/guidance/police-constable-entry-programme
Independent legal office holder	Officers justify actions to courts, oversight bodies and the public	Liability rests with the individual officer	https://www.college.police.uk/guidance/police-constable-role
Victim care as a core duty	Real-time safeguarding and trauma-informed engagement	Emotional and ethical risk	https://www.college.police.uk/guidance/victims-and-witnesses
Live operational assessment of competence	Capability evidenced through real incidents	Public safety risk during development	https://www.college.police.uk/guidance/assessment-requirements
Full Operational Competence (FOC) set as a minimum threshold	Confirmation in rank before full maturity	Capability gap acknowledged	https://www.college.police.uk/guidance/full-operational-competence
EPS achieved post-probation	Higher-level capability evidenced later	Risk borne earlier by the officer	https://www.college.police.uk/guidance/established-practitioner-status

Police Constable role confirmed at Level 6	Complex judgement and autonomy expected	Entry assurance must align	https://www.college.police.uk/guidance/police-education-qualifications-framework
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The evidence indicates that police Constables carry significant legal, ethical and emotional responsibility from an early stage in service, and that capability assurance follows rather than precedes full operational responsibility. In practice, this means that officers are expected to carry full operational responsibility, including autonomous decision-making affecting victims, suspects and public safety, before higher-level capability is fully assured. This is the true definition of ‘being thrown into the deep end’ as a new constable gains experience.

We are not arguing that the requirements to pass probation should change. It is inevitable that officers will need exposure to the harsh realities of what policing means. However, we need to be sure that new recruits have the skills to deal with the ‘deep end’ once they are placed there. A new Constable is expected to carry out all the duties of any Constable. The public does not recognise a constable as being probationary or young in service - their expectations are the same. There is very little margin for error in these situations, and Constables will need to rely on the skills and abilities they have acquired prior to policing to ensure they are able to carry out their roles.

We are extremely disheartened that the College of Policing has put through more proposals to ease the recruitment standards for new recruits. The PFEW has consistently maintained that police officers should be educated or accredited to a Level 6. Introducing lower-level entry routes (for example PCEP at Level 5) risks lowering training standards and establishing a two-tier system which could create future challenges in relation to career progression, pay and remuneration, and undermining public trust in policing competence. Officers entering at a lower academic level may also hold different expectations of the Constable role, potentially contributing to higher attrition rates. Ultimately, this approach risks undermining public confidence in policing by creating the perception that the service is being deskilled.

We must stop chasing recruitment numbers in isolation of the reality that policing needs recruits with the right capabilities, values, and temperament to perform this demanding profession. Government should make no apology for missing recruitment targets if that ultimately means that new officers are suited for the role and more likely to thrive and stay with the police service.

3.4 Section Three Conclusion

We have shown that the changing role of a police officer ultimately offers:

- Increased exposure to violence, threat of violence, assault, and adverse psychological events
- Loss of the right to privacy, with an impact on family life for officers
- Increased exposure to trauma and an increased likelihood of losing colleagues to suicide, which is also hugely traumatic
- More expectation of the capability of officers, including being called upon to support other agencies. This brings a variety of demands that were not commonplace in policing of years past.
- Loss of natural areas of support, which is undoubtedly a factor in increased attrition
- Absorbing work and duties from other public services and more use of policing as the 'public service of last resort'

In summary, we are seeing more expectations and scrutiny of policing but with less respect and support than in previous generations. We are also seeing more attrition increase, but with the troubling overlay of reducing the basic standards of new recruits.

In the next section, we will evidence the degradation of pay officers have experienced, which is now close to a quarter worse off from 2010. Whilst that will be detailed more clearly in the next section, there is an important context to consider around the degradation of police officer pay:

If the average person were given the option to perform a role that:

- exposed them to a daily risk of violence
- made them more vulnerable to criticism on public forums and reduced their right to privacy
- serving the demands of their role was guaranteed to have a negative impact on them to have a consistent family life
- a requirement to act as a 'jack of all trades' with capabilities expanding into areas far outside their profession
- almost guaranteed exposure to significant trauma
- offers starting salaries that are barely above roles with less pressure and consistent hours, and offer this at an almost 25% pay reduction on previous rates

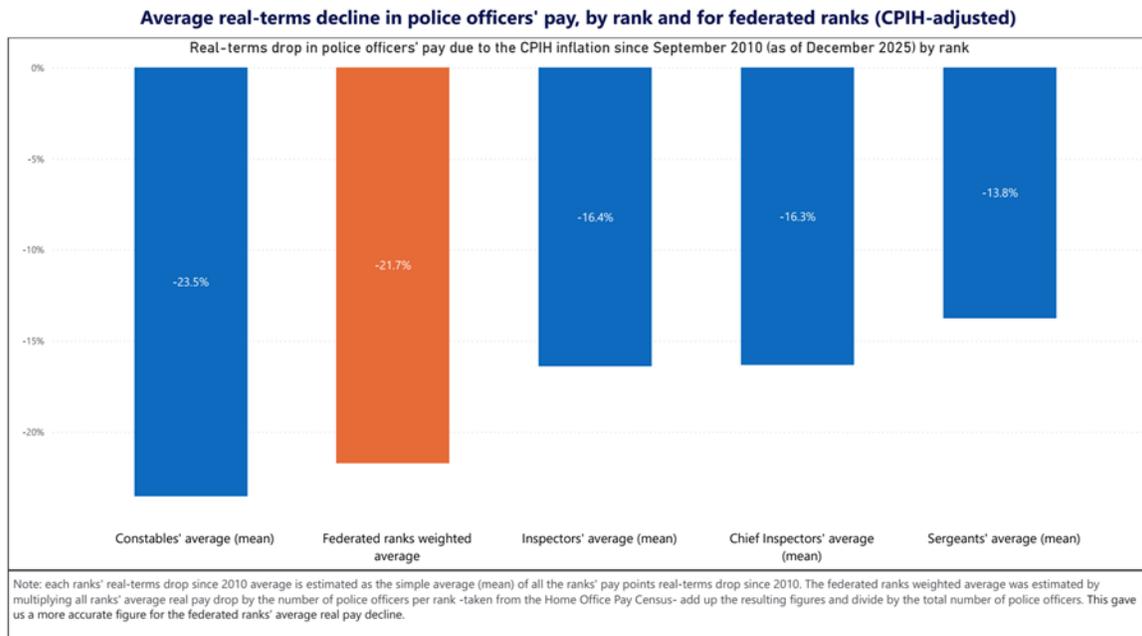
What is outlined above is hardly a glowing job advertisement for policing, but that is the stark reality. We cannot compare policing to the average profession without also examining the unique requirements of this profession.

Section 4 - Relief for Today

As mentioned earlier, a consequence of impending reform can be a narrative of promises for the future. We need to ensure that whilst longer term reform is being designed, there is still an eye on current challenges. Cuts in public spending since 2010 are still having a negative impact on society. This is at a time when the role of an officers is becoming more complex and more dangerous.

In our submission to the PRRB in 2025, we pushed for a plan that would restore the 22% gap in police pay.²² Unfortunately, the position of police pay remains **worse** than this time last year, which is an unacceptable situation. Overall, federated ranks are 21.7% worse off compared with 2010. The position is more acute with the rank of Constable, where we see our largest attrition rates, and where pay is currently worth 23.5% less in real terms compared to 2010.

As this submission will continue to show, since 2010 there has been a heightened requirement for the skills and abilities needed to effectively undertake the office of Constable. What now exists is a scenario where there is more demand and heightened risk that is combined with **almost a quarter reduction in pay**. The PRRB must provide in its recommendation a pay increase that recognises this position.



²² Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW). (2025). *Pay positioning document (February 2025)*. <https://polfed.org/media/19891/pfew-pay-positioning-report-final-january-2025.pdf> (publicly available included in Appendix)

4.1 Pay That Recognises the Unique Demands of Policing and the Conditions in the Wider Employment Market

In December 2025, we surveyed our membership on a variety of topics.¹⁵ In this survey, we asked members what their intention was in relation to their careers in policing.

A frightening 23% of our membership intends to leave within the next 2 years. This is more acute for the rank of Constables, where 25% report their intention to leave. From data in our previous survey, this is an increase in the stated intention of officers to leave.

There is plenty of incentive to leave. Consistent surveying of members shows the same themes, with little or no real change to their frustrations. In the November survey, the main reasons for colleagues leaving were listed as:

- High workload / pressure in the job
- Lack of support or poor leadership
- Pay

As the PFEW, we sincerely hope that police reform will be aimed at making real change in these aspects, and we will support initiatives that deliver to the frontline in these areas. However, we cannot ignore the fact that this reality is being faced by officers now. The recommendations made by the PRRB this year must reflect this reality.

Is the grass greener outside of policing?

All indicators are that it is. When considering the main factors concerned with why officers are leaving, the evidence points to a world of employment outside of policing that demands less hours; better predictability of work to maintain a personal life; less risk of trauma; and better pay.

4.2 Working Hours

Police Officers work longer and far less predictable hours than most other professions. Even when compared to other public safety/emergency roles, this proves to be true, as the demands on police officers stand out to be uniquely unpredictable, with a high prevalence of cancelled rest days, irregular hours, and mandatory attendance at short notice.²³ The demands of working hours for the Inspecting ranks is particularly acute, which will be outlined later in the report.

²³ Ferrer, R., & Ip, A. (2025, November). *Police officers' working hours: Comparison with other professions and UK workforce*. Police Federation of England and Wales. ((Research Department Brief B008/2025, unpublished internal report provided in Appendix).

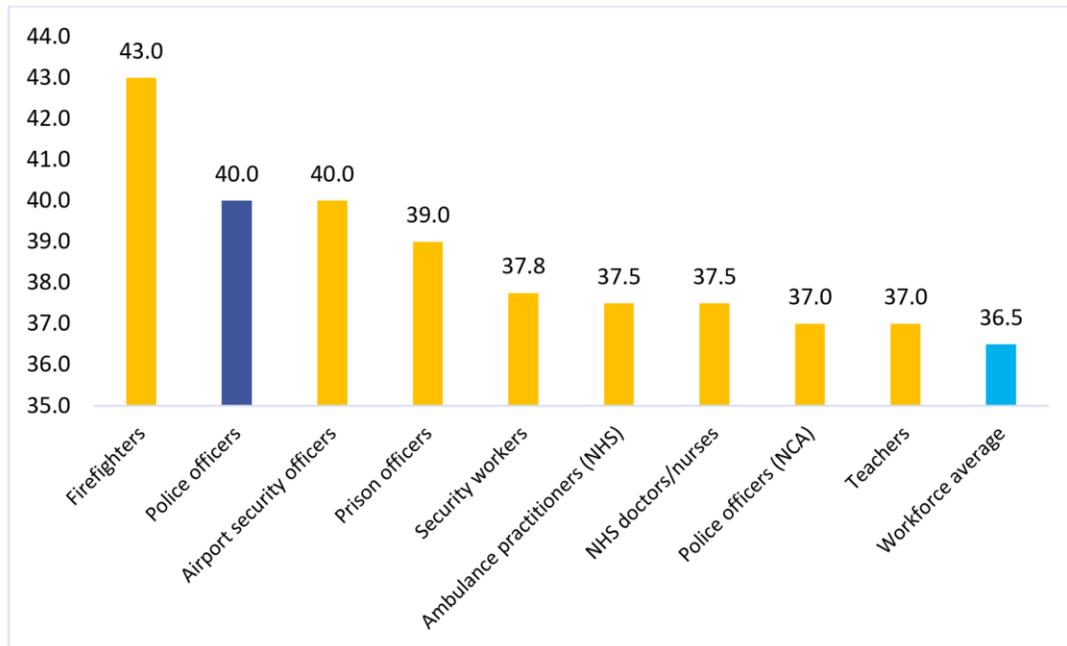
Evidence from the Office of National Statistics shows that officers have longer contracted working hours than average full-time workers. Although this is important to note in considering remuneration, in reality it is the unpredictability of working demands and the restrictions placed on the personal lives of officers that should drive a higher level of compensation. This is supported in the feedback from members as the main driver for dissatisfaction in their roles.

Long-term structural improvement must include the modern reality that officers are more willing to leave policing for the private sector. As work for reform is designed, the recommendations of the PRRB must acknowledge the restrictions policing places on the lives of our members and also the increasing attractiveness of roles outside of policing.

Comparison of Professions – Working Hours and Unsocial Hours²³

Profession	Typical Weekly Hours	Unsocial Hours & Predictability	Comment
Police officers	40+ (contracted 40; many exceed 48)	Very high: nights, weekends, public holidays; rest days frequently cancelled	24/7 cover – work patterns uniquely unpredictable
Police officers (National Crime Agency)	37+ (contracted 37; often exceeded during operations)	Flexible: evenings, weekends, nights, on-call duties	24/7 cover – national crime work requires irregular and urgent deployments
Prison officers	39+ (contracted 39; extended duties common)	Rotating shifts incl. nights/weekends; understaffing often extends duties	24/7 cover – custodial and public safety role
Ambulance practitioners (NHS)	37.5+ (contracted 37.5; frequently extended to 12-hour shifts)	Very high: frequent nights/weekends, mandatory overtime at peak demand	24/7 cover – comparable emergency response pressures
Firefighters	43 (contracted 43; standardised rota)	2-2-4 shift pattern (two days, two nights, four days off); predictable but includes nights/weekends	24/7 cover but structured
Airport security officers	40+ (contracted 40; shifts may extend)	Early mornings, late nights, weekends, and public holidays; roster published in advance	24/7 cover – unsocial hours required but scheduling predictable
Security workers	37.5–38+ (contracted; often extended to 12-hour shifts)	Shift-based; many posts require nights/weekends	Predictability varies; unsocial hours common in guarding roles
NHS doctors/nurses	37.5+ (contracted 37.5; many exceed 48)	Rota-based unsocial hours and long shifts; demanding but scheduled in advance	Intense workload but relatively predictable
Teachers	37+ (contracted 37; plus unpaid work)	Term-time intensity; unpaid prep/marking often evenings/weekends, but calendar predictable	Long hours but structured
Workforce average	36.5 (contracted 36.5)	Mostly daytime, Monday–Friday work	Few unsocial hours

Contracted weekly hours across professions²³



Pay and Morale Survey Insights (Unsocial Hours & Overtime)²³

- **Unsocial hours:** Many officers regularly work nights, weekends, and public holidays (PFEW, 2024).
- **Overtime:** Short-notice overtime is common; 32% report “always/often” feeling pressured to work long hours (PFEW, 2024).
- **Cancelled rest/free days:** In the past year, two out of every three people lost rest days due to cancellations, 49% said that they “never” or “rarely” are able to take at least one rest day per week and 25% had at least one free day cancelled (PFEW, 2024).
- **Annual leave entitlement:** 36% reported not being able to take all the annual leave they are entitled to and 65% had at least one request for annual leave refused in the past 12 months (PFEW, 2024).
- **High workload:** 40% “sometimes/always” worked whilst on annual leave in order to catch up on work and 58% “sometimes/always” took work home that could not be completed in normal working hours.
- **Morale impact:** 57% reported low personal morale, and 88% rated overall force morale as low (PFEW, 2024).

Frustratingly, despite the strong evidence that the unpredictability of working hours is causing officers to leave, we have seen recent proposals from the NPCC to reduce the mandatory compensation and payment to officers in instances of cancelled rest days. This will be covered in more detail later in the report, but it is appropriate in this section that note our concerns. We are losing officers with many more indicating they are planning to leave policing. Working hours are a key driver for this decision. Our workforce is telling us this clearly. Yet, we are in a position where there are active proposals to make compensation for disruption and unpredictability worse.

4.3 Working Time Regulations

To strengthen our evidence on the excessive working hours of our members, in December 2025 we sent a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) access request to all police forces to ask about working hours of police officers. The result revealed a widespread failure of police forces to assess whether officers are carrying unsustainable workloads.

Working Time Regulations set a maximum average working week of 48 hours over a 17-week reference period unless an individual opts out. Twenty-six forces told the PFEW they could not provide basic working-time data, claiming it would take more than two days to compile because no force-wide information is held.

Surrey and Cleveland went further, both stating that they held no information relating to the question. At the time of writing, thirteen forces are yet to respond to the FOIA request.

Only Norfolk, Suffolk, Lincolnshire and Greater Manchester Police were able to provide any data.

Over the 12-month period from 1 December 2024 to 30 November 2025, officers in Norfolk exceeded the 48-hour average weekly working time limit on 1,070 occasions. In Suffolk, officers did so on 1,188 occasions.

Greater Manchester Police reported recording 67,378 'Working Time Regulations exemptions' in its duty management system over the past 12 months but said it could not determine whether those exemptions related to breaches of minimum rest, breaches of the 48-hour limit, or both, without manually reviewing every record.

This demonstrates that forces are wilfully ignoring the excessive working hours of officers. We have already evidenced in this submission the reliance on goodwill of officers in many respects. Policing would not work in its current form without it. Sadly, the lack of basic information on working time of officers underlines what our members have been saying – their fatigue and welfare are not considered.

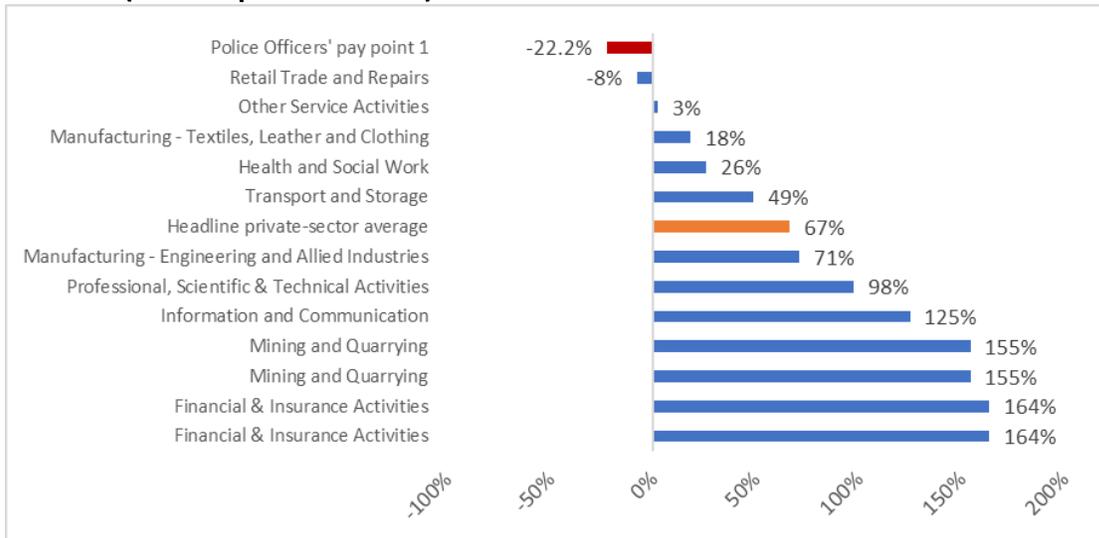
Although we are using these data points as evidence to demonstrate the lack of accountability individual forces have shown in relation to officers working hours, we will also be using this data to push for improvement notices for forces. It is astonishing there has been such a lack of accountability for the working hours of officers, and we cannot idly accept this position.

4.4 Pay Outside of Policing

Public sector pay has, in general, not kept pace with private sector earnings. For policing, this has been more acute. By not having the ability to strike, police officers have continued to fare worse than other public sector colleagues.

Sectors that attract the skills of police officers in the private sector have seen significant pay increases since 2010. This is in comparison to the 22% drop in police officer pay. As the private sector has continued its ‘war for talent’ on skilled workers, headline private-sector industry pay that utilise the skills and experience of officers have seen average wage increases of 67%. This figure is from September 2010 to November 2025 and is relative to inflation, the data is provided by the Office of National Statistics.

Great Britain: headline private-sector industry pay: real-terms change relative to CPIH inflation (since September 2010) as of November 2025²⁴



²⁴ The private-sector average is calculated using twelve industries that are unequivocally private sector, represent large and mainstream labour markets, and align with standard Office for National Statistics (ONS) industrial classifications. These sectors avoid extreme outliers with atypical pay growth and provide a conservative and robust benchmark for comparison with policing. Sectors with structurally different wage dynamics or high part-time prevalence—such as accommodation and food services, retail, arts and recreation, agriculture, and other personal services—are excluded, as their inclusion would artificially depress the private-sector average and weaken labour-market comparability Source: Office for National Statistics. (2024). *Average weekly earnings by industry (CPIH-adjusted), UK*.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours>

4.4 Benchmarking Data

In the NPCC's submission to the PRRB last year, a benchmarking comparison was provided in Annex E:²⁵

This comparison provides interesting insight from Korn Ferry, and their independent remuneration database. It compares police pay with market data for all organisations, and separately, public and not-for-profit organisations. Although it is accepted that comparisons can be useful, there are some important points that should be noted when reviewing that data.

Appendix E - Comparisons with 2024 benchmarking data

Rank	Pay point/ pay group	Base pay 1 Sep 24	31 Mar 23-1 Apr 24 Median average total allowances	Total cash (base pay point plus median avg total allowances)	Total package inc. pension	Base salary				Total Cash				Total Remuneration			
						All Orgs Median	All Orgs Ratio %	PNFP Median	PNFP Ratio %	All Orgs Median	All Orgs Ratio %	PNFP Median	PNFP Ratio %	All Orgs Median	All Orgs Ratio %	PNFP Median	PNFP Ratio %
Constable (appointed on or after 1 April 2013)	1	£29,907	£1,516	£31,425	£38,879	£41,304	72%	£38,286	78%	£ 42,716	74%	£ 38,578	81%	£ 49,239	79%	£ 44,677	87%
	2	£31,164	£5,868	£37,032	£40,513	£41,304	75%	£38,286	81%	£ 42,716	87%	£ 38,578	96%	£ 49,239	82%	£ 44,677	91%
	3	£32,427	£6,789	£39,216	£42,156	£41,304	79%	£38,286	85%	£ 42,716	92%	£ 38,578	102%	£ 49,239	86%	£ 44,677	94%
	4	£33,690	£8,182	£41,872	£43,797	£41,304	82%	£38,286	88%	£ 42,716	98%	£ 38,578	109%	£ 49,239	89%	£ 44,677	98%
	5	£36,216	£9,557	£45,773	£47,081	£41,304	88%	£38,286	95%	£ 42,716	107%	£ 38,578	119%	£ 49,239	96%	£ 44,677	105%
	6	£41,304	£9,617	£50,921	£53,695	£41,304	100%	£38,286	108%	£ 42,716	119%	£ 38,578	132%	£ 49,239	109%	£ 44,677	120%
	7	£48,231	£11,934	£60,165	£62,700	£41,304	117%	£38,286	126%	£ 42,716	141%	£ 38,578	156%	£ 49,239	127%	£ 44,677	140%

- The demands, risk, and expectations of police officers are very unique and comparisons to the wider market will not provide data that is comparable to the sharp end of operational policing, that which new recruits are exposed to from the offset. This point will be explored in more detail in the P-Factor section of this report. It is, however, worth reinforcing here because the level of risk and complexity associated with policing cannot easily be replicated with other professions. Even if it were to be accepted that other professions offered 'like for like' comparisons, policing is still falling behind. The comparison outlined above demonstrates that even with the inclusion of the pension, the value of the total package for a starting Constable is 79% of the median for all organisations at pay point 1. For pay point 3, which is the salary for a Constable outside of their probationary period, the figure is 86%.
- In practice, the cash pay comparison is what our officers will feel day to day in terms of their spending power for themselves and their family. Our Pay and Morale survey indicates widespread unhappiness with pay, and the data in cash comparison underlines this. For a Constable at point one, they will be remunerated with 72 percent of the cash power of comparators. At point three, this grows to 79 percent. This hardly seems an appropriate measure for the modern demands and risks associated with policing.
- Lastly, we should consider the impact of more officers opting out of their pensions. We will cover this point in more detail later in the report, but it is worth noting that an average of over 7 percent of officers are choosing to opt

²⁵ National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC). (2025). Police Remuneration Review Body NPCC Submission 2025. <https://news.npcc.police.uk/resources/z9mhd-hwori-a18pw-jzyq4-ji2u3> (publicly available)

out of the pension scheme. This is based on the information provided by the NPCC. The number of officers opting out of the pension scheme has been steadily increasing. It is disproportionately officers who are younger in service, and from ethnic minority backgrounds, who are opting out of the pension scheme. This supports the argument that base pay is simply not sufficient for the role performed. For these officers, they see a drastic reduction in their remuneration package in comparison with the external market. A non-contributing officer's remuneration package at pay point 1 will be **64 percent** of the total remuneration offered by other organisations. For pay point three, this is **79.6 percent**.

