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# Police personnel: pay, recruitment, training and welfare



## Summary

- 1 Types of police personnel
- 2 Police Federation
- 3 Pay
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- 5 Wellbeing and safety

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## Summary

There are four main types of personnel that work in police forces: police officers, police specials (volunteer police officers), Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and civilian support staff.

Police officers are ‘office holders’ rather than employees, holding the Office of Constable. They are prohibited from joining a trade union. Instead, there are ‘staff associations’ which represent officers. ‘Rank and file’ officers are represented by the **Police Federation**. **The Police Superintendents Association** represents senior officers. Police chiefs and their deputies are represented by the **Chief Police Officers’ Staff Association**.

The **College of Policing** (the College) is the professional body for English and Welsh policing. It sets policing standards, including recruitment and training standards for police officers.

Each police force in the UK organises its officers using a standardised **rank structure** which denotes their seniority and responsibilities. Officers can work their way up the rank structure, others may be fast tracked to leadership roles either through a graduate programme or a talent identification scheme.

Police forces divide their personnel into teams known as **police units**. Most police units fall into one of two categories: local **response teams** work in shifts to respond to emergency calls whilst centralised **specialist units** investigate specific types of crime.

Police personnel can specialise in different types of policing. The most notable specialism is ‘investigations’ where detectives spend their time investigating crimes rather than patrolling and responding to emergency calls. There are many unique police specialisms. For example, police officers may specialise in public order, neighbourhood, or undercover policing (amongst other things). Others are trained to work with police animals like sniffer dogs and horses. The College has issued [policing professional profiles](#) which describe the responsibilities and functions of generic roles across the policing profession.

## Police uplift programme

In July 2019, in his first speech as Prime Minister, Boris Johnson pledged to put “another 20,000 police on the streets” by March 2023. The work to meet this pledge is known as the “police uplift programme”. An estimated 50,000 police officers will need to be recruited to meet the pledge. The police are targeted to increase officer numbers by 6,000 by March 2021 and a further 6,000 by March 2022.

The Home Office is releasing regular information about the progress of the programme on its webpage [police officer uplift statistics](#). As at 30 June 2021, [9,814 police officers](#) have been recruited through the uplift programme.

## Policing covenant

The Government is introducing a ‘Police Covenant’ to recognise the sacrifices of those who work in policing. The Police Covenant will focus on three key areas: the health and wellbeing of police personnel, the physical protections they need on the job and support for their families.

The Government published [detailed proposals for the covenant](#) in September 2020. It proposed the following wording for the covenant:

This Covenant acknowledges the sacrifices made by those who serve or have served in our Police Forces, either in a paid or voluntary capacity, whether as an officer or as a member of staff. It is intended to ensure that they and their families are not disadvantaged as a result of that commitment and seeks to mitigate the impact on their day to day life or in their access to justice. Police officers are required at all times to uphold the important principles of policing by consent, the foundation of their long-standing relationship with the public. We ask a great deal of our police and we expect the highest standards to be maintained. In return, we have a responsibility to provide protection and support to the police.

The Covenant recognises that working within policing comes with a high level of personal accountability, duty and responsibility requiring courage and personal risk both on and off duty. This recognition extends to all those who support police forces in upholding the principles and practices of their vocation. Recognising those who have served in policing unites the country and demonstrates the value of their sacrifice. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.<sup>6</sup>

Clause one of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill would require the Home Secretary to report annual on the principals of the covenant. Part 1 of the PCSC Bill includes other provisions connected to the protection of the police. The Library’s [briefing paper on Part 1](#) includes further information.

## Police pay

Police officer pay is set annually by the Home Office on the advice of the [Police Remuneration Review Body \(PRRB\)](#). Each year the Home Secretary sends a remit letter to the PRRB setting out the considerations it wants it to take into consideration when making its annual recommendations. The PRRB takes evidence from stakeholders across the policing system and publishes a report in response to its remit letter.

In 2021, in line with Treasury policy, all police officers earning below £24,000 received a consolidated pay award of £250. All other officers experienced a pay freeze. The pay deal was widely criticised by those in policing. In response both the Police Federation and the Police Superintendents Association withdrew their support for the PRRB arguing that it was not truly independent of government and therefore lacked credibility.

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# 1 Types of police personnel

## 1.1 Police officers

All police officers (no matter their rank) each individually hold the ‘Office of Constable’. The Office of Constable is a common law concept and as such there is no single piece of legislation which defines its duties and responsibilities.<sup>1</sup>

The ‘Office of Constable’ grants police officers an array of powers they can use to prevent, detect and investigate crime and disorder.<sup>2</sup> Most police officers in England and Wales have jurisdiction to use their powers anywhere in both nations.<sup>3</sup>

Police officers are expected to use their powers “without fear or favour” or “improper political interference” and “faithfully according to law”.<sup>4</sup> They receive training and guidance on the lawful and effective use of their powers and authority, but ultimately, they have discretion to make decisions.<sup>5</sup> As ‘office holders’ they are personally responsible for their decision making.<sup>6</sup>

Every police officer is a member of a police force. The police force organises and coordinates their crime fighting. As members of police forces, officers (and other police personnel) are under the “direction and control” of their chief officer.<sup>7</sup> Chief officers are ultimately responsible for the operation of their force.

Police forces are responsible for providing officers with appropriate training, support and resources. The police force is also responsible for challenging officers who misuse their powers or abuse their position.

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The Library briefing [police complaints and discipline](#) provides further information about how police officers who misuse their powers or abuse their position are disciplined.

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<sup>1</sup> Halsbury’s Laws, Vol 84 (Police and Investigatory Powers), para 1 and 40; *Rice v Connolly* [1966] 2 Q.B. 414.

<sup>2</sup> See: House of Commons Library, [Police powers: an introduction](#), April 2020

<sup>3</sup> **Note:** British Transport Police officers have limited jurisdiction outside the railways. See section 1.1 of the Library briefing [British Transport Police](#) for details.

<sup>4</sup> Police Federation, [