4.5 Stability and Protection for the Short-Term

The upcoming set of police reforms will be an intensive period of designing, consultation, legislative changes, debates, and the continual need to ensure proposed changes will drive increased public confidence. Large-scale structural changes may mean that there will be limited change in many of the areas that individual officers are most concerned with.

That risks creating a situation where officer concerns will be further neglected and pay will continue to degrade, creating even greater retention problems. One of the solutions that the PRRB may provide to mitigate this is a recommendation for a multi-year pay award. A multi-year approach would provide security and assurances of progress while reform is taking place. This will also allow the work of all parties in policing to design a pay structure and reward system that is appropriate for modern policing, without the annual distraction of short-term discussions around pay which ignore the structural inadequacies of the current system.

However, this approach should only be taken if a multi-year pay recommendation moves toward real terms increases for officers and makes progression in improving the pay degradation that has been seen over the years since austerity. If that criterion is met, this option should be considered as a demonstration of the Government's commitment to improving the pay and conditions of police officers. The multi-year recommendation also has the added benefit of allowing forces the opportunity to plan their budgets more confidently. This will certainly be particularly useful in times of reform and change.

Another public service, the Department for Education, is also facing a programme of change and innovation. In that instance, the Secretary of State for Education has requested the chair of their advisory board, the STRB, to consider a multi-year recommendation. Her rationale for this request echoes some of the features of policing.

“I know how important budget certainty is when making strategic decisions – especially in the context of the wider ask on the public sector to maximise value from every pound spent – and I want to help schools plan to spend their money as effectively as possible to provide every child with the high-quality education they deserve. I would, therefore, ask you to look further ahead with your pay recommendations. I would like your formal recommendations for pay awards for school teachers and leaders in the academic year 2026/27 and 2027/28, as well as an indicative pay award for the 2028/29 academic year to be confirmed or reconsidered in a future remit.”²⁶

In the December 2025 polling of PFEW members, we asked about the appetite of members to accept a multi-year pay deal.¹⁵ There was substantial support for this approach, with 80% of our membership either supporting or being open-minded to the idea of a multi-year recommendation. For the 23% of officers who have indicated their intention to leave policing in the next two years, an advance commitment to a multi-year pay recommendation that corrects pay degradation might provide stability and reassurance which would encourage these officers to stay. Our membership has waited too long for a firm display of Government’s commitment to improving the pay and conditions of service. This approach may be very welcome whilst the reform work takes place.

4.6 Analysis of 3.3 Percent

In considering our position for this report, we needed to be clear what a pay increase would feel like to our members. A headline pay award is negotiated and reported in gross terms. However, officers experience pay only in net income. It is this net income, or take-home pay, that determines living standards, behaviour and retention. At key points in the police pay structure, marginal income tax and National Insurance rates change sharply, so that between 34 and 42 per cent of any award is lost at source, depending on the band in which it falls.

To bring to life the impact of take-home pay, the main concern for officers, is explored by using the example of a 3.3% increase. This percentage is used as it is the recommendation of the NHS Pay Review Body. The example considers the impact of ‘fiscal drag’ that is caused by the freezing of the tax bands. Although this is certainly out of the scope of the PRRB, and an issue that impacts on everyone, it is still a consideration for our members.

²⁶ Department for Education. (2025). *School Teachers’ Review Body remit letter for 2026 and 2027*. GOV.UK. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-teachers-review-body-remit-letter-for-2026-and-2027> (publicly available)

We also consider the impact of increased pension contributions on take-home pay. The details of pension contribution increases will be covered in more detail in the pension section of this report.

At the time of writing, February 2026, the most recent CPIH inflation figure has been announced on the 21st of January 2026 as 3.6 percent. Although inflation will fluctuate throughout the year, we will use the most recent announcement as an indicator of what is to come. It should be noted that at the time of writing, there is significant global uncertainty in many regards. We feel that the most recent inflation figures are the most appropriate to use in our estimates with so much global uncertainty.

To draw the comparison, we will first examine what the average change in the take-home pay for officers will be with a 3.3% recommendation. We will also examine what the reality of their spending power will be after factoring in CPIH.

What will an officer receive?

England and Wales: Impact of a projected 3.3% pay rise on Constables' take-home pay Our findings:

Pay Point	Pension Contribution Rate	Approx. Cash Increase (£/year)	Increase in Take Home Pay	Comment
1	12.88%	£667.63	2.91%	Lower pension contribution rate allows a greater share of the pay award to flow through to take-home pay, cushioning real term losses
2	12.88%	£757.07	3.10%	
3	12.88%	£824.55	3.10%	
4	12.88%	£847.34	3.10%	
5	13.88%	£611.13	2.07%	Introduction of the higher pension contribution rate sharply reduces the new benefit of the pay award
6	13.88%	£680.88	2.17%	Higher pension contributions continue to limit how much of the pay rise officers take home
7	13.88%	£910.51	2.38%	Higher deductions for pension, tax and NI reduce how much of the pay rise officers actually receive

- Due to lower pension contributions and remaining in the lower tax band, younger in-service officers will face fewer penalties from a 3.3 percent increase. However, the actual increase in pay they will see is minimal.
- For more experienced Constables in pay bands 5-7, whose leadership policing sorely needs, they will not feel the full benefit of a 3.3 percent increase due to increased pension contributions and tax obligations.

England and Wales: Impact of a projected 3.3% pay rise on Constables' purchasing power

Our findings:

Pay Point	Pension Contribution Rate	Approx. Cash Increase (£/year)	Increase in Take Home Pay	Spending Power with CPIH	
				Real-terms change (%)	Real-term Annual Cash (%)
1	12.88%	£667.63	2.91%	-0.69%	-£158.08
2	12.88%	£757.07	3.10%	-0.50%	-£122.15
3	12.88%	£824.55	3.10%	-0.50%	-£133.04
4	12.88%	£847.34	3.10%	-0.50%	-£136.71
5	13.88%	£611.13	2.07%	-1.53%	-£452.57
6	13.88%	£680.88	2.17%	-1.43%	-£448.83
7	13.88%	£910.51	2.38%	-1.22%	-£467.54

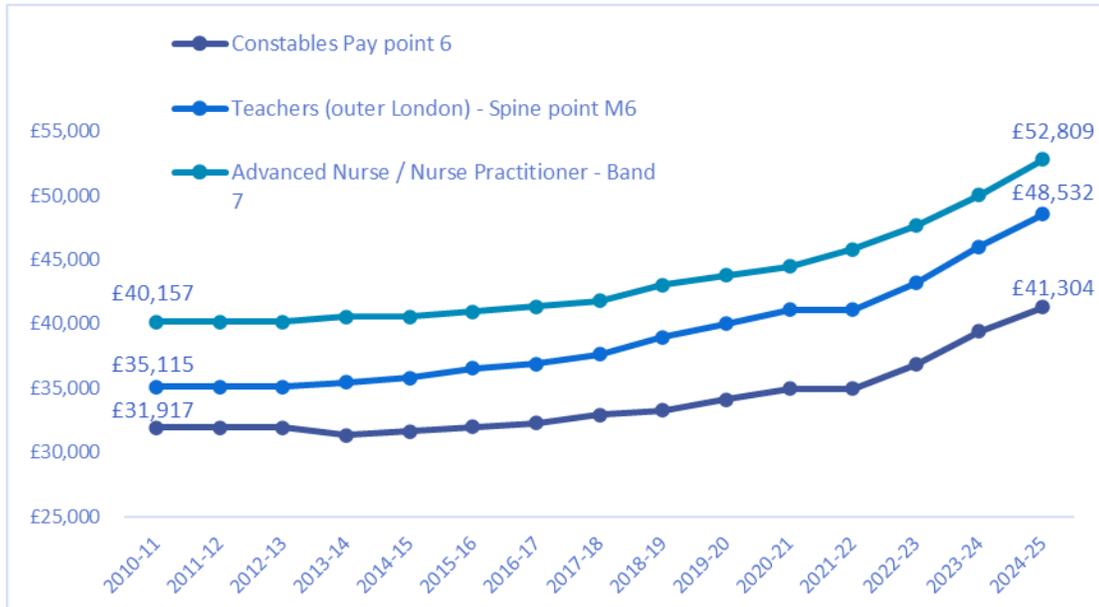
- For younger in-service officers, they will on average be £137.49 worse off per annum in their purchasing power.
- The spending power at the higher ranks decreases further – a average loss of £456.33 per annum

There must be significant investment in the pay recommendation for officers to see any real increase in their pay. Officers cannot be offered token pay increases that result in them experiencing no improvements in their take-home pay. A recommendation that does not address this reality will do nothing to address the concerns around pay within policing, and the comparisons to other private and public sector workers, that are highlighted and evidence within this report. The PRRB must consider this context when making their recommendation.

4.7 Realigning against other Public Sector Bodies

In Section 6, we will cover the issue of benchmarking and how the uniqueness of policing is not captured in the current approach to benchmarking. Whilst we have many concerns about benchmarking in general, which will be outlined in the later section, officers are still falling behind in pay against the traditional public sector comparators of experienced nurse and teachers.

Police Constable’s pay point 6 and comparable roles’ pay scales – 2010/11 to 2024/25



As was outlined in our submission last year, it is our firm view that the discrepancy can, to a large degree, be attributed to the other professions having the right to strike having used that right in recent years. As can be demonstrated in the chart above, there has been an increasing gap in the pay of Constables to other traditional comparators.

Given the scale of danger and difficult working conditions of their daily work, police officers deserve to have this pay gap closed and have a negotiating mechanism that works. It cannot be right for the policing profession to be the ‘service of last resort’ and also be an easy target for sub-optimal pay increases that continue to leave officers worse off.

Officers feel this pay differential acutely in their everyday lives. When asked in the recent Pay and Morale survey, **70 percent of officers felt they were paid unfairly compared to other key workers.** The PRRB should not provide any recommendation that will leave officers worse off, as demonstrated by the 3.3% modelling. A pay award of 7% is the minimum to begin rectifying the issues around police pay that have been clearly established in this report.

4.8 Section Four Conclusion

Our officers require immediate relief and recognition. Our submission of a 7% increase will give officers a pay increase, which offers some genuine increase in take-home pay. The uplift in pay must be significant to see any real movement toward an increased standard of living.

- A recommendation must acknowledge the unique aspects of policing and the reality of the job that is done now. The PRRB must be cautious not to defer meaningful pay awards because of the reform programme and ignore the reality of today. The lure of better pay, stability in working hours and a significant reduction in trauma and harm is strong – particularly for younger in-service officers.
- To ease the distraction of the yearly cycle of pay review, particularly whilst focus and resource should be used on designing and implementing a reform programme, a multi-year recommendation is an option. A multi-year pay recommendation should only be undertaken if it improves both the real term net pay for officers and makes improvements in reducing the overall pay degradation caused by austerity. A recommendation for a multi-year pay settlement must also have protections, for both sides, if the recommendations for future years become no longer appropriate. This is particularly important in our current times of international political turbulence.
- Police officers are not compensated for the continual exposure to physical harm and trauma. For new recruits, their first roles are always at the sharp end of the front-line where exposure to physical violence is more acute – this is likely to be an attributing factor to early resignations. The pay bands for Constables need to be shorter, so they reach higher pay points more quickly. This is essential in recognition of the work they undertake, and the danger they are exposed to daily, from the beginning of their police service.

To be clear police pay needs rectification in three areas. Firstly, to keep up with inflation and the cost of living. Second, to ensure that benchmarking against base pay is correct and takes into account the skills required for modern day policing. Thirdly, that the unique attributes of policing, the P-factor, are fully acknowledged and properly compensated. Given this, **anything less than a pay award of seven percent**, will be a step backwards. To provide certainty for officers and forces, this increase should be guaranteed as an annual increase for a period of 3 years. Officers should not bear the additional pressure of wondering what their pay will be as they are asked to work differently and under more pressure as reform changes commence. To be clear, this approach does not address the full rectification of police pay. That will only be achieved once the benchmarking and the P-factor aspects are added to this proposed annual uplift.

All this should be done with a commitment to enter into reform with the objective of creating benchmarking that is comparable and remunerates for the unique responsibilities of policing.

Section 5 - Workload, Wellbeing, and Stretched Supervisors

The ideal for any workplace is to have experienced and competent supervision who support and upskill staff. For policing, this need is far more acute, as support often will be needed after an officer's exposure to the harsh realities of the front line.

Sadly, policing is experiencing the perfect storm of factors that make this ideal an unlikely reality. Policing is seeing:

- As evidenced earlier - more inexperienced Constables, meaning less leadership and experience from Constables themselves. The peer leadership role of Constables has always been a traditional support mechanism for officers and a source of comfort and confidence to the public.
- Higher attrition levels of Sergeants and Inspectors, which is a waste of investment, experience, and future talent in police leadership. For Inspectors and Chief Inspectors in particular, this is against the backdrop of working with outdated and inappropriate terms and conditions that are not reflective of the modern demands of the ranks. Consistent calls for changes to address the issues facing the Inspecting ranks have been ignored for over a decade.
- A crisis of wellbeing for officers. Having inexperienced and inconsistent leadership has a hugely detrimental impact on a Constable's ability to gain the support they need when they need it most. It is often the watchful eye of an experienced colleague or supervisor that makes the difference.
- Developing, supporting, and training Sergeants, Inspectors and Chief Inspectors is not given enough priority. Years of underinvestment in policing has had an impact on the availability of time, money and resources to equip these leaders effectively. This issue will not assist in retaining officers in these ranks and those seeking promotion may seek development outside of policing.

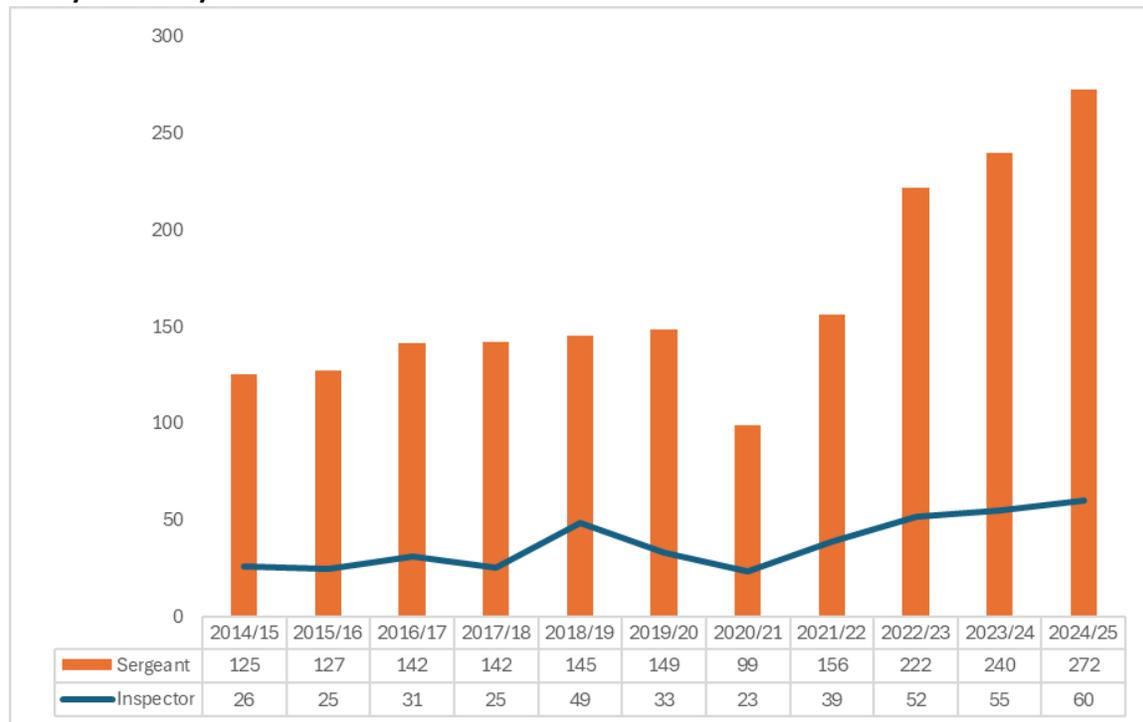
5.1 Less Experienced Sergeants Supporting the Constable Workforce

The role of the Sergeant is a cultural icon of many policing dramas. The Sergeant rank is critical to policing. More officers report to a Sergeant than any other rank. Therefore, their leadership impact, for better or worse, is felt by more individual officers.

In the NPCC's submission to the PRRB last year,²⁵ it indicated that there has been an increase in the number of resignations from the Sergeant and Inspector ranks over the last three years, which is supported by the workforce data. There has been a sharp rise

in voluntary resignations among Sergeants since 2020/21. Resignations at Sergeant rank have more than doubled over the past three years, exceeding pre-pandemic levels and mirroring trends identified by the NPCC. Given the central supervisory role played by Sergeants, the loss of officers at this rank has a disproportionate impact on frontline leadership capacity.²⁷

England and Wales: Voluntary Resignations by Rank: Sergeants and Inspectors, 2014/15–2024/25



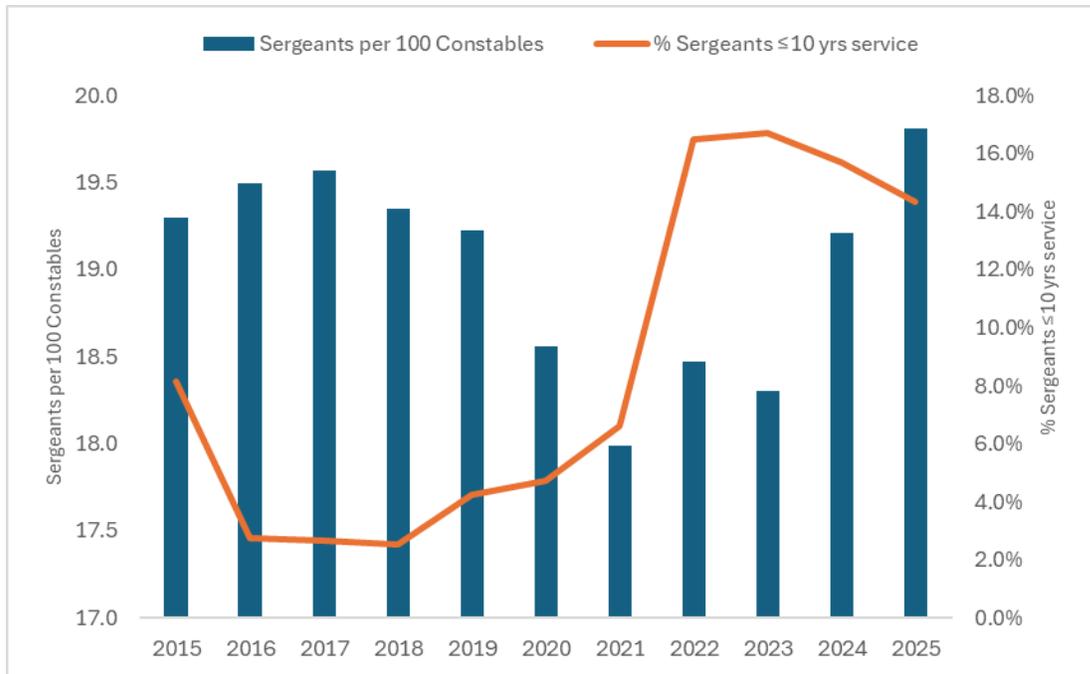
We are also seeing a decrease in the service profiles of Sergeants - an indication that Sergeants are, on the whole, younger in service and less experienced than previous generations. This has a host of implications – from not having gained the operational experience to deal with more serious matters, to not having yet gained life experience and skills, to dealing with the people management of the role. In turn, Sergeants would have previously had the support of experienced and competent Constables who could capably deal with operational issues and support new Constable colleagues. This support is no longer readily available, as already evidenced in the experience profile of Constables in Section One. The role of the Sergeant is becoming more demanding, more chaotic, and with less support.

Workforce data show that the proportion of Sergeants with ten years’ service or less has risen steadily since 2019 and increased sharply from 2022 onwards. By 2025, more than

²⁷ Home Office. (2025). *Police workforce open data tables*. GOV.UK. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables> (publicly available)

one in seven Sergeants had ten or fewer years of service, compared with fewer than one in twenty prior to 2020. This represents a material shift in the experience profile of the rank, reflecting faster promotion, higher turnover, and the loss of more experienced Sergeants through resignation.²⁸

England and Wales: Supervisory Capacity and Experience of the Sergeant Rank, 2015–2025 - (Sergeants per 100 Constables and % of Sergeants with ≤10 years’ service)



In our December 2025 survey of our membership, we asked members what type of training do frontline managers need to perform their role.¹⁵ Unsurprisingly, the top three answers were:

- Leadership and people management
- Wellbeing and welfare support for teams
- Managing demand and resource

This indicates that officers feel their leadership is not adequately equipped and is lacking in information, resource, and capability to manage complex people issues, support teams through difficult periods, and meet operational demands. These factors are all

²⁸ Home Office. (2024). *Police workforce census 2023–24* (confidential unpublished dataset provided to the Police Federation of England and Wales for analytical purposes). Home Office

corroborated by the data in our most recent Pay and Morale survey.²⁹ We also asked officers how they felt about their experience with line managers when raising concerns about mental health or wellbeing.

- 32% of respondents were ‘poorly’ or ‘very poorly’ supported after raising mental health and wellbeing concerns with their line manager.
- More worryingly, 16% reported they felt they were treated differently in a negative way after they discussed their mental health with their line manager.
- Cumulatively, that is an astounding 48% of respondents who did not get the support from their line manager when they were reaching out for support for their wellbeing or mental health. It can only be imagined what support and compassion was given to an officer who was hesitant or did not reach out for support.

This situation is nothing new but has been continually overlooked and, at times, ignored. In her 2023 report into the Metropolitan Police, Baroness Louise Casey wrote about the difficulty that increasing leadership ratios were imposing on policing.³⁰ By that, she means that as there are more Constables to fewer Sergeants. In turn, this creates problems in ensuring an effective supervision system. Although her report was into the Metropolitan Police specifically, many forces would echo the same experience as they also are forced to increase leadership ratios to save money. Baroness Casey writes:

“Growing supervision spans are undermining the ability of Sergeants and Inspectors to supervise their teams effectively. An Inspector mentioned a useful tool for supervisors to review the Body Worn Video (BWV) of their team as part of supervision but said that supervisors don’t have time to use it. He felt the Met were not giving Sergeants the opportunity to be leaders:

“They need the ability, resource and time to look after their officers.”

“Everything is on a conveyor belt, and we don’t have time to invest in staff in the way we should. It’s to our detriment. Before, older officers had time to tutor and stop officers from making mistakes.”

“Several Sergeants told us it had taken over ten months to access training. Some told us they did not have training at all. Several acting Sergeants told us they could not access training and had no support to step into the role unless they found it for themselves from friends and colleagues. Embedded on-site HR

²⁹ Social Market Foundation and Police Federation of England and Wales. (2024). *Pay and Morale Survey 2023 – Headline Report February 2024*. <https://polfed.org/media/19164/pay-and-morale-survey-report-2023.pdf> (publicly available included in Appendix)

³⁰ Casey, L. (2023). *Baroness Casey review: Final report*. GOV.UK. Available at [BARONESS CASEY REVIEW Final Report](#) (publicly available)

support was also withdrawn under austerity, leaving supervisors relatively unsupported. They therefore supervised as they had been supervised or improvised according to their own preferences and style.”

“Having difficult conversations, supporting officers under pressure, keeping a keen eye on performance, and developing individuals, are important skills. They don’t just come naturally. However, the importance of these skills is not recognised. We did not hear from any officer we spoke to that such skills were discussed in any judgement of an individual’s performance, such as part of an annual appraisal, or for promotion purposes:

“Line management in the Met is seen as a luxury, a ‘nice to have’ rather than an essential part of good leadership.”

“There is no training at all on becoming a line manager...I would have to look up what to do if someone came to me with a problem.”

“The biggest mistake was making HR self-service and outsourced via the intranet...You’re always scrabbling the intranet for information, which isn’t even fit for purpose when you find it. How can you do that if you’re out on the streets?”

As above, although this report is structured around the Metropolitan Police Service, the impact of the squeeze on police budgets has meant fewer leaders and less support from police staff across all forces. The Metropolitan Police Service is, due to its size, an extreme version of these consequences, but the impact has a substantial impact across policing in England and Wales.

Investment in preparing front line leaders is critical to retention and in helping to create better Constables. The role of leadership, and the training and support that is provided to those leaders, must be a core part of police reform. For far too long, support and training have been seen as supplementary rather than an essential part of creating a high performing police service.

We must also exercise caution when making any comparisons to other sectors in attrition and experience. It can provide false security and an excuse to continue with no action. Policing is simply not comparable.

5.2 Inspecting Ranks: Working Time, Remuneration and Retention

Background

The terms and conditions for Inspecting ranks remain governed by the 1994 Police Negotiating Board Agreement. The agreement removed overtime entitlement and introduced a compensation framework that has not been materially revised for over 30 years.

Operational practice has changed significantly during that period. The compensation framework has not.

Evidence

Working Hours

Indicator	Finding
Additional hours (0–20 over 4 weeks)	67 percent
Additional hours (21–40 over 4 weeks)	23 percent
Part-time officers paid for additional hours	30 percent
Additional hours counted towards pension	54 percent

The 2012 research identified routine breaches of the 48-hour Working Time threshold, with some Inspectors working 56 hours or more per week. The 2025 survey indicates that excess hours remain embedded within normal practice rather than exceptional demand.

Pay and Satisfaction

The 2025 Inspecting Ranks survey reports 60 percent dissatisfied with basic pay, 81 percent dissatisfied with allowances and 78 percent dissatisfied with overall remuneration.

The removal of overtime in 1994 means additional hours are frequently unremunerated and inconsistently recorded. The structure does not reflect the operational accountability carried by Inspectors and Chief Inspectors.

Retention

Voluntary resignations among Inspectors have increased from 26 in 2014/15 to 60 in 2024/25.

While attrition has multiple causes, sustained excess hours combined with limited financial recognition is a material risk factor for retention within this rank.

Assessment

The current framework does not adequately recognise prolonged excess working hours, does not consistently compensate additional workload, provides limited pension recognition for extra hours and risks burnout within a supervisory rank central to operational delivery.

Recommendations

The PRRB is invited to:

1. Recognise that the 1994 Inspecting ranks framework no longer reflects contemporary operational practice.
 2. Recommend formal workload recognition for Inspecting ranks.
 3. Recommend additional payment for hours worked beyond 48 per week.
- .

Section 6 - A Career Like No Other - Benchmarking and P-factor

In the section addressing the immediate measures needed to address police officer pay, we set out our view that police pay requires rectification in three areas: cost of living; benchmarking; and pay for the unique attributes of policing, the P-Factor.

We feel the starting point must be a recommendation of at least a 7% pay increase to address the cost of living element of police pay.

We have already covered the factors impacting the cost of living in a previous section. In this section, we will look in more detail at the other two parts of this equation - benchmarking and the P-Factor. We will also evidence the importance of these in relation to attracting and retaining talented officers for now and in the future.

To assist the PFEW in this section we commissioned an independent report by Professor Peter Turnbull, which has already been referenced in various sections.

6.1 Fairness and Transparency

In the report, Professor Turnbull evidences the rationale for transparent and fair pay.⁸ In many ways, that is a logical conclusion – who wouldn't want fair and transparent pay? One of the challenges with benchmarking is that it combines pay and pensions and does not distinguish the element of pay that reflects the unique challenge of policing. This makes any comparison against other industries very difficult. This is, in part, because the comparators bear little resemblance to policing. To make comparisons fair, officers need transparency on how much of their remuneration reflects compensation for policing specific demands.

Perhaps the best example of transparency for this is the military. In his report, Professor Turnbull writes:

“Police officers do receive an itemised payslip, with tax codes, pay period, NI number, rank, hours, allowances, unsocial hours payments, pension contributions, etc. The difference with the military is that the payslip for military personnel includes a separate item for the ‘X-factor’, a pensionable

14.5% addition to base pay designed to compensate for unique service disadvantages compared to civilian life.³¹

The annual military salary is made up of three elements: core salary, supplement rate, and the X-factor. For example, an annual salary of £32,721 would be made up of:

Core salary - £25,009

Supplement rate - £3,568

X-factor - £4,144

These items are clearly stated on the payslip, and there is information online that explains the X-factor and how it is calculated.³² In other words, the payment is transparent.³³

It would be a ‘quick win’ for the PRRB to recommend more transparency on payslips now. We want officers to see the difference between their basic pay and the supplementary ‘p-factor’ portion that is given in recognition of the demands of policing. This is a step toward making the entire process of benchmarking fairer and more easily understood.

The theme of fairness and transparency in pay, unsurprisingly, will be one that we continue to return to. Police workforce reform will bring suggestions for changes to pay. We must continue to approach this in a way that is widely understood and transparent to police officers. This clarity will surely lead to more trust and better comparisons with industry.

³¹ The military X-factor includes many similar elements to the police service P-factor (e.g., danger and deployment, working conditions, the impact on family life, and denial of employment rights such as union membership, collective bargaining and industrial action). The X-Factor for the Armed Forces was initially set at 5% in 1970, with progressive revision every 5 years by the Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB) to reflect changes within the service and wider societal and employment conditions. Go to: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7c862240f0b626628acaaa/A_review_of_the_X-Factor_components_IDS_FINAL_.pdf In Israel, the pay of police officers is explicitly linked to the military, but payments to military personnel for ‘X-factor type’ payments (e.g., for risk and deployment) were not awarded to police officers. Consequently, police pay fell behind and was only rectified as a result of claims lodged with the National Labour Court. See Litor L (2023) Collective labour rights of police officers: Global labour constitutionalism and militaristic labour constitutionalism. *Global Constitutionalism* d 12(1): 174-213.

³² <https://discovermybenefits.mod.gov.uk/raf/your-pay-and-pension/x-factor/>;
<https://www.army.mod.uk/support-and-training/welfare/financial-and-legal-support/pay-and-pensions/>

³³ Transparency is not the same as an ‘intuitive calculation’ of the X-factor (i.e., it is not £32,721 x 0.145 = £4,744). The sum for the X-factor is derived by adding the core (benchmark) salary and the supplement rate (£25,009 + £3,568 = £28,577) and then multiplying by 0.145 (£28,577 x 0.145 = £4,144).

6.2 Concluding Winsor

When the Winsor Report was published in 2011, it introduced the concept of the X-factor, which we now refer to as the P (or policing) factor.³⁴ Winsor's recommendation used the factor from the standpoint of reduction. His recommendations were to reduce pay by 8% for officers on restricted duties. Since that point, to the best of our knowledge, not a single force has reduced an officers pay.

There are several reasons for the lack of adopting the deduction of an officer's pay. Restrictions placed on officers vary widely and are set in accordance with their personal needs. It is regularly the case that officers with restrictions remain in a full-time roles doing valuable work that supports the service and the public. In other words, restrictions are not necessarily a barrier to perform effective police work. Restrictions are often about finding the right role to utilise the officer's capabilities. It is an incorrect and destructive assumption that an officer with restrictions is not contributing appropriately or carrying out their duties effectively.

In many situations, the decision to withdraw pay is very complicated and requires intense resources from HR specialists. An officer's individual restrictions and their ability to capably perform an effective police role all need to be considered carefully. Most forces have concluded that their efforts would be best placed in either making small adaptations to an officer's current role or in finding an alternative role for the restricted officer that would still allow their capabilities to be used in valuable police work. This approach has been adopted by forces in place of removing pay from the small number of restricted officers that are unable to effectively contribute due to their restrictions.

Another driver for the lack of implementation has been the risk that this recommendation has with the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act 2010 served to protect individuals with 'protected characteristics' from discrimination. Disability was one of the nine protected characteristics named in that act. The timing of the Winsor report recommendations and the Equality Act meant that any force implementing a reduction in pay of an officer would likely have that decision tested not only internally, but also through the employment tribunal courts as well.

Lastly, many police leaders were concerned about implementing a process of reduction of pay with so much uncertainty surrounding it. There was also the risk that it could lead to inconsistencies in its application within forces. This was completely understandable, given the damage a wrong decision could have brought. This risk was not just through the courts, but also in what damage it could do to the goodwill of the workforce. So much of policing, then as it is now, works because of the additional effort

³⁴ Winsor, T. (2011). Independent review of police officer and staff remuneration and conditions: Part 1 report. Home Office. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/police-pay-winsor-review> (publicly available)

and willingness of officers. Taking an approach that would ultimately reduce this goodwill could lead to much more significant and costly issues for the service.

Since then, the political will to implement this reduction of pay has continued to lack. Arguably, the environment for implementing these changes has only grown more costly and risky. Case law from the Equality Act has continued to emerge, demonstrating the tremendous risk associated with a finding of discrimination on the basis of disability. The backlog of cases waiting to be heard at Employment Tribunals, like the criminal justice system, have continued to grow. According to the latest Government statistics, there are over 37,000 single claim ET cases within the caseload, meaning that resolution to any claim of discrimination would be a significant wait and an unnecessary distraction.³⁵

The mechanism to enact this Winsor X-factor reduction is contained within Annex EE of the Police Regulations 2003. We encourage the PRRB to recommend an immediate change to these regulations. There is no benefit to having a provision that is seen as a threat to officers. The reduction of pay has never been used and there is no appetite to start to use it now. It is an unnecessary distraction. Conversely, removing that regulation would signify the removal of a punitive and unnecessary approach. This is a practical and proportionate immediate improvement that would incur zero cost.

6.3 P-Factor

Perhaps the positive aspect of the Windsor recommendation is that it brought forward the question about how officers should be remunerated for the dangerous and unique work they do. As written in Professor Turnbull's report:⁸**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

"...the current consensus is that the P-factor is a 'premium' of 13% within police pay³⁶ – "The value should be and is considered within the benchmarking against comparators."³⁷"

There are two issues with the current approach to P-factor and the way it is applied to police pay. The first issue is the transparency of the payment, which has already been covered in the section above. The P-factor amount should be clearly indicated on payslips so that it is clear to officers this element of their pay.

³⁵ Ministry of Justice. (2024). *Tribunal Statistics Quarterly: April to June 2024*. His Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tribunals-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2024/tribunal-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2024#employment-tribunals> (publicly available)

³⁶ NPCC (2025) *Police Remuneration Review Body – NPCC Submission 2025*, p.47. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines a 'premium' as a sum *added to* an ordinary price, charge or wage.

³⁷ NPCC (2025) *Police Remuneration Review Body – NPCC Submission 2025*, p.43

The second issue is that P-factor is thought be included in current pay. It is our strong view that the P-factor should sit separate to base salary. Indeed, the entire consideration of the P-factor lends itself to sitting separately.

In Professor Turnbull’s report he writes:⁸

*“When initially tasked with describing an updated (Winsor) X-factor for the police service, renamed the P-factor, the NPCC quickly established that the twelve elements listed in Appendix II described areas of distinct demand that do not overlap (i.e., no ‘double-counting’). Although the twelve elements do not constitute a job evaluation scheme, they have features in common with extended evaluation frameworks that organisations use to pay for both the job (size) and circumstances (factors) in which the job is performed. In short, the P-factor descriptors are all additional to job evaluation and standard benchmarking against ‘All Organisations’ or a sub-group of organisations that might be deemed closer to the type of work performed by the police service (e.g., Public and Not for Profit, PNFP).³⁸ This is simply another way of saying that “police officers do a job like no other”, and **therefore the P-factor is an addition to base pay.**^{39”}*

As already indicated in the report, **our firm view is that the PRRB should be making a recommendation of an increase of at least 7%.** We also suggest that the PRRB consider **some of this increase to be put toward the P-factor element of pay and** be explicit about that, so officers are clear that the unique attributes of policing are being rewarded. This suggestion goes together with making the P-factor more transparent on payslips.

6.4 Benchmarking

In a previous section, we indicated our concerns that we had with police pay in relation to the Korn Ferry benchmarking. In that section, we took the benchmarking data that the NPCC had commissioned to illustrate that even by the measures provided in that data, the pay for officers was falling behind. Here, we want to examine how that same benchmarking would look when the P-factor is reviewed separately. This review demonstrates further how far police officer pay is falling behind.

In reviewing the data below, we encourage the reader to remind themselves of the current attrition problem of new and mid-career officers. We have previously made the point that pay in the private sector is increasing. Policing skills are valuable to

³⁸ <https://www.npcc.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/publications/publications-log/2022/npcc-eighth-police-renumeration-review-body-submission-appendices.pdf>

³⁹ Both the PFEW and PSA impressed this point on the PRRB, as reported in the 2025 report. PRRB (2025), *op. cit.*, p.8.

prospective employers and there is more flexibility that an employer can show with remuneration when attracting talent from policing. This is why it is critical to examine benchmarking data exclusive of the P-factor when determining if salary is comparable.

An officer who is making their decision to leave policing and move into industry will be weighing up the salary and benefits of a new role, but they will also be examining all the burdens they will not have to carry as a police officer. Factors which all have been outlined in this report – working hours, exposure to trauma and injury; impacts on family life; the right to privacy and the lack of support. All these elements should attract remuneration and that should be in addition to the base pay. This is why it is so critical to get all three elements of police pay (cost of living; P-factor, and benchmarking) right. Without separating out the P-factor, benchmarking comparison is unfair on officers. We cannot continue to ignore this fact, because officers are making the assessment themselves and voting with their feet.

Another issue to consider is the impact of working within a ‘high reliability organisation’ which was defined earlier in this report. In relation to being in a HRO, it is noted that:

“It goes without saying that people are the most important (re)source of performance in HROs. This, in turn, creates particular challenges for human resource management,⁴⁰ most notably in terms of recruitment, training, and retention, but also working practices and the (re)negotiation of the ‘wage-effort bargain’. It is precisely the P-factor variables (Appendix II) that create ‘high risk’ for the police service, and why police officers need to know what they are being paid for and how this is determined. Of particular concern is whether, and how, police officers have any say in the payment side of the wage-effort equation.”⁸

The benchmarking data shown earlier in this report was from the NPCC. The salary levels for officers shown in their data table were inclusive of the P-factor element. Using the same benchmarking data that was given by the NPCC, but removing the P-factor element, the pay disparity between comparators becomes significant.

⁴⁰ Kellner A, Townsend K, Loudoun R, and Wilkinson A (2021) High reliability Human Resource Management (HRM): A system for high risk workplaces. *Human Resource Management Journal* 33(1): 170-86.

Table 1. Police Basic Pay Compared to All Organisations and PNF

Federated ranks	Pay point	Base pay £ Sept. 2024	Base pay minus P-Factor (13%)	All Orgs. Median	All Orgs. Ratio %	PNFP Median	PNFP Ratio %
Constable appointed on or after 1 st April 2013	1	£29,907	£26,019	£41,304	63%	£38,286	68%
	2	£31,164	£27,113	£41,304	66%	£38,286	71%
	3	£32,427	£28,211	£41,304	68%	£38,286	74%
	4	£33,690	£29,310	£41,304	71%	£38,286	77%
	5	£36,216	£31,508	£41,304	76%	£38,286	82%
	6	£41,304	£35,934	£41,304	87%	£38,286	94%
	7	£48,231	£41,961	£41,304	102%	£38,286	110%
Sergeant	2	£51,408	£45,138	£53,230	85%	£47,027	96%
	3	£52,458	£46,188	£53,230	87%	£47,027	98%
	4	£53,943	£47,673	£53,230	90%	£47,027	101%
Inspector	0	£61,197	£54,927	£67,345	82%	£56,131	98%
	1	£62,865	£56,595	£67,345	84%	£56,131	101%
	2	£64,527	£58,257	£67,345	87%	£56,131	104%
	3	£66,201	£59,931	£67,345	89%	£56,131	107%
Chief Inspector	1	£67,509	£61,239	£79,493	77%	£65,207	94%
	2	£68,823	£62,553	£79,493	79%	£65,207	96%
	3	£70,200	£63,930	£79,493	80%	£65,207	98%

Returning to the example of the officer considering leaving policing. This table is the reality of their decision. Should they remain in a role where they receive nowhere close to the median level of pay for industry or leave and also enjoy a life free of the burdens of policing? Or, should they continue in policing and all the associated risks? The reader must also consider that officers are people with families and friends and, like most people, will rarely decide about changing career without considering the input of those closest to them. In that context, what would an independent person advise this young in-service officer? The data points to an easy decision – they need to leave and enjoy less burdens and more pay. There is no mystery why we are seeing such high levels of attrition.

Professor Turnbull summarises the issue as:⁸

*“When basic pay is compared to the median for All Organisations and PNF, it is only when officers reach the top of the pay scale within their rank that pay is comparable (i.e., equivalent).⁴¹ However, the calculations presented by the NPCC, based on data provided by Korn Ferry, includes the P-factor.⁴² This is contrary to the very definition of the P-factor as an addition to standard benchmarking and the unique elements of police work that “are shared by very few workers in the public sector and even fewer in the private sector.”⁴³ Table 1 provides calculations and comparative data on police basic pay, minus the P-factor (capped at 13% of Constable pay point 7) against All Organisations and PNF. **The message to the federated ranks is clear – the competencies you bring to your work are worth less to the police service than those of workers in all other (ordinary) organisations (with the exception of Constables at pay point 7), and only valued as much as PNF organisations at the top of the pay scale for Constables and Sergeants alongside Inspectors on pay points 1-3 (highlighted pay points in Table 1).”***

“Police officers, like all other workers, are more likely to compare their pay against specific occupational groups rather than nondescript organisations. Public as opposed to private sector organisations are more likely to publish data on pay scales for different roles (e.g., nurses and paramedics in the NHS, firefighters and teachers). Here again, the NPCC points out that Constables only gain parity after several years in the job, and only then with the inclusion of the P-factor.⁴⁴ A future rewards strategy needs to incorporate shorter pay bands aligned to the changing competencies demanded of police officers.”

We accept that benchmarking is a necessary and appropriate way to review salary levels, in particular when the source of funds is from the public purse. However, we must do so in a way that compares “apples with apples.” The current approach of assuming inclusion of P-factor is hurting policing. It is not showing the problem for what it really is. If benchmarking is to have any validity, it needs to make comparisons with P-factor sitting separate. Anything else ignores the reality that there should be compensation for the burden of policing.

⁴¹ Comparison against the median is a contentious benchmark, given that police pay has historically been set *above* the average in recognition that it is indeed a ‘job like no other’.

⁴² NPCC (2025) *op. cit.*, p.44.

⁴³ *Winsor Review, op. cit.*, 8325-II, 7.5.2.

⁴⁴ NPCC (2025) *op. cit.*, pp.47-8. The fire service is an appropriate comparator given its command structure; NHS workers also experience emotional strain and can experience hazards at work (e.g., infection and assaults); teaching represents an alternative profession given the (graduate) qualifications of new recruits.

6.5 Skills for the Future

We are in a time of deep technological change. There are, of course, many different views on what the future will bring in terms of jobs and skills. However, all opinions agree that AI will have a significant impact on shaping that future.

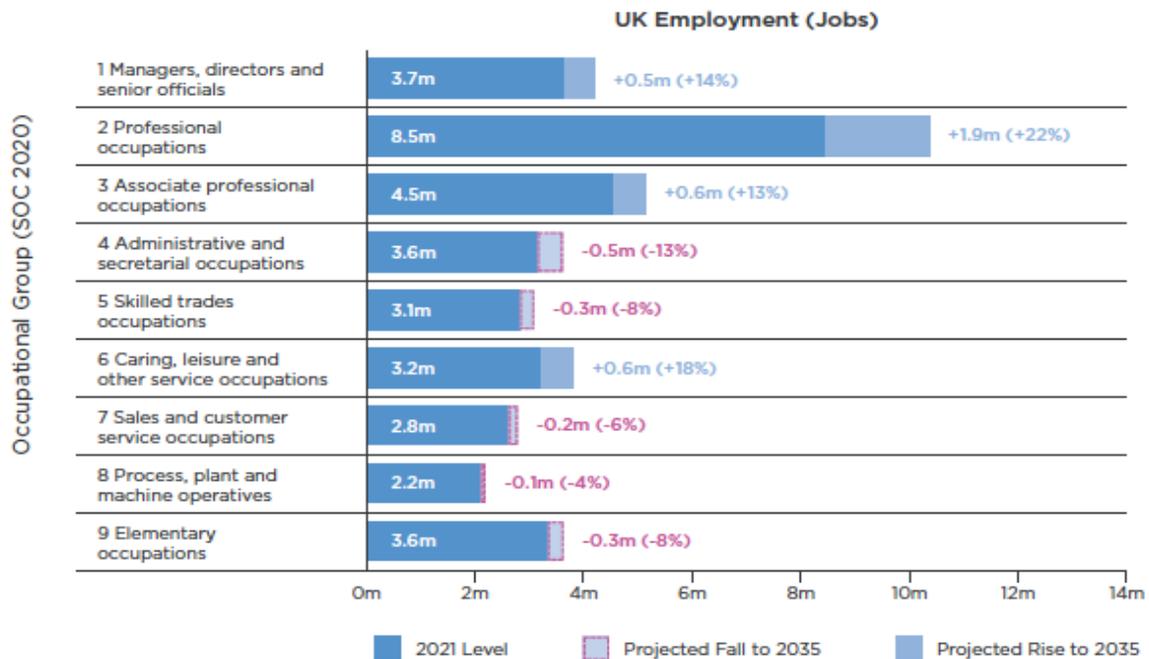
In his report, Professor Turnbull uses various sources, including the National Foundation for Educational Research to provide an insight into what the future for policing could look like:⁸

“Nonetheless, there is still expected to be significant growth and competition for talent in some occupational groups, as depicted in Figure 1,⁴⁵ especially in sectors where employees use IT and AI to enhance their performance at work. Police officers are included in the ‘associate professional’ occupational category in Figure 1, which is anticipated to grow by 13% (more than half a million jobs) by the year 2035.⁴⁶”

⁴⁵ These predicted occupational shifts are consistent with longer-term changes in the composition of the UK labour market. See Cominetti N, Costa R, Eyles A, Moev T and Ventura G (2022) *Changing Jobs? Change in the UK Labour Market and the Role of Worker Mobility*. The Economy 2030 Inquiry. Go to: <https://economy2030.resolutionfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Changingjobs.pdf>

⁴⁶ The term ‘Associate professional’ is not widely used outside of labour market research. Other workers in this category include engineering or IT technicians, counsellors, legal assistants or clerks, accounts managers, sales managers and housing inspectors. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) defines associate professionals as “occupations whose main tasks require experience and knowledge of principles and practices necessary to assume operational responsibility.” As with police officers, they typically “have an associated high-level vocational qualification, often involving a substantial period of full-time training or further study. Some additional task-related training is usually provided through a formal period of induction.” Go to: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/aps>

Figure 1. Employment Growth and Decline by Occupational Group



Source: Bock L, Scott M and Hillary J (2025) *The Skills Imperative 2035: Creating a System of Lifelong Learning to Provide the Essential Skills for Tomorrow’s Workforce*. National Foundation for Educational Research, p.16.

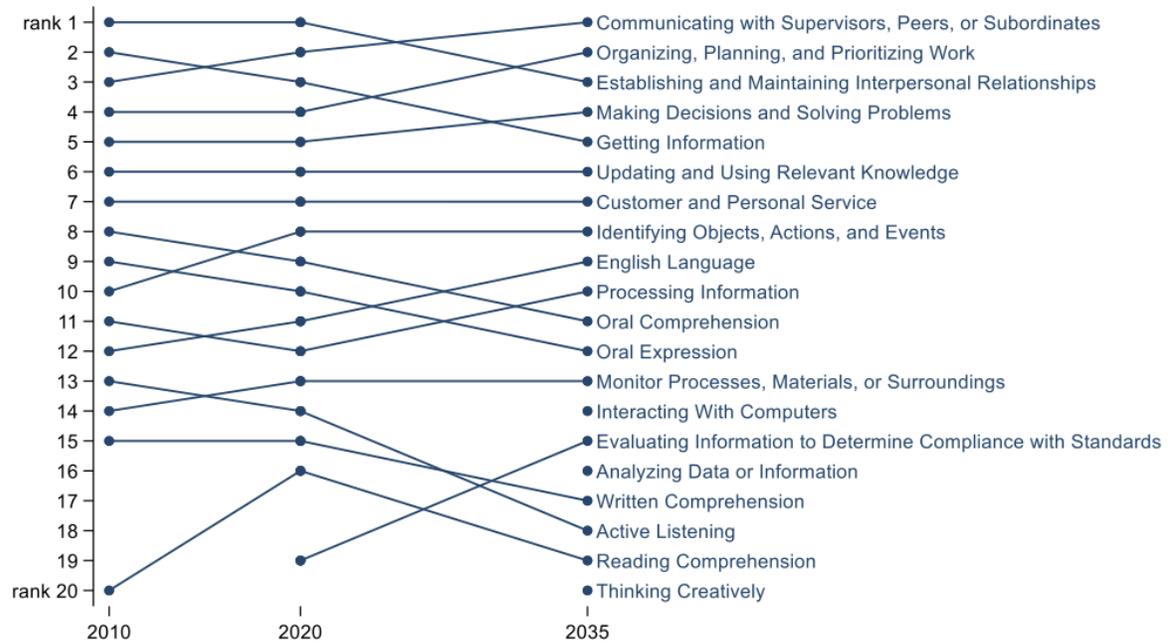
“The Skills and Employment Survey 2024, funded by the ESRC, the Department for Education and ACAS,⁴⁷ found that the demand for generic skills has increased in recent years, most notably computer use but also literacy, numeracy, and influencing skills. In fact, the skills that are most utilised today are set to remain fundamental for future employment,⁴⁸ as illustrated in Figure 2 and elaborated in Appendix I. We still need professional workers who can apply common sense to resolve otherwise intractable problems or confrontations, use judgement and emotional intelligence, and communicate effectively with others.⁴⁹ Ipso facto, the top 10 skills used most intensively in the labour market in 2035 will broadly be the same as today.”

⁴⁷ <https://wiserd.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/7.-Are-Skill-Requirements-on-the-Rise.pdf>

⁴⁸ https://www.nfer.ac.uk/media/utwf2grb/the_skills_imperative_2035_working_paper_3_an_analysis_of_the_demand_for_skills_in_the_labour_market_in_2035.pdf

⁴⁹ As the age-old saying goes, we know more than we can tell and even in our digital world we possess more tacit knowledge than we often appreciate.

Figure 2. Top 20 Labour Market Skills



Source: Dickerson A, Rossi G, Bocock L, Hillary J and Simcock D (2023) An analysis of the demand for skills in the labour market in 2035. Working Paper 3. National Foundation for Educational Research.

For policing specific skills, we have reviewed multiple sources of independent research on policing. Whilst the data set above provides a view of the general skills that will be in demand in the future, all of them overlapping with the skills in policing, there will be additional capabilities for officers.

Future Capabilities for Police Officers

Indicative skill area	Document	Capability implication
Digital & AI understanding	Policing and Artificial Intelligence ⁵⁰ (Police Foundation, 2025)	Officers and leaders need improved awareness and understanding of AI and digital technologies to use them effectively.
Digital & technology deployment	Use of Digital, Scientific and Other Technologies by the police and wider	Policing needs more people with the right technical and operational skills.

⁵⁰ Police Foundation. (2025). *Policing and artificial intelligence*. <https://www.police-foundation.org.uk/publication/policing-and-artificial-intelligence/> (publicly available)

	criminal justice system ⁵¹ (POST, 2024)	
Digital & technology deployment	Use of Digital, Scientific and Other Technologies by the police and wider criminal justice system ⁵¹ (POST, 2024)	Officers need training on law, bias, and correct use of technology.
Digital literacy (workforce-wide)	National Policing Digital Strategy 2025 -2030 ⁵² (NPCC/APCC, 2025)	Digital skills are required at all levels, not just specialists.
Specialist digital & analytical skills	National Policing Digital Strategy 2025-2030 ⁵² (NPCC/APCC, 2025)	Policing needs specialist technical and analytical expertise.
Digital evidence & forensics	Digital Forensics: The Next Steps ⁵³ (Police Foundation, 2021)	Digital material is no longer specialist or exceptional; all frontline officers require baseline competence in digital evidence.
Investigative judgment & risk	Digital Forensics: The Next Steps ⁵³ (Police Foundation, 2021)	Investigators and frontline officers need stronger judgement skills when handling digital evidence.
Communication & public confidence	Improving Public Confidence in the Police ⁵⁴ (College of Policing, 2025)	Officers need strong communication, empathy and procedural fairness skills to build and maintain public trust.
Vulnerability & safeguarding	Children, Violence and Vulnerability ⁵⁵ (Youth Endowment Fund, 2023); National Vulnerability and	Officers need skills to recognise and respond to vulnerability, assess risk, apply trauma-informed approaches, and collaborate effectively with partner agencies.

⁵¹ Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST). (2024). *Use of digital, scientific and other technologies by the police and wider criminal justice system*. <https://post.parliament.uk/use-of-digital-scientific-and-other-technologies-by-the-police-and-wider-criminal-justice-system/> (publicly available)

⁵² National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC). (2025). *National policing digital strategy 2025–2030*. <https://pds.police.uk/welcome/about-us/national-policing-digital-strategy/> (publicly available)

⁵³ Police Foundation. (2021). *Digital forensics: the next steps*. London: Police Foundation. <https://www.police-foundation.org.uk/project/the-next-steps-for-digital-forensics/> (publicly available)

⁵⁴ College of Policing. (2025). *Improving public confidence in the police*. https://assets.college.police.uk/s3fs-public/2025-01/Improving-public-confidence-in-the-police-guide.pdf?VersionId=XpjDwAkOrd7AjDXNdBY75ImCNWDJJ_7k (publicly available)

⁵⁵ Youth Endowment Fund. (2023). *Children, violence and vulnerability*. <https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/reports/children-violence-and-vulnerability-2023/> (publicly available)

	Public Protection Strategy ⁵⁶ (NPCC/CoP, 2025)	
Leadership & change	Leadership, Wellbeing and Innovation for the police front line: an evidence review ⁵⁷ (Home Office, 2019)	Leaders need people management and change skills.
Leadership capability	State of Policing ⁵⁸ (HMICFRS, 2025)	Leadership skills are needed across all ranks.
Professionalism & ethics	Understanding the reconstruction of police professionalism in the UK ⁵⁹ (Martin, 2021)	Officers need professional competence, adaptability and the ability to align practice with organisational ethical standards.

This policing specific data, overlaid with data from more general sources, gives clear evidence that the capabilities we need in policing are going to become more in demand and more marketable. The number of jobs requiring these abilities will grow as we need workers in the future to focus on the human qualities that AI cannot replace – communicating, building relationships, prioritising and being able to understand nuance and context. Indeed, when looking at the policing specific capabilities, such as dealing with vulnerable people and applying ethics, it is clear there will remain a deep requirement for police officers to be capable of these human qualities.

All of this points to a future of more competition for candidates with these abilities. We must make policing more attractive to candidates. Some elements of course cannot be controlled by a remuneration body, such as increased violence and change in societal attitude. However, we can control the frameworks and remuneration that attract and keep valuable people. We are at a critical point of designing remuneration for police officers that will either set us up to have a fighting chance at success – or set a path for continued struggles with recruitment and attrition.

⁵⁶ National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC) and College of Policing. (2025). *National vulnerability and public protection strategy*. <https://www.vkpp.org.uk/assets/National-Vulnerability-and-Public-Protection-Strategy/NCVPP-National-Vulnerability-and-Public-Protection-Strategy-Jul25.pdf> (publicly available)

⁵⁷ Home Office. (2019). *Leadership, wellbeing and innovation for the police front line: an evidence review*. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5d25bb79ed915d69031d7c8b/FLR_literature_research_report.pdf (publicly available)

⁵⁸ HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). (2025). *State of policing*. <https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/news/news-feed/improvements-made-across-policing-and-planned-reforms-may-secure-change/> (publicly available)

⁵⁹ Martin, A. (2021). Understanding the reconstruction of police professionalism in the UK. *Policing and Society*, 32(7), 931–946. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2021.1999447> (publicly available)

6.6 Section Six Conclusion

We must introduce a change now in the way we approach the application of the P-factor and benchmarking. It will address the inequalities in remuneration for current police officers and also create a platform for attracting and retaining talent for the changes that AI will bring.

“The structure of basic pay in the police service can be traced all the way back to 1920 and the Desborough report.⁶⁰ To claim that a strategic overhaul of police pay is warranted would be an understatement. Strategic pay reform is an investment in police officers and the future of the police service.”⁸ **Error!**
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Now is the time to start to take steps toward improvement. We have outlined several quick wins that are no or low-cost and will start heading policing in the right direction around the appropriate level of pay and remuneration.

- A change in the payslips of officers to show the P-factor element needs to be implemented. It demonstrates transparency and provides clarity for everyone about how much remuneration is given for the unique attributes of policing.
- A line needs to be drawn under the Winsor X-factor to signal a change in the philosophy of a future rewards strategy.
- We need to remove P-factor when considering the benchmarking of salary, so we are comparing like-for-like. This will help shape decisions for today but also reform design for the future. Like the clarity required for payslips, we need clarity in our comparisons, so we have a chance at securing and keeping talent in the future.

Although the points above are low or at no cost for now and can be swiftly implemented. These are recommendations that the PRRB can make now. The reality of wider impending reform is that it will cost money. Reform for officers that will last and provide improvement will not be free, and we need to enter reform in that spirit. For now, addressing the items that will set us up for success is a move in the right direction.

⁶⁰ See Winsor, *op. cit.*, Final Report Vol.2, pp.328-41.

Section 7 - Allowances

7.1 Summary of PFEW Recommendations

We ask that the PRRB consider and make recommendations on the following PFEW proposals on improvements to terms and conditions of service falling within the Police Consultative Forum (PCF) remit – the full details and supporting evidence are set out in the sections following this summary:

- 1. Rest days in lieu** – PFEW proposes that, as a matter of urgency, any rest days in lieu for constables and sergeants that remain outstanding after 3 months should have the option of being converted into pay. Inspectors and chief inspectors should have the option to convert any outstanding rest days in lieu into pay, once the 12-month threshold is breached. In addition, we need clear and accurate data to be recorded to provide a continual measure of the number of rest days being cancelled.
- 2. Compensation for rest days or free days cancelled for court warnings** – The PFEW proposes that rest days or free days that have been cancelled for court warnings should be compensated at time and one half (or an officer can elect time off in lieu) irrespective of whether 15 or more days' notice has been received.
- 3. Shift disturbance allowance** – Rosters must cover, at least, a three month period (90 days), published one month in advance and the PFEW proposes that any changes made to either the hours to be worked or the days to be worked, within this 90 day timeframe, should trigger payment of a shift disturbance allowance of £30 for each change, in addition to any other compensation.
- 4. Annual uprating of allowances** – In November 2023 the PFEW sought an increase either in line with inflation or the corresponding pay award, for all allowances set at a flat rate where there is no uprating mechanism in place. We again request that the PRRB recommend this as a basic measure against continual reduction on the real terms value of these allowances.
- 5. London and South East allowances** – The PFEW proposes that there should be a fundamental review to assess the standard of living for officers in London and the South East compared to the rest of England and Wales. Pending this, the PFEW proposes that the existing chief officer discretion to vary the amount of London and South East allowance payable should be removed and that the allowances should be paid at their maximum level.
- 6. Away from home overnight allowance and hardship allowance** – The PFEW proposes that the provisions governing the payment of the away from home

overnight allowance and the hardship allowance in England and Wales should be changed to mirror the provisions given to officers in Scotland.

- 7. On call – guidance to forces** – PFEW asks that the PRRB make a clear recommendation that the NPCC bring forward draft guidance to forces on the management and use of on call to the PCF for discussion and agreement with the staff associations and the APCC.
- 8. Unsocial hours allowance** – The PFEW seeks an increase to the percentage rate of the unsocial hours allowance for every full hour worked between 8pm and 6am on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 10% to 20% and for the allowance to be reckonable for pension purposes.
- 9. Protection allowance** – The PFEW proposes that the protection allowance should be uprated in line with the pay award and this should be backdated to 1 September 2021.
- 10. Protection allowance – rate 1 and payment of hardship allowance to protection officers** – The PFEW proposes that those protection officers in receipt of rate 1 should be paid at a rate equivalent to the away from home overnight allowance. In addition, all officers entitled to the protection allowance rate 1 should be entitled to the hardship allowance if the criteria fits and they are not provided with proper accommodation.
- 11. Compensation for periods of acting up** – The PFEW proposes that the acting up allowance should be abolished. Officers who are required to perform the duties normally performed by a member of a higher rank should be paid a temporary salary from day one of any period of acting up. All time spent acting up in receipt of a temporary salary should be reckonable for pay purposes in both the lower and higher ranks. The temporary salary should remain pensionable as it currently is.
- 12. Bonus payments** – The Home Office and NPCC should take steps to urgently collect accurate data on the use of bonus payments and team recognition awards to be shared with the PCF/PRRB alongside an Equality Impact Assessment so that the PCF/PRRB can conduct a proper review of bonus payments and team recognition awards. In tandem, the proposed NPCC guidance to forces should be shared with the PCF so that the PCF can assess whether the guidance will address the issues highlighted by the NPCC. Data should then continue to be collected and reviewed by the PCF, so the PCF is in a position to assess whether any guidance issued has addressed concerns about consistency or any issues highlighted in the EIA. In addition, the PFEW proposes that a set amount of force budgets should be ring fenced for bonus payments.

- 13. Payment of allowances when on reduced or no pay** – It is the PFEW’s position that the existing provisions governing the payment of allowances during reduced/nil pay should remain in place. There should not be an automatic trigger to withdraw payment when an officer is on unpaid leave, other than for those allowances paid to meet an expense which then ceases.
- 14. Targeted variable payments** – The PFEW’s position remains that, without suitable evidence that the Targeted Variable Payment scheme is effective and consistent, it cannot be made permanent. We ask that the PRRB concur with our position.
- 15. Inspecting ranks payments** – The PFEW proposes that the provisions of the Recognition of Workload Payment (TVP) scheme should be extended to members of the inspecting ranks as an interim, stop gap measure to compensate for excessive workload and hours worked, while we await the structural review and reform that is so desperately needed. In addition, a separate payment should be introduced for Inspectors and Chief Inspectors, to be claimed when more than 48 hours are worked in any week.
- 16. Detective’s allowance** – The PFEW proposes that a detective’s allowance should be introduced, to be paid at a rate of £1250 per annum, with effect from 1 September 2026 and uprated annually in line with the pay award. In addition, specific data should be collected with regards to the numbers of detectives, against target figures, in each force, so that the effectiveness of the allowance can be evaluated going forwards.
- 17. Pay progression standard (PPS)** – The PFEW proposes that any review of the Pay Progression Standard must be done in conjunction with a wider review of pay scales. The PPS cannot include any movement down the pay scale, nor can it be linked to misconduct.
- 18. NPCC proposal on statutory leave** – The PFEW asks that the PRRB reject the NPCC proposal for statutory employment changes to be applied automatically and concurrently to police officers through police regulations.
- 19. Changes to police regulations and determinations** – We urge the Home Office to take swift action to translate all outstanding agreements into police regulations and determinations as a matter of urgency: we ask the PRRB to support this and to make a recommendation that all outstanding agreements should be implemented by the Home Secretary by the end of 2026.
- 20. Family leave and pay** – The PFEW is calling for a *Charter for Change* that will provide a blueprint for a modern, compassionate police service. PFEW proposes that all officers should be entitled to family related leave from day one, i.e. no service requirements, on full pay because no officer should have to earn the

right to care for their child or grieve for their partner. Specifically, we are recommending improvements to terms and conditions on the following family leave and pay matters–

- **Carer’s leave and pay** – at least one week’s paid leave for carers and that where an officer has more than one dependant with a long-term care need this leave is increased, i.e. one week per dependent
- **Neonatal care leave & pay** – up to 12 week’s paid leave while a baby needs neonatal care
- **Maternity support and adoption support leave & pay** – as a starting point, at least two weeks’ paid leave immediately with a view to increasing this to six weeks’ paid leave. In addition, make provision for a main adopter to nominate a carer⁶¹
- **Maternity support and adoption support (bereavement) leave & pay** – officers to retain the right to maternity support and adoption support leave and pay where a mother (or mother and baby), or a person with whom a child is placed or expected to be placed for adoption, dies. In these circumstances, extend maternity support and adoption support leave to 52 weeks (on similar lines to maternity and adoption leave)
- **Death of premature baby – police maternity pay** – amend Annex L, paragraph 2(b)(ii) so that officers retain their full rights to police maternity leave and pay if a baby is born alive but dies before 24 weeks
- **Stillbirth and entitlement to leave & pay** – amend police regulations and determinations to make clear that where a child is stillborn at 24 weeks or more into a pregnancy that officers will retain their full entitlements to police maternity leave & pay, adoption leave & pay, maternity support and adoption support leave & pay, parental bereavement leave, time off for dependents and shared parental leave & pay (when provision is finally made in regulations & determinations)
- **Shared parental leave and pay** – to mirror the police maternity and adoption leave and pay provisions
- **Leave to attend ante-natal appointments with a pregnant woman** – paid leave to attend up to two ante-natal appointments (up to 6.5 hours including travel to and from) with a pregnant woman

⁶¹ ‘carer’ here means the main adopter can nominate someone to provide care and support to them at or around the time of placement. It is estimated that 11% of adopters are single. This would mirror the police maternity support leave provisions. This is not the same as someone who is a carer of another person with a long-term care need.

- **Leave to attend pre-adoption appointments** – paid leave to attend pre-adoption appointments. Up to five appointments for the primary adopter and up to two appointments in the case of a partner or nominated carer of a primary adopter (up to 6.5 hours including travel to and from)
- **Safe leave** – up to two weeks' paid leave for officers experiencing domestic abuse
- **Grandparents' leave** – up to one week's paid leave for members who become grandparents
- **Bereavement leave** – at least two weeks' paid leave on the death of a spouse (including cohabiting partner) and one week's paid leave for other immediate relatives/dependents (officers who experience death of a child under 18 years of age are already entitled to two weeks' paid leave)
- **Parental bereavement leave** – extend existing parental bereavement leave and pay provisions to officers who experience a pregnancy loss before 24 weeks. Increase to six weeks' paid leave to every officer in the event of the death of a child up to their 18th birthday or who experience a pregnancy loss before 24 weeks
- **Parental leave** – up to 18 weeks' paid parental leave for each child up to their 18th birthday
- **In addition**, before officers are deployed back to the front line following a period of family leave, there should never be a simple calculation based on the number of hours lost presented as a monetary value. There must be a proper risk assessment to determine how best to reintroduce officers to operational duty

21. Annual leave – The PFEW proposes that the time it takes to reach the maximum annual leave entitlement should be reduced to 5 years. In addition, officers should be able to either buy or sell up to 5 days' annual leave at the start of each annual leave year (over and above the WTR minimum of 28 days).

22. Long service leave – The PFEW seeks a one-off period of 6 weeks' long service leave for federated ranks officers who have served for 10 or more years. This would be separate, and additional to, the annual leave (& public holidays) entitlement.

23. Recuperative leave – The PFEW seeks a period of up to three days' paid recuperative leave following an injury on duty or exposure to a traumatic event. Data on the use of recuperative leave should be collected and used to inform force wellbeing policies.

7.2 PFEW Proposals on Improvements to Terms and Conditions of Service Falling Within the PCF Remit

As part of our call for fairness, reform and compassion we are seeking a number of improvements to members' terms and conditions.

Officers' terms and conditions should demonstrate organisational justice and fairness. Officers should be rewarded appropriately for their skills, knowledge, attributes, hours worked, sacrifices made, and the risks and demands of the job. We agree with the PRRB that the employment offer must promote the well-being of officers and an acceptable work-life balance. Organisations are increasingly using innovative ways of attracting and retaining the best talent. Policing must do the same.

The Policing Vision sets out that by 2030 policing aims to be a representative workforce in all ranks. The PFEW believes that the key to this is a reward framework that attracts, retains and motivates high calibre officers with the right skills and maturity to manage the complexity of modern policing given the unique demands of policing. Voluntary resignations continue to increase at an alarming rate and are highest amongst women and officers from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

The crucial issue of effective workforce planning and workload management, yet again, remains a huge barrier to reform as does the lack of a workforce strategy, or at least a draft, as requested by the PRRB last year, and poor quality data collected by forces and the Home Office. Poor workforce planning has a massive impact in every area, from officer morale and wellbeing to the service provided to the public. We call for urgent attention to this issue so that forces are required to regularly review their local resource management policies and ensure that they are robustly being applied.

To address the issues identified we have set out below much needed increases to existing allowances, the creation of new allowances and payments and our Charter for Change which would create a comprehensive set of family leave provisions to provide a blueprint for a modern, compassionate police service.

7.2.1 Workforce and resource management

Policing is a profession where unexpected events require the cancellation of leave, rest days and disruption to shifts.

However, poorly designed shift patterns, particularly those involving long shifts of 11 and 12 hours, which fail to adopt a balanced scorecard approach⁶² too often result in difficulties matching supply with demand, more use of overtime, more short notice

⁶² the elements of which are supply/demand, officer welfare, manageability and external factors including service to the public and value for money - as set out in Accenture's 2004 report on force rostering arrangements (Home Office circular 068/2004)

changes to the roster, more cancelled rest days and more difficulties with managing annual leave.

Guidance has been issued to forces on numerous occasions, most recently by the NPCC NRT (Advice note 15), however we have seen no evidence that forces are taking steps to improve workforce planning and management. All police officers understand that they can be recalled to duty at any time and rosters can be changed subject to exigencies of duty. However, poor rostering practices are not a justification for excessive use of being placed on call, being recalled to duty, having short notice changes to their roster, officers being unable to fully recuperate on their rest days and unable to take their annual leave entitlement. The PFEW Pay & Morale Survey 2024 found that working conditions remained a major driver of low officer morale, affecting two-thirds of respondents.

We seek agreement to the following PFEW proposals which we believe will help incentivise forces to improve their workforce planning policies and reduce the burden on our members.

7.2.1.1 Rest Days – rest days in lieu

Officers in the federated ranks are entitled to rest days at the rate of two per week. These are essential to provide rest and recuperation from the strenuous demands of working as a police officer. However, these days are regularly cancelled and officers required to work, often for long hours at short notice, depriving them of a much needed break.

It is vital that the protections provided for in police regulations and determinations are adhered to by forces. Rest days should only be cancelled due to exigencies of duty, and these should be kept to an absolute minimum by improved workforce planning. Rest days cancelled with 15 days or more notice should be re-rostered within four days, so that officers know when the re-rostered days will fall and can make arrangements and plan accordingly. However, in practice this does not happen and there is no penalty on a force for not complying with regulations and determinations.

Detailed considerations

Disappointingly, our 2024 Pay and Morale survey found that two-thirds of respondents had rest days cancelled, an increase on the year before. This coupled with the difficulties faced by taking annual leave means that officers are facing an untenable situation. Many officers find themselves with large numbers of rest days owed to them, with no expectation of when they will be afforded the days' rest. Forces must urgently take action to reduce the number of rest days owed to officers.

We appreciate the comments from the PRRB last year raising concern about the situation. PFEW's position remains that for constables and sergeants any rest days in

lieu that remain outstanding after 3 months should have the option of being converted into pay. This would replicate the current provisions for time off in lieu (TOIL) of overtime and rest days cancelled with less than 15 days' notice, whereby payment becomes due after three months (if the TOIL hasn't been granted).

For the Inspecting ranks, rest days in lieu should be granted within the following 12 months (or over a further 12-month period due to exceptional circumstances, exigencies of duty or work demands). The PFEW's position remains that Inspectors and Chief Inspectors should have the option to convert this into pay, once the 12-month threshold is breached.

We have been disappointed with the approach taken by the NPCC throughout 2025 on this issue. Instead of seeking to discuss our specific proposal (as encouraged by the PRRB) they presented to us a package of changes in November, which includes a variation of our proposal set out above but sat alongside a worsening of officers entitlements in a range of other areas; and for the changes to be agreed as a package (or not at all). Separately, an advice note has been issued by the NPCC NRT on the issue of rest days in lieu, but we have seen no demonstrable improvement for our members.

As far as we understand the current NPCC position (which is subject to agreement by Chief Constables' Council in January 2026), they are seeking a package of changes called an 'additional hours' agreement, as follows:

- NPCC Guidance to suggest time off in lieu for the inspecting and superintending ranks for time worked when on call, within agreed parameters (which have not been set out to PFEW)
- 5 rest days per year to be 'carried over' as outstanding days in lieu, for all ranks
- Constable and Sergeants: payment for rest days in lieu if not taken after three months (but over and above the 5 days to be 'carried over')
- Inspecting and superintending ranks (and potentially chief officer ranks): payment for rest days in lieu not taken within 12 months (over and above the 5 days carried over)
- An ambition for all outstanding rest days in lieu to be taken over a three-year period
- **To remove** the right of an officer to choose to work a rest day that has been cancelled and then reinstated at short notice (7 days or less)
- **To remove** the entitlement to pay, at the appropriate rate of either time and a half or double time for a minimum of four hours on a rest day or public holiday (if less than four hours are worked). To replace this with time and a third (the overtime rate) for each 15 min period worked

These are proposed to take effect from April 2027 (with the exception of the first bullet point which is proposed to start in September 2026).

The PFEW cannot agree to this package. It has only recently been raised for discussion, and it represents a significant reduction in the terms and conditions and protections of our members overall. It is the fault of forces that poor workforce planning and rostering has led to our members paying the price in terms of lost rest days. It is disappointing that the NPCC has offered to fix this problem but only in exchange for officers losing out in other areas.

The NPCC proposal is for payment only at the 3 month or 12-month point. The PFEW wants the payment to be optional – i.e. at the choice of the officer. Officers should be receiving the rest days they are entitled to. If an officer decides that they need rest and recuperation as a priority (rather than selecting to take the payment) then this should be provided.

The current provisions in respect of an officer choosing to work a day that has been cancelled (and then reinstated at short notice) and the minimum four hours payment (when less than four hours are worked on a rest day or public holiday) are significant protections for officers against the regular pattern of short notice working with the consequential problems that arise for morale and wellbeing that we are seeking to address with a shift alteration allowance.

Members who have been notified of a requirement to work on a rest day or public holiday will in all likelihood have rearranged plans or made alternative arrangements for dependents for that day and it may not be possible to change these again at short notice, so the officer should be able to choose whether to continue to work on that day or not. The NPCC proposal will do nothing to prevent, and in all likelihood will increase, abuse by forces of the provisions governing cancellation of rest days.

The NPCC proposal to remove the minimum four-hour payment and change the rate to time and one third would mean that there was no distinction between working additional hours on a duty day and a non-duty day.

In any event the current use of both provisions can be significantly reduced by better workforce planning: it is in the gift of the chief officer to do so. A survey of our members conducted in December 2025 found that:

- 78% of respondents opposed the NPCC's proposed change to the provisions covering the reinstatement of rest days at short notice.
- 85% of respondents opposed to the NPCC's proposal to change the provisions governing compensation for working into a rest day or a public holiday.

PFEW recommendations

Our proposal should be implemented as a matter of urgency: for constables and sergeants, any rest days in lieu that remain outstanding after 3 months should have the option of being converted into pay. Inspectors and chief inspectors should have the option to convert any outstanding rest days in lieu into pay, once the 12 month threshold is breached.

In addition, we need clear and accurate data to be recorded to provide a continual measure the full extent of the problem.

Further to this we ask that clear guidance is given to forces that any outstanding rest days in lieu at the end of service, irrespective of how service ends, are converted into pay. It simply can't be the case that officers are not compensated for lost rest days in lieu at the end of service because of non-compliance with police regulations and poor management practices. To not pay officers would be to reduce their pay, potentially significantly, from the time the oldest rest day in lieu was owed.

7.2.1.2 Compensation for rest days or free days cancelled for court warnings

When officers are required as a court witness, we accept that an officer's duty roster can be altered so that they can attend. This is an exigency of duty. The provisions governing compensation for a requirement to work on a rest day or a free day are set out in Annex H to Police Regulation 26. The main elements being that an officer is given a clear indication that they are required to do duty on the day in question and when notified of a requirement to do duty with 15 or more days' notice they are entitled to another rest day, to be notified within four days. If less than 15 days' notice is given an allowance is payable or the officer can elect to receive time off in lieu.

We are concerned that forces are cancelling officer's rest days and free days for the entire period when a court warning is issued and the adverse consequences this has on officers' work-life balance and the ability to rest and recuperate, which may be hugely reduced. Such cancellations are also likely to involve additional costs for childcare or other dependents. It is likely that most cancelled days will involve the officer waiting to appear at court.

PFEW recommendation

The PFEW therefore proposes that rest day or free day compensation at time and one half (or an officer can elect time off in lieu) should be introduced for court warnings irrespective of whether 15 or more days' notice has been received.

7.2.1.3 Shift disturbance allowance

We raised this issue for the first time in our pay positioning paper last year. We are seeking the introduction of a new allowance to compensate officers for changes to their shifts, often made at very short notice and after a roster has already been published notifying officers when they can expect to be working.

Detailed considerations

Rosters should only be changed due to exigencies of duty which is defined as a 'pressing need'. However, changes are made at an alarming rate, many due to poor rostering and workforce management which could be avoided with better planning.

The PFEW Pay and Morale Survey 2024 showed that, in 2023, only 21% of respondents never had a roster changed once published. In 2024 that fell even further to a mere 17%. In addition, in 2024, 83% of respondents had rosters changed due to exigencies of duty, with one in five (20 per cent) having this happen more than 10 times – roughly once a month. We are grateful for the PRRB's comments last year that echoed our own concerns around poor management practices, and we agree that the introduction of a shift alteration allowance would help to deter such practices. We are disappointed that the NPCC has decided not to look at our proposal this year.

As noted above, the NPCC NRT's proposals on additional hours and rest days look to address issues of poor workforce planning through a potential worsening of our members' entitlements. It is in the hands of chief officers to address this, and they need to address this urgently. The PFEW's proposals with regards to rest days in lieu and the shift alteration allowance put the onus back on chief officers to take matters in hand or otherwise compensate officers accordingly. This is the fairest approach.

Short notice requirements to work have a disruptive effect on officers and their families and often have a financial impact as well. Plans with family and friends have to be cancelled. Costs relating to either childcare or the care of other family members are incurred and often at a high premium when at short notice. In fact, even when rest days are cancelled and re-rostered there will be implications for the 'new' rest day as well. For example, the rescheduled rest day will likely fall on days on which childcare and care costs have previously been arranged and paid for.

Attempts were made to look at this issue in the 2010 PNB (10/5) maternity guidance. A dependent's care allowance was agreed and the circular stated that "*forces should bear in mind that officers with caring responsibilities may experience particular difficulties when they return to work on non-duty days. Forces should not require officers to attend work without due consideration of the disruption to the officer's care arrangements and the additional costs that may be incurred. Forces should give consideration to formulating local arrangements in support of this*". Unfortunately, because this was guidance and therefore not put into determinations it has not been supported by forces.

In addition, we are aware of payments made to police staff, which can mean officers are used to fill gaps rather than staff, given the financial consequences of using staff members. Two types of payments are made to police staff: payments for short notice changes to start time and payment and other arrangements for an employee who works on a day not originally published/scheduled, see the Police Staff Council Handbook⁶³.

Police officers fully understand the need to be available when emergency situations arise and they undertake this with no complaints. However, when changes are made to cover foreseeable and expected events that could and should have been planned for, this has consequences for officer's morale and wellbeing.

This has been an on-going issue for an incredibly long time, and it shows no sign of abating, without a financial disincentive being placed on forces. Officers need a level of certainty around when they will be expected to work, with changes only being made due to unforeseen emergencies.

PFEW recommendation

Rosters must cover, at least, a three month period (90 days), published one month in advance and the PFEW proposes that any changes made to either the hours to be worked or the days to be worked on, within this 90 day timeframe, should trigger payment of a shift disturbance allowance of £30 for each change, in addition to any other compensation.

It's our view that this figure would provide some acknowledgement to officers of the difficulties they face and would act as an incentive to forces to ensure rosters are properly planned and managed. It is our hope that these underlying issues are addressed.

7.2.2 Allowances and other pay related matters

As outlined in our pay positioning document last year, PFEW seeks changes to existing allowances and makes recommendations on the creation of a number of new allowances and payments, which we believe will help improve officer morale, motivation and wellbeing and help incentivise chief officers to address underlying problems of poor workforce planning.

7.2.2.1 PCF review of allowances

In September 2022, the PFEW proposed that the Police Consultative Forum commence a rolling programme for a review of allowances. In January 2024, the PCF agreed a priority order for the structured review of all allowances. Since 2017, the PFEW has sought agreement that all allowances be reckonable for pension purposes.

⁶³ Local Government Association (2022). *Police Staff Council handbook*. <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/workforce-and-hr-support/police/police-staff/police-staff-council-handbook> (publicly available)

PFEW hoped that a full review and detailed discussion would take place at PCF on each allowance being considered for that year. However, this has not proved possible. We are concerned that the NPCC, as with other items we raise at PCF, simply see the PCF as a place to report NPCC positions with a view to then asking the PRRB to make a decision on each allowance as it arises.

The PFEW therefore finds itself in the disappointing position of also looking to the PRRB for a recommendation on the allowances on the PCF agenda this year.

PFEW recommendation

In November 2023 the PFEW sought an increase either in line with inflation or the corresponding pay award, for all allowances set at a flat rate where there is no uprating mechanism in place. Given that the NPCC are reluctant to put in place annual uprating mechanisms for any allowances that haven't previously had this agreed and implemented, we again request that the PRRB recommend this as a basic measure against continual reduction on the real terms value of these allowances.

7.2.2.1.1 PCF review of allowances – year 1

7.2.2.1.1.1 London and South East allowances

The London and South East England allowances (commonly referred to as “*South East allowance*”) were designed to address recruitment and retention difficulties.

In 2000, the rate of the London allowance was increased for those officers appointed on or after 1 September 1994 due to a worsening recruitment and retention situation among the post 1 September 1994 group of officers.

In 2001, the South East allowance was introduced to address recruitment and retention difficulties in south east forces: Hampshire & IoW, Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Thames Valley, Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire.

The provisions governing the payment of London and South East allowances, London Transitional Supplement and South East Transitional Supplement are set out in Annex U to Police Regulation 34. These are summarised in the attached Appendix.

Detailed considerations

The PCF originally scheduled the review of the London and South East allowances in year 2 but it was brought forward to year 1 at the request of the NPCC NRT.

The NRT submitted a paper to the PCF in December 2024 stating NPCC's position was for no change to the South East allowance, but that from September 2026, the NPCC recommendation would be to implement an annual uplift aligned to the annual pay award. This position was confirmed in the NPCC's PRRB submission 2025. No proposals

were submitted to the PCF by the NPCC regarding London allowance however the NPCC PRRB submission included a recommendation to uplift the maximum limit for the London allowance in line with the annual pay award with effect from September 2025.

The APCC told the PRRB that there was a clear rationale for uprating the allowances annually in line with the pay award to ensure they maintained their value relative to pay awards. The MPS told the PRRB that it supported the proposal to uplift the maximum limit of London Allowance in line with pay.

As set out in the PFEW's pay positioning document, the PFEW proposed that chief officer discretion to vary the amount of London and South East allowances payable should be removed so that all officers in a force area are paid the current force maximum, as set out in Police Regulation 34, Annex U.

In its report, the PRRB said that it would consider the proposals to uplift London and South East allowances in line with pay in the next pay round (2026) in line with market practice in other organisations. The PRRB also noted that time was needed to evaluate the impact of changes to arrangements for determining starting salaries and the increase to London allowance that came into effect on 1 April 2025. To this end, the PRRB invited parties to provide evidence in 2026. As set out in our pay positioning document last year, the PFEW again proposes that the discretion for chief officers to vary the amount of London or South East allowance payable (& London Transitional Supplement) should be removed. This is because the discretionary element risks the allowances not being increased, or even lowered which has recently happened in Essex, and that over time the value of the allowances decreases. Without the discretion being removed there is a risk that forces will not follow the evidence and recommendation of both the PRRB and Home Secretary.

Given the competitive labour market and the cost of living in London and the South East the value of the allowances must be set and maintained at a level that helps attract, recruit and retain sufficient, capable and motivated officers to help meet operational demand. The PFEW proposes that there should be a fundamental review to assess the standard of living of officers in London and the South East compared to the rest of England and Wales.

The PFEW believes that the continuing cost of living crisis, especially housing costs, makes recruitment and retention challenging in London and South East forces. The cost of living in London and the South East is unattainable for many officers, particularly new recruits but also long-serving officers. Research by the PFEW highlights the issue of housing affordability for new starters. In particular:

- In London rent consumes 67% of starting pay⁶⁴ more than double the 30% rent affordability benchmark

⁶⁴ Bottom pay point on constables' pay scale

- In the South East rent accounts for 41% of starting pay
- In London, the house price to income ratio is 13.9, much higher than the 3 x annual pay benchmark, making home ownership for new constables out of reach
- In the South East this ratio is 9.6, again making home ownership out of reach
- Throughout London and the South East the home price to income ratio far exceeds the 3.0 affordability benchmark, demonstrating that home ownership has been out of reach for new constables for over 20 years.

Longer serving officers are also struggling in London and the South East with the cost of living including housing costs, particularly when they are considering starting a family. Typical child care costs, food prices and transport costs are also far higher in London and the South East all of which, taken together, we believe significantly contributes to the ability of forces in London and the South East to attract and recruit new officers and to retain sufficient numbers of officers, whether in their early years of service or longer serving, to meet operational demands and reforms such as the Government's Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee. For this reason, the PFEW believes that there should be a fundamental review to assess the standard of living for officers in London and the South East compared with the rest of England and Wales.

We are aware that there is less recruitment this year. Attrition appears to be worsening in London and the South East. This is illustrated when figures for joiners and voluntary resignations at constable rank in London and South East forces in 2023-24⁶⁵ and 2024-25⁶⁶ are compared:

⁶⁵ Home Office (2024). *Police workforce, England and Wales: 31 March 2024*.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2024> (publicly available)

⁶⁶ Home Office (2025). *Police workforce, England and Wales: 31 March 2025 (second edition)*.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2025> (publicly available)

Joiners (standard recruitment) and Leavers (voluntary resignations) at constable rank

	Year ending 31 March 2024	Year ending 31 March 2025
Joiners at constable rank in London forces	1,652	1,231
Voluntary resignations at constable rank in London forces	1,764	1,573
Difference/balance	(112)	(342)
Joiners at constable rank in MPS	1,629	1,197
Voluntary resignations at constable rank in MPS	1,707	1,532
Difference/balance	(78)	(335)
Joiners in South East forces	2,065	1,663
Voluntary resignations in South East forces	1,403	1,338
Difference/balance	662	325

In the year ending 31 March 2025, forces in London saw a net loss of 342 constables at constable rank (this is largely accounted for by the MPS who saw a loss of 335 constables). This is a three-fold increase (and a four-fold increase in the MPS) from the year ending 31 March 2024. Similarly, whilst South East forces continued to recruit more constables than those who voluntarily resigned in the year ending 31 March 2025 there has been a reduction in numbers joining, resulting in an almost 50 per cent reduction from 662 in year ending 31 March 2024 to 325 in year ending 31 March 2025 in the ratio of joiners/leavers.

The PFEW Pay and Morale survey 2024 found that 68% of respondents who received the London or South East allowance were dissatisfied with the amount of the allowance. A slight increase from 2023 when 66% were dissatisfied. 35% of respondents said that the allowance affected their decision to join and over half (52%) said that it influences their intention to stay within their force.

PFEW recommendations

London and South East allowances were designed to address recruitment and retention difficulties. The competitive labour market and the cost of living in both London and the South East are significantly impacting on the ability of forces to attract, recruit and retain sufficient numbers of officers to meet operational demand. The allowances must be set at such a rate that they help attract sufficient recruits and retain them through their early years and similarly retain the quality and experience of long-serving officers who are also struggling with the cost of living in London and the South East. The PFEW proposes that there should be a fundamental review to assess the standard of living for officers in London and the South East compared to the rest of England and Wales. Pending this, the PFEW proposes that the existing chief officer discretion to vary the amount of London and South East allowance payable should be removed and that all officers should be paid the maximum amount.

7.2.2.1.1.2 Mutual aid/held in reserve/away from home overnight allowance

Last year we submitted proposals for a revised package for officers who are held in reserve. The current allowance is paid when an officer is held in reserve, and the appropriate criteria are met and this can be when an officer is deployed on mutual aid or not. The PFEW looked to mirror the provisions in place for police officers in Scotland. The PRRB increased both the away from home and hardship allowance and, in addition, commented that:

- the term 'Hardship Allowance' should be reviewed in the interests of clarity;
- that advice should be issued to forces to clarify what constitutes routine enquiries and to set standard expectations for accommodation.
- The coherence of the package of entitlements for officer on mutual aid should be reviewed and guidance on the package issued to forces. In particular, that thought should be given to officer welfare and to ensure that they receive some uninterrupted rest time while on deployment.

The NPCC has not looked to develop or clarify the package of entitlements for mutual aid, or review the term, 'hardship allowance' following the 2025 PRRB report. An advice note was issued in May (and reissued in July when we raised concerns that we had not had an opportunity to provide comments). However there has been no discernible change to the confusion in forces and inconsistency of payments to officers when held in reserve, whether on mutual aid or otherwise.

The PFEW still has significant concerns with the operation of both the away from home overnight allowance and the hardship allowance. In particular the term 'routine enquiries' continues to be problematic, and this needs urgent resolution. It's our view that the wording of the determination, at Annex U to Police Regulation 34, is the source

of many of these difficulties and directly results in significant inconsistencies in payments to officers.

Furthermore, the definition of held in reserve as set out in Annex U has been clarified in the judgment in *Prior & others v The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis and Justin Fielding & others v The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis*, which found that “it is the need to be ready for immediate deployment from the specified overnight accommodation that prevents the officer from returning home. Home is too far away”. The ‘immediate deployment’ would normally refer to the start of the next day’s shift, to be performed away from the normal place of duty”. This judgment means that officers should always be paid the away from home overnight allowance when they are required to stay overnight and be available for duty the next day and not just in limited circumstances as currently happens under the narrower interpretation of immediate deployment. It has now been reflected in the prevailing NPoCC guidance to forces on mutual aid operations but needs to be reflected in the determination at Annex U for all officers held in reserve.

We believe that our proposals outlined in our pay positioning paper last year would address the issues identified above.

PFEW recommendations

The away from home overnight allowance and the hardship allowance are not due to be reviewed by the PCF for a further two years. Given the ongoing issues outlined above, we seek a recommendation from the PRRB that the provisions governing the payment of the Away from Home Overnight allowance and Hardship allowance in England and Wales should be changed to mirror the provisions given to officers in Scotland. This would provide a solution to many of the problems by ensuring consistent decision making as well as adequately compensating members for the disruption to their private lives.

7.2.2.1.1.3 On call allowance

We welcomed the PRRB’s recommendation last year to increase the rate of the allowance to £35 and your comments that the on-call allowance may be providing compensation to officers for poor management practices that are impacting on officer wellbeing and work life balance and that these underlying problems should be addressed.

The NPCC advised you that guidance on the use of on call would be issued shortly to reconfirm the provisions of regulations and determinations and to advise forces that on call should not be used on days of annual leave, rest days and free days. Regrettably, such guidance has not been issued to forces. To assist the process during the summer the PFEW provided the NPCC NRT with another copy of draft guidance that the Police Consultative Forum had previously considered but to date we have received nothing further from the NRT.

PFEW recommendation

We ask that the PRRB make a clear recommendation that the NPCC should bring forward draft guidance to forces on the management and use of on call to the Police Consultative Forum for discussion and agreement with the staff associations and the APCC.

7.2.2.1.2 PCF review of allowances - Year 2

7.2.2.1.2.1 Unsocial hours allowance

The Unsocial Hours Allowance is payable to all members of the federated ranks for every full hour worked by the member between 8pm and 6am. The allowance is paid at an hourly rate of 10 per cent of the member's hourly rate of pay.

The PFEW seeks an increase to the percentage rate for every full hour worked between 8pm and 6am on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 10% to 20% and for the allowance to be reckonable for pension purposes.

Detailed considerations

The allowance was introduced in 2012. The Winsor review recommended that an unsocial hours premium should be added to pay to recognise that officers working unsocial hours, whether occasionally, or on a regular basis, are doing something which is more onerous – for themselves and their families – than those who work normal office hours.

Unsocial hours duties are widespread, however the operational burden is concentrated among frontline constables, many of which will be young in age and therefore likely to be young in service. The burden for working unsocial hours therefore falls on those lowest paid officers. The time is right to review the allowance and increase the rate for working unsocial hours at the weekend.

Home Office Pay Census data 2024-25

Key findings show

- Constables (80.8%) represent the largest group of recipients, reflecting their extensive night, weekend, and shift work commitments
- The majority of recipients (60.9%) are aged 25–44, the most operationally active cohort. This figure increases to 66.9% for constables aged between 25-44
- The latest NPCC report shared with the PCF shows that the vast majority of officers receiving the allowance are response officers: Incident (Response) Management at 37,780 officers. The next highest is local investigation/prisoner processing at 12,290 officers.

Comparator data

The allowance paid to officers lags behind that paid across the private and public sector, especially when compared to that offered in other emergency and healthcare occupations. The current rates do not fully reflect the demands of unsocial hours working.

The NPCC NRT paper shared with PCF in December acknowledges that the percentage rate for officers is lower than market practice across both the public and private sector.

A 2024 report into H&S of night work⁶⁷ notes Labour Research Department data on shift premia which show (through a survey of collective agreements) that night shift premia vary widely, but the average and median are both 30% of the equivalent day rate.

IDR survey results across different sectors found that

- An annual shift premium is paid by two-thirds of respondents of between 12.5% and 35% (33% at the median)
- An annual shift premium is paid to one-third of respondents at just over £5,000 at the median

Specific examples:

- Prison Officers (Band 3 – National) receive 20% between 8pm and 6am
- Firefighters are paid a pensionable supplement of 20% of basic pay if they are on the flexible duty system (between 7pm – 7am)
- Nottingham City Council pays 33% of salary between 11pm to 6am
- Network Rail pays 33% between 8pm and 6am

With regards to weekend work:

- Police staff in England and Wales receive time and a half (50%) for weekend work (at any time) and time and a third (30%) for night work (between 8pm and 6am) but not both at the same time⁶⁸.
- NHS provides an allowance of varying rates for unsocial hours worked:
 - 30% for pay bands 4-9 on Saturdays (midnight to midnight) and any weekday (8pm – 6am)
 - 60% for pay bands 4-10 on Sundays (midnight to midnight)

It is of particular concern to the PFEW that the increased cost and impact of working unsocial hours falls on the lowest paid officers, who are working on the frontline. These

⁶⁷ Moore, S. & Ballardie, R. (2024). *The Health and Safety Impacts of Night Working*. [nightworkresearchreport.pdf](#) (publicly available)

⁶⁸ Police staff can also receive an allowance for irregular hours (18.30 to 0700) of 7.5% & 10% however, again, only one allowance is payable at a time, ie it's not payable if employee qualifies for T1/2 weekend rate or T1/3 night work rate

officers are acutely aware of the implications and consequences of working evening, nights and early mornings. In addition, these shifts are often for 12 hours and there are dangers associated with both night working and longer shifts.

The 2024 report into the health and safety impacts of night work (cited above) found that

- a substantial international body of work has demonstrated that night and shift work are linked to a wide range of mental and physical health conditions (Torquati, et al., 2019; Moreno, et al., 2019; Gurubhagavatula, et al., 2021).
- these conditions have significant effects on workers, but also their relationships, families and social lives (Arlinghaus, 2019)

There are therefore wide-ranging issues prevalent in relation to officer wellbeing, health and morale. In addition, there can be a financial impact to working unsocial hours.

It is unacceptable that officers must undertake this requirement without appropriate compensation. Friday, Saturdays and Sundays are the days of the week where this burden will be felt most. Children are at home for cherished family time. Paid childcare or dependent care during late evenings and overnight at the weekend is rare and carries a significant premium where it is provided.

In addition, wider family members and friends are available to meet and social occasions are almost always held on these evenings. Police officers accept that working at such times is a part of the job but the impact on mental health and wellbeing of being absent from such occasions on a regular basis shouldn't be underestimated.

If attrition continues to increase, the burden of working unsocial hours will be shared between fewer officers (meaning more hours needing to be worked per officer, placing a greater impact on the working life balance of those officers). The PRRB noted this year that the voluntary resignation rate is highest for constables and remains high in the early years of service. In addition, that one-third of officers have less than five years' service.

Last year's PRRB report urged that the police service's employment offer promote the wellbeing of officers and an acceptable work-life balance. We believe the unsocial hours allowance is a crucial part of this package.

Forces should ensure sufficient numbers of officers are available to work between 8pm and 6am but it should be only those needed and not an arbitrary and/or unnecessarily high number. Proper workforce management should be utilised here, and the rate of the allowance should be set high enough to ensure this happens.

We believe a higher rate for Friday, Saturday and Sunday would ensure adequate compensation is provided to officers *and* act as a tool to help forces focus on better

workforce planning: to ensure *only* those officers needed are rostered to work. If the allowance is set too low, then it will not act as disincentive to forces. We believe a higher rate at the weekend would have a positive effect on equality considerations and encourage officers into (or to stay in) response roles. It will help to attract experienced officers into public-facing roles.

PFEW recommendations

The PFEW seeks an increase to the percentage rate for every full hour worked between 8pm and 6am on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 10% to 20% and for the allowance to be reckonable for pension purposes.

7.2.2.1.2.2 Protection allowance

The protection allowance came into effect from 1 December 2020. It is paid, at three different rates, to federated ranks officers who are undertaking Core Protection Duties. Consideration of this allowance was brought forward to year 2 at the request of the NPCC NRT. No formal proposal has been put to PCF, from the NPCC, on the protection allowance but we understand that they will be proposing an £8 increase to the rates of the allowance to the PRRB.

Detailed considerations

When the allowance was first created, a business case was presented to PCF in 2018 setting out the new allowance. The business case detailed that the MPS would support the Protection Allowance being uprated annually in line with the annual pay award, to ‘ensure the amounts of the proposed protection allowance stay in line with inflation’. The PCF agreed the business case, and it was sent to the Home Office in February 2019. The allowance was implemented in line with the PCF agreement, with effect from 2020, after being translated into Annex U, under Regulation 34. However, the agreement for an annual uprating has not been adhered to.

The table below shows the rates, had they been uplifted in line with annual pay awards, for illustration purposes:

Effective date	Uplift	Rate 1	Rate 2		Rate 3	
			Cons & sergs	Inspecting ranks	Cons & sergs	Inspecting ranks
-	-	-				
1/12/20	-	40	90	125	125	160
1/9/21	-	-	-	-	-	-
1/9/22	5%	42	95	132	132	168
1/9/23	7%	45	102	142	142	180
1/9/24	4.75%	47	107	150	150	189
1/9/25	4.25%	49	112	157	157	197

In addition, an issue has arisen with regards to protection officers in receipt of rate 1 protection allowance (currently paid at a rate £40 per shift). Those officers are being compensated less than other officers when required to stay away from home. For example, they could be on the same mutual aid commitment and staying in the same accommodation as officers who are paid the Away from Home overnight allowance (£60) and, where appropriate, the Hardship allowance (£40). Officers paid the protection allowance are not entitled to claim the AfH or hardship allowance. We believe that this is unfair, and those officers entitled to the protection allowance rate 1 should be paid at a rate equivalent to the AfH allowance. In addition, those on rate 1 should be entitled to the hardship allowance if the criteria fits and they are not provided with proper accommodation.

PFEW recommendation

As PFEW noted last year the Home Office has not uprated the protection allowance in line with the pay award and the rates remain as first introduced in 2020. The allowance for rate 2 and rate 3 should be uprated in line with the pay award and this should be backdated to 1 September 2021, see table above.

Those protection officers in receipt of rate 1 should be paid at a rate equivalent to the AfH allowance. In addition, all officers entitled to the protection allowance at rate 1 should be entitled to the hardship allowance if the criteria fits and they are not provided with proper accommodation.

7.2.2.1.2.3 Acting up allowance

The acting up allowance is payable to a member who is acting up in a higher rank. There is a 10-day qualification period in any year (being a 12-month period beginning on 1 April) then from day 11, the member receives the allowance up to a maximum of 46 days in respect of any one continuous period of acting up. After 46 days, if an officer continues to act up, they will be paid a temporary salary, paid at the rate they would be paid on promotion to the higher rank.

The provisions governing the payment of the acting up allowance, temporary salary and pay on temporary promotion are summarised in the attached Appendix. The provisions governing the use of and qualifications for periods of temporary promotion are set out in the Police (Promotion) Regulations 1996. These Regulations fall within the remit of the College of Policing. For clarity, the PFEW's proposal only covers compensation arrangements for periods of acting up not temporary promotion.

The PFEW's proposal was initially outlined in the PFEW's pay positioning document last year. A copy of PFEW's detailed proposal was sent to the NPCC NRT in May 2025. We welcome the PRRB's suggestion that the NPCC consider PFEW's proposal to simplify the compensation arrangements for periods of acting up. We have seen a copy of an NRT paper submitted to the NPCC PCS Board in September 2025. The PCS Board

endorsed the recommendations of the NRT to issue NPCC guidance, gather data and review the allowance in two years' time. As the PCF had agreed in January 2024 to review the acting up allowance in year 2 (2025) and in light of the PRRB's comments, it is extremely disappointing that the NRT has not considered data requirements prior to the planned PCF review.

Detailed considerations

In 2008, the Police Negotiating Board reached agreement on the compensation arrangements for periods of acting up and temporary promotion (PNB circular 08/4). At that time officers were paid a temporary salary for all periods of acting up of any duration. The PNB agreed to amend the qualifying period for the payment of temporary salary to ten days each year for all ranks. The PNB also agreed that officers should no longer pay pension contributions on any temporary salary for short periods of acting up (up to 56 days). This was because the way the final salary pension scheme in place at the time operated many of those officers saw no benefit in paying those additional pension contributions on any temporary salary received for short periods of acting up. This agreement required an amendment to the Police Pension Regulations. The PNB agreed that temporary salary for periods of acting up over 56 days would continue to be pensionable.

The PNB also provided guidance to forces on the use of acting up and temporary promotion. In particular, the PNB agreed that acting up should be used for short term cover (56 days maximum) following which officers would be temporarily promoted unless in the case of promotion to the rank of sergeant or inspector an officer is not qualified for promotion in accordance with the Police (Promotion) Regulations 1996 or if a chief officer is responding to an overwhelming operational emergency in which case an officer would continue to act up and be paid a temporary salary instead. In addition, temporary promotion should be used from the outset for longer term arrangements such as long-term sickness absence, maternity cover or individual projects.

The agreement set out in PNB circular 08/4 was finally translated into police regulations and determinations in 2012. The acting up allowance was created during this process. To avoid the need to amend the police pension regulations, Home Office lawyers proposed instead the creation of the acting up allowance for short periods of acting up to 56 days.

Since 2008 there have been two significant changes which are now having an impact: the introduction of the Police Pension Scheme (PPS) 2015 and the introduction of National Police Promotion Framework (NPPF) in 2015

As a career average scheme, paying pension contributions in the PPS 2015 on a higher salary would benefit officers no matter what length of time they are performing the duties of a higher rank. However, as things currently stand, no pension contributions can be made during the first 56 days of acting up and officers are losing out.

In addition, each year officers need to complete a 10-day qualifying period to trigger an entitlement to the acting up allowance. This means each year, forces are benefiting from officers performing the duties of a higher rank, without having to pay those officers for doing so.

PFEW therefore proposes that the acting up allowance should be abolished and that officers are paid a temporary salary from day one for any period of acting up when they are required to perform the duties of a higher rank on an acting up basis. Since the introduction of the NPPF in 2015, it appears that acting up is being used more frequently and for longer periods, such as long-term sickness absence or maternity cover, than was envisaged by the PNB in 2008.

It is unclear precisely what the reasons are for this. It is entirely possible for officers to be temporarily promoted outside of the NPPF to cover such vacancies, but as mentioned above, in the case of temporary promotion to the ranks of sergeant or inspector, only if an officer is qualified for promotion under the Police (Promotion) Regulations. In other words, only officers who are OSPRE I and II qualified can be temporarily promoted outside of the NPPF and presumably, as time has passed, the numbers of those officers has decreased.

We have heard of frequent examples of officers acting up for many years (and this has been acknowledged by the NRT). For example, an officer who acted up from November 2021 to May 2024. This goes against both the intention and spirit of the PNB agreement and the provisions of Police Regulations 2003 and determinations thereunder. In such circumstances officers will see the value of any temporary salary paid for a period of acting up reduce because temporary salary does not currently reckon for pay purposes in the higher rank.

Given the increasing use of acting up for long periods of time (likely linked to the introduction of the NPPF), the PFEW proposes that all time spent acting up should be reckonable for pay purposes in both the lower and higher ranks. Police Scotland agreed that with effect from 1 January 2023 that time spent on acting up in receipt of a temporary salary will reckon for pay purposes (there is no acting up allowance in Scotland).

PFEW recommendations

The use of acting up for extended periods is likely to continue for the foreseeable future given the operation of the NPPF.

All the issues set out above combined mean that officers are not being adequately recompensed for performing the duties of a higher rank and forces are, in effect, getting 'free labour'. Officers are not benefiting in pay terms and are missing out on vital pension contributions that would help them save adequately for their retirement.

The acting up allowance was introduced in response to an agreement that recognised that the provisions of the previous final salary pension scheme meant that officers did not benefit from the pension contributions that they were making on additional salary received for short periods of acting up. Now, the reverse is true and the reason for the creation of the acting up allowance no longer applies. Therefore, PFEW proposes that:

- the acting up allowance should be abolished.
- officers who are required to perform the duties normally performed by a member of a higher rank should be paid a temporary salary from day one of any period of acting up.
- all time spent acting up in receipt of a temporary salary should be reckonable for pay purposes in both the lower and higher ranks and temporary salary should remain pensionable as it currently is.

We believe that the above changes to the compensation arrangements for periods of acting up would widen the pool of those available to perform the duties of a higher rank particularly at the rank of Sergeant where there are a large number of vacancies. For instance, in the MPS there are circa 500 sergeant vacancies at any one time. In a force such as GMP there are between 50 - 100.

7.2.2.1.2.4 Bonus payments

Bonus payments, of between £50 and £2,000, are payable where the chief officer judges a piece of work by an individual member to be of an outstandingly demanding, unpleasant or important nature. The upper limit increased from £50 to £2,000 with effect from 1 July 2021.

There is also the facility for chief officers to make team recognition awards of £50 to £100 to all members of a team (both officers and staff). The power to pay rewards for diligence under section 31 of the Police Act 1996 is used to make these awards to officers.

The NRT asked that a review of bonus payments be included in year 2 of the Police Consultative Forum's review of allowances. In November 2025, the NPCC NRT shared a copy of their paper to the PCF, and we note that the NPCC will not be recommending any changes to the bonus payment provisions and to issue guidance to forces instead to help with consistency.

Detailed considerations

Bonus payments are discretionary and there is no specific budget allocation for them. The lack of a specific budget provision for bonus payments may undermine their purpose at a time of budget restrictions.

In addition, while some data may be collected on the use of these payments, and the related Team Recognition Award, it is impossible to identify bonus payments specifically

in the HO Workforce Census. This means that we do not have a clear picture of who is getting these payments, what work officers are receiving them for, and what roles people are performing who receive them.

The lack of good quality data, which the PRRB has commented on more generally on numerous occasions, gives rise to concerns about inconsistency of payments which drives uncertainty and divisiveness among the workforce impacting morale and motivation and raises concerns about equality implications.

For example, officers from neighbouring forces dealing with a road traffic incident involving multiple victims and who have witnessed extremely distressing scenes may be awarded a bonus payment in recognition of the demanding and unpleasant nature of the incident. The amount of payment each officer receives could vary depending on which force they are from but even within the same force area, i.e. one officer could receive £600 and the other £50. Likewise, an officer in one force may be awarded a bonus payment but an officer from a neighbouring force dealing with the same incident could receive nothing. Of course it goes without saying, that when dealing with such incidents individual members are not motivated by whether or not they might receive a bonus payment. Nevertheless, as their staff association, it is incumbent on us to raise our concerns about the discretionary nature of these payments, the lack of data, and inconsistencies in application on which both the PCF and the PRRB is being asked to make decisions.

As the NPCC NRT paper to PCF notes data on the use of bonus payments (and the team recognition award) are not individually detailed in the HO pay census so it is difficult to estimate to what extent either provision is being used and who is in receipt. Furthermore, we note that to ameliorate this problem the NRT has sought to collect data on the use of bonus payments directly from forces through the NPCC's Workforce Hub, however this data is not useable because some forces have combined bonus payments with TVPs, despite it seems previous NRT guidance and that these are two entirely separate provisions set out in regulations and determinations with different purposes.

The issue of data quality and the incorrect application of bonus payments and TVP provisions by forces has been identified for a number of years so it is extremely disappointing that those issues have still not been addressed prior to the PCF review. For example, during the review of the TVP scheme in 2023 we know that data supplied by forces to the NRT and the HO likely recorded bonus payments as TVPs (and potentially vice versa).

The PFEW has said for many years that the quality of data collected by the HO/forces needs to be improved. If PCF is to undertake a review of allowances, it needs up to date accurate information.

Given the lack of data on the use of bonus payments or an equality impact assessment (EIA) being shared with the PFEW or other PCF members it is not possible for either the PFEW or the PCF to give a view as to whether guidance to forces will suffice to address concerns about consistency of payments. Bonus payments, and the related team recognition award, are useful tools but there needs to be better capture of data.

PFEW recommendations

The HO and NPCC should take steps to urgently collect accurate data on the use of bonus payments and team recognition awards to be shared with the PCF/PRRB alongside an EIA so that the PCF/PRRB can conduct a proper review of bonus payments and team recognition awards. In tandem, the proposed guidance to forces should be shared with the PCF so that the PCF can assess whether the guidance will address the issues highlighted in the NPCC's paper. Data should then continue to be collected and reviewed by the PCF so that the PCF is in a position to assess whether any guidance issued has addressed concerns about consistency or any issues highlighted in the EIA. The PFEW proposes that a set amount of force budgets should be ring fenced for bonus payments. Failure to do this would potentially weaken the status of bonus payments in police regulations and determinations at a time when forces are struggling financially and lead to officers losing out on payments they should be receiving and are entitled to.

7.2.2.1.2.5 Payment of allowances when on reduced or no pay

At the last meeting in December 2025, the NPCC informed the PCF that they would be including a proposal in their PRRB submission to seek a change to the police regulation governing the payment of allowances when on reduced or nil pay. We understand they are likely to propose that allowances are reduced or removed altogether when an officer is on reduced or nil pay. They suggested that the PCF could discuss the NPCC's proposal at the next PCF meeting, which is currently scheduled to take place on 23 April 2026 and falls after PRRB submissions have been finalised.

Detailed considerations

This topic has been hinted at for several months by the NPCC NRT, but no specific NPCC proposals have been shared on which the PFEW, or any other PCF member, can form a view or seek legal advice if necessary. We have not been informed which allowances the NPCC considers should be included in any change and/or what types of leave it is looking to target. It is completely unacceptable that the PFEW and other staff associations are completely out of the loop with regards to the NPCC's proposals and we are therefore unable to provide the PRRB with a comprehensive position in response.

It is currently the case that allowances remain payable when an officer is on unpaid leave (or leave at statutory pay or half pay). The only exception to this is if an allowance is paid to meet an expense which ceases during the officer's absence from duty on either maternity leave or sick leave. In which case the allowance remains payable for up to a period of a month but thereafter may be suspended at the discretion of the chief officer (Police regulation 36).

This is a long-standing entitlement, but it has necessitated significant legal action by the PFEW to ensure officers are receiving this entitlement. It requires an on-going effort by the PFEW, on behalf of our members, and we unfortunately do not have confidence that all forces are currently paying the correct entitlements to officers.

In 2017 PFEW were successful in the case of Geldart v Commissioner of City of London Police which concerned a member who was on maternity leave between December 2016 and October 2017. During this leave, the member's London allowance was reduced by 50% when she moved to half pay and then to nil when her entitlement to police maternity pay came to an end. The member successfully claimed in the Employment Tribunal, the Employment Appeals Tribunal and the Court of Appeal that London allowance should be paid during the whole maternity leave period regardless of whether a Member is (or is not) paid. The Court of Appeal said, "On the natural reading of the Regulations and the relevant determinations, London allowance is payable during the entirety of maternity leave and does not fall to be treated in the same way as pay under Part 4 [of the Police Regulations 2003]".

With regards to the London and South East allowances the Chief Constable of the City of London Police accepted during the litigation process that London allowance is not "an allowance to meet an expense which ceases" during a period of maternity rather it is paid with regard to location and retention needs. The Court of Appeal also confirmed that London allowance (and therefore South East allowance) is not 'pay' (which can and does cease during sickness absence and maternity/adoption leave) but is an allowance provided by Part 6 of the Police Regulations 2003 and should therefore continue.

In line with this, it is our position that allowances are a separate part of an officer's remuneration package to pay and are provided for specific purposes. They warrant individual consideration with regards to how and when they are paid. In the case of London and the South East allowances the recruitment and retention issues remain present, even when an officer is on, for example, maternity leave. There should not be an automatic trigger to withdraw payment when an officer is on unpaid leave, other than for those allowances paid to meet an expense which then ceases (as is currently the case).

PFEW recommendation

It is unacceptable that the PFEW and other staff associations are completely out of the loop with regards to the NPCC's proposals on allowances when on reduced or nil pay and are therefore unable to provide the PRRB with a comprehensive position in response. It is the PFEW's position that the existing provisions governing the payment of allowances during reduced or nil pay should remain in place. Allowances are a separate part of an officer's remuneration package to pay and are provided for specific purposes. There should not be an automatic trigger to withdraw payment when an

officer is on unpaid leave, other than for those paid to meet an expense which then ceases.

7.2.2.1.3 Other allowances and payments

7.2.2.1.3.1 Targeted Variable Payments

At the time of writing we are still awaiting a final decision on the future of the TVP scheme or if it will be extended to 2029 in line with the PRRB 2025 report.

Detailed considerations

In 2025 the NPCC NRT has been looking to introduce pay bandings to the TVP guidance and we have sought to discuss this with them. We were finally provided with a copy of revised guidance from the NPCC NRT on 9 December for comment by 19 December. TVPs have been widely used by forces and are an important reward to our members in service-critical roles. However, our position remains, as set out in April 2024 to the Policing Minister: we have concerns about the equality impact assessment, we are concerned about the disproportionate impact on officers with a protected characteristic and the lack of quality data to enable evidence-based decision making with regards to the future of the scheme.

In particular we remain concerned with the discretionary element of TVPs which has led to inconsistency across forces and across roles within forces. We see a gap in provision whereby no payments are made for public order roles.

The PFEW is aware that a number of forces are reducing or even discontinuing the use of TVPs due to financial pressures. For example, all officers currently in receipt of a TVP in Hampshire have been notified that their existing TVP will be halved this year. Along with the PRRB, we are still awaiting the outcome of the wider Police Reform Programme, the workforce strategy and possible changes to the structure of base pay, which may impact considerations on TVPs.

PFEW recommendation

Our position remains that, without suitable evidence that the Targeted Variable Payment scheme is effective and consistent, it cannot be made permanent.

7.2.2.1.3.2 Inspecting ranks payments

There remains an urgent need for reform of the terms and conditions of members of the inspecting ranks. Workload is becoming a critical issue, voluntary resignations are increasing and workforce reform is not proceeding.

Detailed considerations

Last year the PFEW presented a package of recommendations to the PRRB, to review and reform the structure and agreements the inspecting ranks are subject to. These

included reform of the 1994 PNB Inspecting Ranks agreement, a requirement for the inspecting ranks to have a regular shift pattern, arrangements to recognise (and reduce) the long hours that officers are currently undertaking and to widen the pay gap between the Sergeant to Inspector and the Inspector to Chief Inspector ranks.

We remain committed to these proposals.

We appreciate the comments from the PRRB last year that progress on restructuring and rebalancing the pay and workload of the inspecting ranks is needed but that it is unfortunately some distance away. The PRRB noted that, as a last resort, stop-gap measure until reform is implemented, the NPCC should work with the PFEW to explore the introduction of temporary, time-limited payments for the inspecting ranks to compensate for high workload where this is unavoidable.

We regret to confirm to the PRRB that this has not taken place, nor has any alternative been developed. The NPCC NRT responded that they would consider the case for a targeted base pay intervention for their 2026 submission, rather than a temporary arrangement (informed by benchmarking and utilising existing regulations). However, no clear proposals to this effect have been shared with PFEW.

The NRT did review the compensation for additional hours worked, but only for when an Inspector or Chief Inspector is on call and tied this to other detrimental changes for federated ranks officers, as has been outlined earlier. At the time of writing they have proposed guidance recommending TOIL for hours worked by the inspecting ranks when on call (but not at any other time). Unfortunately, we are not confident this would lead to a meaningful and consistent solution for Inspectors and Chief Inspectors.

It is our position that the Recognition of Workload payments (TVPs) currently only payable to the superintending ranks, should be extended and paid to the inspecting ranks, on a time-limited basis if necessary.

When the Home Office consulted on the draft determination to introduce the recognition of workload payment, the PFEW commented that it should be payable to any officer whose role fits the criteria. If officers in the inspecting ranks are in roles where the chief officer determines that the demands placed on the officer exceed those usually placed on other officers of the same rank, then payment should be made.

Annex U sets out that a chief officer may make a recognition of workload payment, if the officer's role involves at least one of a number of factors, including for example:

- Unusual frequent antisocial working hours or high levels of 'out of hours' contact or disruption
- Lengthy and regular periods of travel to fulfil command responsibilities
- Exceptionally high operational demand of continuing intensity

- The management of a large change process.

In which case an allowance of up to £5,000 can be paid.

We anticipate this would be more likely to be paid to Chief Inspectors and that Inspectors would be less likely to receive any additional payments under this provision. In addition, we propose the creation of a separate payment for Inspectors and Chief Inspectors to be claimed when they have worked over 48 hours in a week. This would provide some compensation to Inspectors for those circumstances where workload and therefore working hours are unacceptably high. It remains our position that the systemic problems need resolving, but in the interim some compensation should be paid to those bearing the brunt of the problems and working incredibly long hours.

PFEW recommendation

We unfortunately do not anticipate that wider pay reform will take place any time soon and so it is our position that the provisions of the Recognition of Workload Payment (TVP) scheme should be extended to members of the inspecting ranks as an interim, stop gap measure to compensate for excessive workload and hours worked, while we await the structural review and reform that is so desperately needed. In addition, a separate payment should be introduced for Inspectors and Chief Inspectors, to be claimed when more than 48 hours are worked in any week.

7.2.2.1.3.4 Detective's allowance

The PFEW raised this issue for the first time in our pay positioning document last year. We welcome the PRRB's comments, raising concern with the difficulties of recruiting and retaining detectives and inviting the NPCC to explore the options, for strengthening the financial package for detectives in a way that would create a consistent approach across the service, including the creation of an allowance.

Detailed considerations

We are extremely disappointed that the NPCC has not explored the options for strengthening the financial package for detectives. The NPCC's response to the PRRB's comments was to await the outcomes of the Reform Programme and White paper, before considering the development of a targeted proposal; and that TVP's are available in the meantime and therefore it would not be added to their 2025/26 NRT workplan.

Instead the NPCC NRT has been reviewing the TVP guidance this year. A version seen in February 2025 outlined the following pay bandings for detectives in 2023/24:

- PIP2 – one off payment on examination (£500-£750)
- PIP2 – one off payment on portfolio completion (£500-700)
- PIP2/3/4 – annual payment in an investigative role (£2K - £3K)

Then in December 2025, we were provided with a copy of further draft guidance setting out the following pay ranges for detectives in 2024/25:

- £250 – £500, for each qualification component completed. Forces typically pay a figure in this band after each component (NIE and PIP2) is passed
- £500 – £1000, an annual payment when fully qualified as a detective and posted in an investigative role
- PIP3/4 qualified Detectives may attain higher payments, due to a national shortage in such qualified officers, but the NPCC data does not go into this level of detail.

In addition, as stated above, we are aware that a number of forces are reducing or even discontinuing the use of TVPs due to financial pressures. For example, in 2022/23 21 forces paid a TVP to investigators and this has reduced to 18 forces in 2024/25.

It is the PFEW's position that progress on a new allowance should not be delayed for the White Paper: the situation needs urgent remedy, and proposals should be developed now. As with any area, if the position changes in the future, once reform is implemented, then the position can be re-considered at that stage, with the ability to then evaluate the impact of an allowance as part of any future considerations.

It is the PFEW's position that an allowance, specifically for those officers working as a detective, is long overdue. It should be set at a rate that compensates officers for the extra demands placed upon them in the role and as well as taking into account any potential loss of the unsocial hours allowance.

The 2024 PFEW Pay and Morale Survey found that only a small number of officers (10%) would consider becoming a detective and reasons given for not seeking to move into a detective role were that officers felt they [detectives] were not compensated appropriately for the extra work of becoming a detective and the extra responsibilities in the role. In addition, there were widespread concerns about small teams and high workload.

Detectives are required to pass a national exam and then maintain a PIP 2 level of accreditation throughout their career as a detective: it requires accreditation through the exam and portfolio assessment set by the College of Policing, which can take a considerable length of time to achieve. This requires a significant commitment to undertake work in an officer's own time.

We also estimate that detectives lose around £1250 per year in unsocial hours payments.

Recruitment and retention difficulties are a continual problem for forces trying to fill detective roles and retain officers in these roles. There remains a national shortfall.

We know that many forces have deemed the role as hard to fill and are paying a service critical skills payment, i.e. a targeted variable payment (TVP), but not all are. Data received from the NPCC NRT in February 2025 shows that investigators make up the largest portion of service critical payments (52%), used by more than half of forces. This means that just under half of all forces are not paying their detectives a TVP.

As the PRRB is aware TVPs inherently lead to inconsistency: they are paid at the discretion of the chief officer, who also determines the rate of payment, which varies across forces. They can also be withdrawn should a decision be made to do so, for example, due to budgetary pressures in other areas. TVPs can therefore only ever have a limited effect on an officer's decision to become a detective. There can be no certainty that the allowance will continue to be paid.

Action is therefore needed to ensure a consistent and clear financial package for detectives.

PFEW recommendations

A detective's allowance should be introduced. It must be paid at a set rate, across all forces and to all detectives. This would ensure officers have the certainty and confidence with regards to their financial position during their time in the role.

The PFEW therefore seeks the introduction of a detective allowance of £1250 per annum, with effect from 1 September 2026. It should be uprated annually in line with the pay award.

In addition, specific data should be collected with regards to the number of detectives, against target figures, in each force, so that the effectiveness of the allowance can be evaluated going forwards.

7.2.2.1.3.5 Pay Progression Standard (PPS)

The NPCC NRT has not instigated any significant discussion of the pay progression standard this year.

We anticipate they will propose three changes to the scheme and that is: to apply the PPS to officers who have their probation extended, to reduce the lead in time for notification of training requirements, and to review the exemptions in the accompanying NPCC guidance to forces. The NPCC NRT has informed us that any wider review of the PPS is on hold pending wider pay reform.

Detailed considerations

We note the PRRB's observations last year encouraging the NPCC to develop the PPS into a meaningful competency related tool which is clearly linked to continuous professional development (CPD) and strengthens the professionalisation of the police service and which is properly resourced.

It is an opportune moment to remind the PRRB that the link between time served and automatic progression up the pay scale was removed for police officers some time ago. For example, as far back as 1996, the constable pay scale denoted the following:

“All officers move to this salary point [pay point] on completion of two years’ service as a constable, subject to satisfactory appraisal.

Progress thereafter is also dependent on satisfactory appraisal”

The PFEW fully supports and agrees with the desire to support officers with continuous professional development. However, it is important to note that automatic progression is not a part of the police pay structure and hasn’t been for nearly 30 years.

PFEW is content to consider a review of the PPS, but it must be done in conjunction with a review of pay scales. Our position is that the PPS cannot include any movement down a pay scale, nor can it be linked to misconduct. The proposals from the NPCC, shared with the PCF in December, lack detail and a clear explanation of the policy intention behind the proposed changes. The PFEW did provide comments to the NPCC NRT on their proposed changes to the list of exemptions in the NPCC guidance on 31 October 2025 however, the paper to the PCF did not suggest that these had been taken into account.

PFEW recommendation

PFEW believes that any review of the Pay Progression Standard (PPS) must be done in conjunction with a wider review of pay scales. The PPS cannot include any movement down the pay scale, nor can it be linked to misconduct.

7.2.3 Leave

Given the uniqueness of the police officer role and the demands placed on officers, it is essential that terms and conditions facilitate a reasonable work life balance and provide officers with sufficient opportunities to rest and recuperate. Leave provisions are an essential recruitment and retention tool and when effectively managed improve morale and motivation.

We have set out below a number of recommended improvements to the leave provisions for officers which we believe will help promote officer wellbeing and demonstrates that the Service cares about its officers.

Unfortunately, however, we first need to address a proposal from the NPCC, which we understand is included in their submission. The NPCC proposal would undermine PFEW’s package of improvements to family related leave and pay and our position that

having in place terms and conditions that go above and beyond the statutory minimum is a powerful tool to attract and retain a representative and experienced workforce.

Even more importantly, the NPCC proposal appears to be designed to significantly circumvent the mechanisms currently in place through which changes to members' terms and conditions are achieved and ensure instead that changes proposed by the NPCC are implemented by the Home Office without a proper process.

7.2.3.1 NPCC proposal – statutory changes to Police Regulations

On 26 January this year, the NPCC NRT raised an issue with the staff associations for the first time and stated it would be part of the NPCC submission to the PRRB this year. The proposal recommends that *“statutory employment changes, once enacted by Parliament following full Government due diligence, should be applied automatically and concurrently to police officers through Police Regulations”*.

PFEW does not support this proposal. We are disappointed that it would implement a legal minimum entitlement, without any opportunity for discussion and represents a race to the bottom. It highlights a lack of appreciation of the current pay and conditions mechanisms that exist for officers (PCF and PRRB) and could cause officers to lose confidence in them. It also ignores the fact that all changes to police regulations and determinations are made by the Home Office and so, in any event, it would not realise entitlements any sooner than is currently the case.

On 28 January we informed the NPCC that the PFEW could not support this proposal. The response from the National Reward Team is even more concerning. The NPCC NRT said that the proposal is “not in itself designed to only apply statutory in the future” which seems to suggest that they envisage it applying more broadly to other changes to terms and conditions. So while it may be badged as a means to help the service introduce improvement quicker for officers, and also to fast track the changes to determinations, the PFEW is extremely concerned that the NPCC's proposal will make it far easier for the NPCC to change members' terms and conditions without the need to seek agreement with the staff associations, or refer a matter to the PCF, or the PRRB, for consideration.

Detailed considerations

Police officers are not employees and should not be treated as if they are. They are servants of the Crown and, as such, require distinct and bespoke terms and conditions.

Police officers are individual warranted officers (from the time they attest). They are individually responsible for exercising their statutory powers and are accountable to the law both on and off duty. This is a foundation of the principle of policing by consent. In addition, holding the Office of Constable means that there are restraints placed on officers, i.e. not to cause disaffection, withhold their services and the restrictions on the

private life of officers and their families. These factors combined mean that officers do not work under an employment contract. Police officers' entitlement to leave (or pay, allowances, hours of duty etc) derives from the Police Regulations 2003 and Home Secretary's determinations thereunder.⁶⁹ Officers are excluded from many areas of employment law and, for example, cannot bring a claim for unfair dismissal, it would simply not be appropriate or helpful to mirror statutory entitlements of employees.

With regards to family leave provisions, the NPCC is aware that the staff associations do not support new entitlements being implemented as either unpaid entitlements or paid at statutory rates only (at this stage it is unclear whether the various statutory leave provisions in the Employment Rights Act 2025 will be paid or not). This has been made clear at PCF and to the PRRB over recent years. It inevitably results in a pay cut for any officer wishing to take a period of family leave, even if it is paid at statutory pay, as is the case for the second week of maternity support leave. In fact, the NPCC recently agreed with PFEW that neo-natal care leave and pay should be implemented at full pay, not at the statutory rate.

Many employees are afforded a higher level of entitlements than the legal minimum through their own employment contracts and the legal minimum is often aimed at preventing poor practice, it is not an ideal to aim for.

The situation for officers is more nuanced than the NPCC has acknowledged. Statutory pay provisions, whether that is Statutory Maternity (SMP), Paternity (SPP), Adoption (SAP) are not covered by police regulations and determinations 2003. In fact, no change is needed to police regulations when a change or an increase is made to the rate of statutory pay, as provision for this is set out in the relevant legislation under the Social Security Act. In contrast, as detailed above, any corresponding leave entitlement needs to be provided for in police regulations and determinations and the police service is free to agree leave and pay provisions over and above the legal minimum.

Therefore, on the face of it, the NPCC's proposal could result in a doubling of the HO's workload. First, the HO would need to consult on a change to regulations and determinations to make provision for an equivalent 'statutory' leave entitlement. Then should it subsequently be agreed to improve the provision, the HO would need to consult again. Alternatively, does the NPCC think that it will not be necessary to amend regulations and determinations to provide officers with 'statutory' leave and that this can just be implemented by issuing a note to forces. We do not think that this is correct.

⁶⁹ Prior to 2003, all terms and conditions were set out in Police Regulations. It was agreed to introduce Home Secretary's determinations to speed up the time it took to make changes to officers' terms and conditions and thereby reduce delays. This would avoid the need for such changes to go through the parliamentary process, which is required when changes to regulations are necessary.

As we say, in our introduction to our family leave proposals below, unless a specific provision is made in police regulations and determinations, it does not exist.

Most, if not all, changes to statutory employee entitlements are known about well in advance, due to the course of legislation through Parliament. There is almost always a significant notice period before provisions come into effect. There is therefore ample opportunity for a matter to be discussed at PCF and, where necessary, to be put to the PRRB before an entitlement comes into effect.

The only reason for any lag for police officers is the significant delays at the Home Office, which is responsible for publishing revised determinations. We first wrote to the PCF with regards to all our family leave proposals in 2023. The delay in implementation of any areas of agreement, of which there are several, sits entirely with the Home Office. This is an unacceptable position and needs urgent resolution. The suggestion that one element of officers' terms and conditions should be implemented automatically, without any due process, on the lowest possible terms, simply because the Home Office is slow to enact changes is unpalatable.

At the very least we encourage the Home Office to resurrect their previous approach of issuing a Home Office circular once the Home Secretary has made a decision following agreement at the PCF or on the recommendations of the PRRB whilst a revised determination is awaited. This provides forces with the authority to implement a new agreement with immediate effect, and it is disappointing that this approach is no longer used. It is particularly concerning given the delays in providing revised determinations have increased to unparalleled levels.

The NPCC say there is a precedent for their proposed approach, but this is incorrect and misleading. The pay award is a matter of providing the authority to forces to pay the new rate, but the matter is always preceded by either consideration by the PRRB or previously via negotiation at the PNB followed by a Home Secretary's decision. To suggest that some terms and conditions can simply skip any due process is unacceptable.

In addition, changes to national insurance are a completely different matter to negotiable pay and conditions of service for police officers (or any pay and conditions for employees for that matter). It is not in any way connected to police regulations and determinations and we cannot understand what point is being made here.

As we note in our introduction to our family leave and pay proposals below, the NPCC proposal for 'statutory only' will result in some perverse and distressing outcomes. In addition, the NPCC proposal only deals with those matters for which a statutory provision for other workers has been made. The NPCC proposal will not address PFEW's overarching proposal that officers should benefit from day one leave entitlements, paid at full pay. Nor will it address PFEW's proposals for which there is no corresponding

statutory leave entitlement, such as safe leave for officers who experience domestic violence.

PFEW recommendations

The PFEW does not support the NPCC proposal for statutory employment changes to be applied automatically and concurrently to police officers through Police Regulations. We ask that the PRRB reject the NPCC proposal. We have set out, in this document, our Charter for Change which would create a comprehensive set of family leave provisions to provide a blueprint for a modern, compassionate police service.

In addition, we urge the Home Office to take swift action to translate all outstanding agreements into police regulations and determinations as a matter of urgency: we ask the PRRB to support this and to make a recommendation that all outstanding agreements should be implemented by the Home Secretary by the end of 2026.

7.2.3.2 Family leave

In our pay positioning document last year, we said that policing needs a reward and benefits framework that helps attract and retain a more representative workforce and recognises that over the course of an officer's career their needs may change, such as becoming a new parent, dealing with family illness and death or increasing caring responsibilities, and that provisions should be in place to support officers at what may be very difficult, and on occasion traumatic, points in their lives. To that end we outlined our proposals to improve terms and conditions covering family friendly leave and pay.

Many larger employers in both public and private sectors are using innovative ways for attracting and retaining the best talent. The recruitment and retention of women in particular should be a high priority. Policing is not doing enough to keep women in the service. In addition, the provision of family friendly policies needs to reflect the unique nature of police work.

We welcomed the PRRB's supportive comments last year and your encouragement to both the NPCC and the Home Office to consider and implement legislative changes in a more timely manner. In particular you asked the NPCC to quickly consider the case for measures to be introduced to provide two weeks paid 'paternity'⁷⁰ leave and to explore the scope for increasing this further over the next few years. You also asked the NPCC to review the implementation of existing special leave provisions by forces to ensure that there is a coherent, consistent and transparent approach across England and Wales, which supports officer wellbeing.

⁷⁰ 'paternity' is not a term used in police provisions. The equivalent provisions for officers are called Maternity Support Leave & Pay and Adoption Support Leave & Pay.

Given the NPCC's stated desire to address sexism and misogyny in response to both the Casey and Angiolini reports, it is extremely disappointing to report that there has been little or no progress this year. The Angiolini Inquiry Report Part 1⁷¹ recommended a review of all terms and conditions of female officers (and staff) to encourage women to join and progress in policing careers by September 2024. The NPCC accepted this recommendation and yet in the Angiolini Report Part 2⁷² the NPCC's update confirms that no such review has taken place, and it seems there is no intention to do so. Instead, the NPCC's response to the PFEW's proposals on family leave and pay has unfortunately been neither coherent or consistent and will do nothing to support recruitment and retention or address concerns about fairness and inconsistent decision making.

The PFEW believes that improvements to family leave and pay provisions should be made a priority. Therefore, this year we are asking that the PRRB make clear recommendations on the PFEW's proposals covering family leave and pay.

Detailed considerations

The PFEW maintains that having in place terms and conditions that go above and beyond the statutory minimum is a powerful tool to attract and retain a representative and experienced workforce at minimal costs. More than that, having provisions incorporated into police regulations and determinations, demonstrates that the Service recognises the duty of care owed to members and the impact of the unique demands of policing on officers. This is why we are calling for a *Charter for Change*.

The terms of conditions for police officers are set out in police regulations and the Home Secretary's determinations thereunder. Unless a specific provision is made in police regulations and determinations, it does not exist. This includes 'special leave' – many of our proposals might be covered by special leave but there is no provision for special leave in regulations and determinations. It is therefore a postcode lottery as to whether an officer is granted leave and whether that leave is paid or unpaid. This leads to inconsistent decision making and unfairness. An officer's ability to care for a family member or deal with the death of a close family member should not depend on where they serve and who they report to.

To be clear, unlike most workers, police officers do not have an automatic right to paid maternity or adoption leave, paid maternity support or adoption support leave, carer's leave, neonatal care leave and so on. Therefore, it is not sufficient for the NPCC to say

⁷¹ Angiolini Inquiry (2024). The Angiolini Inquiry Part 1 Report. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e05420cf7eb1b0e5f57eff/E02740018_Angiolini_Inquiry_HC_530_Accessible.pdf (publicly available)

⁷² Angiolini Inquiry (2024). The Angiolini Inquiry Part 2 First Report: Prevention of sexually motivated crimes against women in public. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/692ee226a245b0985f0343ed/E03342246_Angiolini_Inquiry_Pt2_Accessible.pdf (publicly available)

‘statutory only’, nor is it necessary to wait for the Employment Rights Bill to be enacted or the Government’s review of statutory paternity provisions to be completed.

Any employer can determine to offer benefits over and above the statutory minimum including where there is no statutory entitlement. The statutory provisions are a backstop for millions of workers and represent a legal minimum, which is often a pay cut for individuals for the duration of their leave period.

The PFEW is calling for a *Charter for Change*, which sets out a blueprint for a modern, compassionate police service. Policing is unique and regulations and determinations must reflect that uniqueness. To do otherwise is to let officers down. The result will be more sickness, burnout and ultimately more resignations.

We acknowledge that there will be a cost associated with our proposals but the cost of losing committed and experienced officers mid-career is far higher.⁷³ The National Audit Office estimated that it costs around £180,000 to recruit and train one officer.⁷⁴ If even a handful of our proposals help retain skilled officers, they will more than pay for themselves many times over.

Turning to the NPCC’s position, which they regularly say is ‘statutory only’, which seems to mean that they will not consider any improvements unless there is already a statutory provision in place for other workers and that officers will be paid at the prevailing statutory rate only, even though many provisions already in regulations and determinations are paid at full pay for a period followed by statutory rate. On top of this, despite the NPCC’s consistently stated position, since the last PRRB pay round, we have received a proposal from the NPCC NRT for up to 12 weeks Neonatal Care Leave on full pay (which is what the PFEW proposed) even though they told you last year that it should be statutory pay only. While this is a very welcome development the NPCC NRT has not explained the change in NPCC position. We should add that there has been no further progress on this and the Home Office has not begun the process to amend regulations and determinations.

On 6 January 2026, we received a copy of the Minister’s response to the PCF Chair’s letter dated 21 October advising her of the agreement reached at the PCF on neonatal care leave and pay. Disappointingly, the Minister has declined to make a decision on this matter despite unanimous agreement reached at the PCF and instead has suggested that the matter will be referred to the PRRB for a view first. This approach unfortunately reflects the recent change in stance by the HO that all matters need to be

⁷³ NPCC submission to the PRRB in 2024 noted that “Females are more likely to resign during mid-career, at 16-20 years’ service, a critical career point for progression through to senior and executive levels. The likely cause is balancing career and family commitments during this period becomes irreconcilable and leads to resignation.”

⁷⁴ National Audit Office (2022). *The Police Uplift Programme*. <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/The-Police-uplift-programme-Summary.pdf> (publicly available)

referred to the PRRB first, which is a significant change in approach from the HO and is not consistent with previous practice. For example, the increase to 26 weeks maternity and adoption leave on full pay and the introduction of the protection allowance were implemented without a referral to the PRRB.

As you know⁷⁵, the PCF's terms of reference were carefully crafted with the aim of providing a quick and effective route to reach agreements on pay and conditions matters without a referral to the PRRB using the Home Secretary's Reserved Powers⁷⁶ and contribute to excellent industrial relations.

In addition, the NPCC's position of statutory only will result in some perverse and distressing outcomes. For example, currently an officer, who meets the qualifying criteria, and whose partner gives birth is entitled to two weeks' police maternity support leave; the first week on full pay and the second week at statutory paternity pay rate.

The PFEW has proposed that in the event that an officer's partner (and their baby) dies they should still be entitled to two weeks' police maternity support leave that they would have been entitled to if their partner (and child) had lived. This would mirror the policy intention of the Paternity Leave (Bereavement) Act. The NPCC has proposed instead that the statutory paternity (bereavement) leave scheme should apply to those officers whose partner (and child) dies. This would mean that those officers would be paid at statutory rates only.

Finally, even where there has been agreement on some of our proposals there has been no progress, and we are still waiting for the Home Office to begin the process to amend regulations and determinations. For instance, in July 2024 the Police Consultative Forum agreed that in order to address an anomaly in the police maternity pay provisions, a minor change to Annex L, paragraph 2(b)(ii) was necessary to clarify that in the event of the death of a baby who was born alive but died before 24 weeks officers retain their full entitlement to police maternity leave and pay. The PCF Chair wrote to the HO setting out this agreement in a letter dated 19 February 2025. Nothing was done to action this – quite simply all parties could have been consulted and the matter agreed within one week.

Sadly, an officer has since experienced such a loss and without the backing of a revised determination, her force failed to recognise her right to police maternity leave and pay. The PFEW wrote to the Policing Minister on our members' behalf and we attach a copy of the Minister's letter 30 June 2025 for your information, see attached Appendix. In particular, we draw to your attention the Minister's view that:

⁷⁵ In 2015 the PRRB welcomed the creation of the Forum and hoped that it would provide a quick route to achieving necessary changes in police officers' terms and conditions.

⁷⁶ Section 52A, paragraph (5) of the Police Act 1996 and Regulation 46 of the Police Regulations 2003

“The PCF’s decision to clarify that maternity leave and pay should apply in any case where a baby is born alive but sadly dies shortly after birth is humane, essential, and has my full backing. I understand my officials have informed you that they are progressing the necessary amendment to Annex L as a matter of urgency and I want to personally reassure you that this remains a priority.”

Regrettably, there has been no further progress despite the Minister’s assurances and individual officers are still facing uncertainty at a time when they should feel supported by their employer and shown compassion.

Turning to your specific recommendation that the NPCC should quickly consider the case for measures to be introduced to ensure officers receive at least two weeks’ police maternity support and adoption support leave on full pay and to subsequently explore the scope for increasing this further over the next few years, the NPCC has not agreed to this, citing cost. Yet the first week is already paid, and the second week, currently paid at SPP rate, which forces can claim back, making the actual top up cost negligible.

The PFEW has tried for over two years to agree a package of improvements through the Police Consultative Forum. Unfortunately, the NPCC has not engaged with this process, and the PCF has only reached agreement on some more relatively minor matters. Even on these, the Home Office has not yet begun to consult on the necessary changes to regulations and determinations. Therefore, we ask that the PRRB make clear recommendations on the following PFEW’s proposals.

PFEW recommendations

The PFEW is calling for a *Charter for Change* that will provide a blueprint for a modern, compassionate police service. All officers should be entitled to family-related leave from day one, i.e. no service requirements, on full pay because no officer should have to earn the right to care for their child or grieve for their partner.

The nature of police work is such that terms and conditions must support rest, recovery and resilience. It’s in the interests of both our members and the wider public that officers are not rushed to return to work before they are ready. The consequences of doing so are serious. Sleep deprived new parents, partners mourning the loss of their loved one, carers dealing with a change in circumstances for the person they care for are forced to make split second decisions in high pressure situations perhaps while carrying tasers and firearms or driving response vehicles.

Details of the PFEW proposals for family related leave are set out in the attached Appendix. In summary we are recommending improvements to terms and conditions on the following family leave and pay matters:

- Carer's leave and pay – at least one week's paid leave for carers and that where an officer has more than one dependant with a long-term care need this leave is increased, i.e. one week per dependent.
- Neonatal care leave & pay – up to 12 week's paid leave while a baby needs neonatal care.
- Maternity support and adoption support leave & pay – as a starting point, at least two weeks' paid leave immediately with a view to increasing this to six weeks' paid leave. Make provision for a main adopter to nominate a carer⁷⁷.
- Maternity support and adoption support (bereavement) leave & pay – officers to retain the right to maternity support and adoption support leave and pay where a mother (or mother and baby), or a person with whom a child is placed or expected to be placed for adoption, dies. In these circumstances, extend maternity support and adoption support leave to 52 weeks (on similar lines to maternity and adoption leave).
- Death of premature baby – police maternity pay – amend Annex L, paragraph 2(b)(ii) so that officers retain their full rights to police maternity leave and pay if a baby who is born alive but dies before 24 weeks,
- Stillbirth and entitlement to leave & pay – amend police regulations and determinations to make clear that where a child is stillborn at 24 weeks or more into a pregnancy that officers will retain their full entitlements to police maternity leave & pay, adoption leave & pay, maternity support and adoption support leave & pay, parental bereavement leave, time off for dependants and shared parental leave & pay (when provision is finally made in regulations & determinations).
- Shared parental leave and pay – to mirror the police maternity and adoption leave and pay provisions.
- Leave to attend ante-natal appointments with a pregnant woman – paid leave to attend up to two ante-natal appointments (up to 6.5 hours including travel to and from) with a pregnant woman.
- Leave to attend pre-adoption appointments – paid leave to attend pre-adoption appointments. Up to five appointments for the primary adopter

⁷⁷ 'carer' here means the main adopter can nominate someone to provide care and support to them at or around the time of placement. It is estimated that 11% of adopters are single. This would mirror the police maternity support leave provisions. This is not the same as someone who is a carer of another person with a long term care need.

and up to two appointments in the case of a partner or nominated carer of a primary adopter (up to 6.5 hours including travel to and from).

- Safe leave – up to two weeks’ paid leave for officers experiencing domestic abuse.

Grandparents’ leave – up to one week’s paid leave for members who become grandparents.

- Bereavement leave – at least two weeks’ paid leave on the death of a spouse (including cohabiting partner) and one week’s paid leave for other immediate relatives/dependants (officers who experience death of a child under 18 years of age are already entitled to two weeks paid leave).
- Parental bereavement leave – extend existing parental bereavement leave and pay provisions to officers who experience a pregnancy loss before 24 weeks. Increase to six weeks’ paid leave to every officer in the event of the death of a child up to their 18th birthday or who experience a pregnancy loss before 24 weeks.
- Parental leave – up to 18 weeks’ paid parental leave for each child up to their 18th birthday.

In addition, before officers are deployed back to the front line following a period of family leave, there should never be a simple calculation based on the number of hours lost presented as a monetary value. There must be a proper risk assessment to determine how best to reintroduce officers to operational duty. This approach is common in sport but overlooked in policing. Just as in sport, our people are the real asset — the ones who deliver — and we must care for the individual.

7.2.3.3 Annual leave

The PFEW welcomed the recommendations from the PRRB in 2024 for much needed improvements to officers’ annual leave entitlements. It’s our view that further improvements are still required to provide necessary rest and recuperation given the unique demands and challenges of working as a police officer.

We would like to see the time it takes to reach the maximum entitlement of annual leave reduced to 5 years. This would address the remaining equality issues, help improve diversity and enhance the total reward package, making policing a more attractive option for new and existing recruits. It would, at least, put the police scheme in line with other public sector organisations, although it would still be behind both Police Scotland and the NHS.

The PFEW agree with the PRRB that it is essential that officers can take the annual leave to which they are entitled to and for that leave to be protected and not disrupted. This benefits both the officers individually and the service as a whole. Annual leave is vital to promote good physical and mental health in the workplace and helps improve work-life balance. Officers who take regular periods of annual leave can be more motivated about their work and perform more effectively than those who do not.

PFEW research found in 2024 that one third of respondents (to our Pay and Morale Survey) said they were unable to take all the annual leave they were entitled to, and two thirds had at least one request for annual leave refused in the previous 12 months.

This is yet another example of poor workforce management and rostering practice resulting in a disadvantageous position for our members. It is unacceptable for this poor practice to be used as an excuse not to provide the annual leave officers are in need of.

Officers should also be able to either buy or sell up to 5 days' annual leave at the start of each annual leave year. This is quite common in the NHS and other organisations and could be offered to officers, where appropriate. For clarity, it would only be possible to buy or sell annual leave in excess of the working time minimum which is 28 days.

PFEW recommendations

The PFEW would like to see the time it takes to reach the maximum annual leave entitlement reduced to 5 years.

Officers should be able to either buy or sell up to 5 days' annual leave at the start of each annual leave year (over and above the WTR minimum of 28 days).

7.2.3.4 Long service leave

The PFEW's original proposal on annual leave, put to the PCF in 2022, also sought the introduction of a period of Long Service Leave (LSL) for federated ranks officers who have served for 10 or more years.

Detailed considerations

A long service leave entitlement would provide a way of motivating and retaining experienced officers in the police service, in a way that can't be done through annual leave entitlements. The intention behind the scheme is to recognise the experience and loyalty of those who stay in the service longer term. It would provide officers with a necessary break and opportunity to decompress, very much needed given the unique stresses and strains of the job. We agree (with the PRRB) that it could be a useful retention tool.

We suggest a one-off period of 6 weeks' leave to be granted at the point an officer reaches 10 years' service. This would provide officers with a complete break from service for a relatively short period of time.

Unfortunately, this is yet another area that the NPCC has not chosen to explore further (despite the PRRB's suggestion) and is not expected to provide evidence to the PRRB this round. We find this frustrating, and it undermines the role of the PCF to flush out potential areas of agreement for the benefit of officers and forces alike.

We note the PRRB's suggestion to link a period of long service leave to the Police Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, which officers receive after 20 years. However, we are concerned that many officers may not reach this stage, due to the exact reasons as to why we feel the leave would be beneficial. It could miss precisely those officers it aims to help retain.

The UK Army offers a scheme for enhanced leave, after 15 years' service. It provides an opportunity for a longer period of leave in recognition of an individual's service. It offers a discretionary period of 50 days' leave, to be taken in one continuous period, in lieu of 30 days of annual leave allowance.

While this is different to our proposed scheme, we would consider alternative proposals and would like to have an opportunity to discuss this further with the NPCC.

PFEW recommendation

PFEW seeks a one-off period of 6 weeks' Long Service Leave for federated ranks officers who have served for 10 or more years. This would be separate, and additional to, the annual leave and public holiday entitlements.

7.2.3.5 Recuperative leave

This is another area we remain committed to. This type of leave is not currently in Police Regulations and Determinations. Whilst there are many supervisors and managers that might take a benevolent approach to cater for officers there is nothing in regulations and determinations to provide officers with recuperative leave following an injury on duty or exposure to a traumatic event.

Again, this is another area that the NPCC has chosen not to explore any further with the PFEW.

Detailed considerations

Given the unique policing role, the police service's employment offer should be crafted to promote compassion and the wellbeing of its officers.

Officers can face unimaginable horrors and injury in the course of their work and the impact of this on frontline officers must be prioritised, given the heightened levels of stress and trauma involved in working on the frontline.

The introduction of recuperative leave would allow an immediate line manager to grant paid recuperative leave in a consistent and fair manner. It would also provide officers with a safe space to raise the issue with their line manager rather than being forced into the position of either reporting sick, when what they need is an opportunity to heal and clear their headspace or pretending that they are okay.

PFEW recommendations

An entitlement to a period of up to three days' paid recuperative leave following an injury on duty or exposure to a traumatic event. It would provide a strong message to officers that they matter and would help ensure consistent and clear decision making by line managers.

Data on the use of recuperative leave should be collected and used to inform force wellbeing policies.

Section 8 - Pensions

In the PRRB's 2025 report, we were pleased to see the recognition that police pensions impact the "morale, motivation, and retention" of our members.¹⁹

For our members, pensions remain a top priority item. We regularly hold webinars and other information events for members on a variety of topics ranging from specific technical pension matters to understanding pension statements. We have been surprised by the level of uptake in these sessions. Recent sessions have had attendance capped at 1,000 attendees and the slots for these webinars are routinely filled within days of being made available. We are also now often seeing waiting lists for attendance. This is very important context for the PRRB in appreciating the strong level of member interest in this topic.

8.1. Scheme Advisory Board

We recognise the importance of our involvement in ensuring the pension arrangements for our members. This was the driving force in our decision to rejoin the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) in 2025. We recognise that, as the PFEW, we hold a great deal of experience and expertise on police pensions, and our voice needs to be present in shaping solutions for the future.

It should be noted here the deep concerns that we have about the speed of decisions and the implementation of change, particularly from the Home Office. The effectiveness of the SAB is heavily reliant on the Home Office carrying out their responsibilities. Sadly, the experience of the SAB is there is not the momentum to effect change in a timely manner. The 'remedy', which affects so many officers, is still an ongoing issue. The regulatory deadline for Remediable Service Statements (RSS) of 31 March 2025 was not fully met and there are still several thousand members awaiting their RSS.

Although we appreciate that changes to the SAB and the Home Office "engine" are out of scope of the PRRB, it is an important aspect when looking at recommendations as a whole and a prime example of why there needs to be a better system of negotiation and collaboration. We feel that we have been proactive and collaborative in our approach to pensions and wish to continue in that manner. However, there needs to be a far more efficient mechanism in place to ensure faster decision making and implementation. Our work in the pensions arena is impacted by the lack of movement in ultimately implementing change.

8.2 Genuine Consultation

In addition to the concerns around the effectiveness of the ability to deliver change, we need to also highlight the lack of meaningful consultation within the pensions arena. In late 2024 and early 2025, the consultation for an increase in pension contributions was held. Our position, along with other staff associations, was a considered recommendation for a 0.22 percent contribution increase to pension contributions. We are acutely aware of the limitations of the ability of scheme managers to implement complex arrangements and do so consistently, all of which impacts our members. This is why our response was one that was practical and easy to implement. Such an increase would have the ability to be consistently applied and fairly executed within the boundaries of the administrative capability that exists.

Disappointingly, none of these well-considered responses seem to have been taken into account. What has been recommended is an ill-considered increase. The recommendations for tiering increases based on pay, whilst well intended, will be administratively difficult to implement across a variety of pension scheme administrators and will undoubtedly bring about the consequence of inconsistency. The failure to automatically increase the tiers in line with pay rises or inflation will see another example of fiscal drag for our members.

Although it is again appreciated that effecting change in this area is out of the scope of the PRRB, it is an important context for the overall challenges that exist in the pensions arena. Improving this must be part of ongoing reform.

8.3 Opting - Out

We share the concerns in the 2025 PRRB's report about opting out, particularly for those that are early in service. Our concern is also wider, in the disproportionate number of officers opting out being of an ethnic minority background.

In the NPCC's Strategic Assessment of Workforce 2024/2025 they provide some insight into the opt-out rates (page 9). Their information points to 7.2 percent of officers opting out of the pension scheme, which is an increase from the previous years.

Figure 3: Percentage of officers opting out of the scheme by sex⁷⁸

National*	2022	2023	2024
Female	6.8%	6.4%	7.5%
Male	6.4%	6.1%	7.1%
MPS			
Female	Not available	Not available	11.1%
Male	Not available	Not available	10.5%

⁷⁸ NPCC Unpublished data excludes MPS, North Yorkshire and Devon and Cornwall not available at the time of publication.

Figure 4: Percentage of officers opting out of the scheme by ethnicity

	2022	2023	2024
Asian / Asian British	14.3%	11.5%	16.6%
Black / Black British	11.3%	10.5%	16.8%
Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups	8.7%	8.4%	10.5%
Not stated	6.2%	6.0%	6.6%
Other Ethnic group	9.4%	12.4%	13.2%
White	6.2%	6.0%	6.8%

Figure 4 demonstrates the exceptionally high rates of officers of Asian/Asian British and Black/Black British officers. When comparing this with the Home Office workforce data, the picture that is painted is even starker:

- Black and Black British officer account for 16.8% of officers opting out, as presented in the NPCC data. However, when compared to the workforce data, it can be seen how disproportionate this percentage is, as Black and Black British officers only account for 1.3 percent of federated officers.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables>⁷⁹
- Similarly, officers who are Asian and Asian British are 16.6% of the overall opt out rate in our survey, but only account for 2.7% of federated officers.

In our December 2025 survey of members, we asked the question about pension opt-out rates.¹⁵ Key findings are:

- 5% of overall respondents indicated they had already opted out
- 11% of overall respondents indicated they were considering opting out

More needs to be done to understand why pension contribution opt-out rates are higher with our colleagues from ethnic minority backgrounds. The significant disproportionate impact for these groups cannot go ignored. Although we are happy to share our own survey findings, this is a subject that requires far more examination and recommendations for change.

For all groups that were either considering opting out of the pension or had already opted out, the main driver for their decision was cost. For those that had already opted out of the pension, an overwhelming 56 percent site cost as the main driver for not joining the pension scheme. For those considering opting out, the figure was lower at 41%.

The reasons provided in the comment section further highlight the impact of costs on their reasons for opting out of the pension scheme:

⁷⁹ Home Office. (2025, October 9). *Police workforce open data tables*. GOV.UK.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables> (publicly available)

“I struggle to afford my mortgage payments, bills etc. whilst still paying in to the pension.” Officer

“I literally can’t afford to get through the month if I pay into the pension.” Officer

“Due to my low take home pay, I could not afford to pay this and live. Officer

The survey also indicates a need for better information and education on the benefits of the pension scheme, as 29% of respondents who are considering opting out indicated their main driver would be their concern the pension was not good value. Locally, the PFEW do play a part in explaining the benefits of the pension scheme, particularly to new recruits or those younger in service. The survey results do point to more needing to be done locally to educate and encourage officers to take part in this crucial benefit.

Unfortunately, we have received reports from some of our branches that their local force is reluctant to more actively encourage enrolment to those that have opted out, as ultimately it is a cost saving to the force at a time when police budgets are under strain. Of course, we are also aware of forces that are taking a more proactive approach with officers that decide to opt-out by providing more information to encourage their participation in the scheme. Given this inconsistency in approach, we would encourage a more structured expectation of forces and scheme administrators. This is particularly important as we see more officers opting out.

7.2.3 8.3.1 Worrying signs of more opting out to come

In the NPCC’s Assessment of Workforce, they indicate they provide detail that shows that those younger in service are more likely to opt out (NPCC Assessment page 10). Our survey data demonstrates the same trend, but perhaps more alarming is the number of younger in-service officers that are considering opting out of the scheme. Cumulatively, 40 percent of those with 2-4 years’ service are either considering or have already left the pension, as outlined below:¹⁵

	0-1 years service	2-4 years service	5-9 years service	10-14 years service	15-19 years service	20-24 years service	25-29 years service	30 or more years service
I am thinking about opting out	13%	25%	20%	18%	12%	8%	3%	4%
I have already opted out	8%	15%	10%	6%	4%	2%	2%	14%
I plan to stay in the scheme	69%	54%	64%	68%	76%	85%	93%	80%
I don't know	11%	7%	6%	9%	8%	5%	2%	3%

We support the PRRB’s recommendation in 2025 that more needs to be done to make the pension more “affordable and appealing to young-in-service officers”.¹⁹ However, as outlined below, the ability for pension improvements and changes to be made are hampered by the current arrangement and complete lack of movement on many outstanding issues. Our survey data demonstrates that the opt out rate is likely to continue the trajectory toward more opt-outs if intervention is not made quickly. As the PFEW, we will continue to play our part by encouraging members through all the mechanism we have. We have increased our efforts to educate and inform members about the benefits of the scheme. We do, however, need to see more earnest effort from other parties.

7.2.4 8.3.2 Death in Service and Injury on Duty

In the PRRB’s report, a specific request was placed in relation to opting out:¹⁹

“We would also like evidence in the next pay round on how the wider implications for officers when they opt out of the pension can be mitigated, especially ways that ensure that death-in-service and medical retirement benefits are available to any officer killed or injured as a result of incidents they faced in the line of duty, regardless of pension membership status.”

The regulations already provide the answer to this request, and we would fully support their full application to assist colleagues who have opted-out.

It is already possible for an officer to claim an injury on duty award (pension) even if they are not or if they have never been in any of the police pension schemes. The Police

Injury Benefit Regulations (2006) are a standalone set of regulations. They are benevolent in nature, and duty includes being on duty and travelling to and from work.

The injury award is calculated based on the degree of disablement. In relation to process, if an officer is not in the pension scheme, then they would first need to be assessed as permanently medically unfit for the ordinary duties of a police officer. If the Selected Medical Practitioner (SMP) confirms this is the case, then an injury on duty award (IODA) can be considered.

The IODA is a guaranteed amount expressed as a percentage of average pensionable pay. This percentage is dependent on the banding of the award (dictated by the severity of the injury) and the officer's service. This process is, of course, based on the situation of the individual and their specific medical conditions. This does bring about complexities and resolution can be lengthy.

In addition, Regulation 12 of the Police Injury Benefit Regulations 2006 provides a gratuity of the lesser of five times average pensionable pay or four times total remuneration if an officer becomes totally and permanently disabled within twelve months of receiving an injury on duty. The Home Office consulted on removing the twelve-month stipulation from the regulation over four years ago and we await the result of that consultation.

In relation to death in service, there are already some existing provisions under the Police Injury Benefit Regulations (2006). This can be complex, but the table below summarises the position of existing regulations that allow family members access to funds in the tragic event of an officer's death.

<u>Regulation</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Information</u>
Regulation 13	Adult Survivor's Special Award	A 45% pension for adult spouses and civil partners (not cohabitants, award lost on cohabitation). There is also a gratuity.
Regulation 14	Adult survivor's augmented award	An extra pension award for officers attacked etc. There is also a gratuity.
Regulation 17	Child's special allowance	A pension for children – different levels for those with a surviving parent and those that don't.
Regulation 18	Child's special gratuity	A gratuity payable for a regulation 14 award where there is no adult survivor.

<u>Regulation</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Information</u>
Regulation 20	Adult dependent relative's special pension	For dependent relatives such as disabled children who were financially dependent on the deceased member.
Regulation 21	Death gratuity	Similar to Regulation 12 but can be left to an adult survivor, child or children or adult dependent(s)

We are pleased that the PRRB is expressing support for officers that are injured or die in service. We recognise our deep expertise in this area and are happy to participate in discussions about how to use the existing regulations to ensure the best possible outcomes for officers.

Section 9 - Conclusion

This submission has set out evidence of sustained real-terms erosion of police pay, retention pressure at Constable and supervisory ranks, structural weaknesses within the 1994 Inspecting ranks framework, and insufficient recognition of unsocial hours, specialist skills and disrupted working patterns.

The Federation therefore invites the Police Remuneration Review Body to make the following recommendations.

Pay

- An annual consolidated pay award of at least 7 percent for 2026/27 and 7 percent for the following three years.
- A reduction in the number of Constable pay points to improve progression.
- Full recognition of the P-factor within pay determination.
- Removal of adjusted duty reductions within the X-factor framework as detailed in Annex EE.
- A formal benchmarking review to ensure continued competitiveness.

Allowances

- Increase the unsocial hours allowance from 10 percent to 20 percent when working Friday, Saturday or Sunday between 20:00 and 06:00.
- Introduce a Detective Allowance.
- Remove discretion from London and South-East allowances and pay them at maximum levels.
- Review London allowance, South-East allowance and London Weighting to maintain parity of living standards.
- Introduce pensionable acting up, temporary salary and temporary promotion payments from day one.
- Increase the protection allowance and align rate 1 with away from home and overnight allowances where appropriate.
- Ring-fence funding for targeted variable and bonus payments.

Regulations and Working Time

- Extend workload recognition to Inspectors and Chief Inspectors, including additional payment for hours worked beyond 48 per week pending review of the 1994 PNB Agreement.
- Introduce a shift disturbance allowance.
- Provide paid compensation, or time off in lieu, for court warnings irrespective of 15 days' notice.

- Increase annual leave entitlements and introduce long service and recuperation leave.
- Provide day one rights to family leave and expand family leave provisions to reflect policing realities.
- Align mutual aid arrangements with Police Scotland.

These recommendations are targeted and address specific, evidenced pressure points within the current framework. The Federation submits that implementation of these measures is necessary to support retention, operational capability and workforce stability within the federated ranks.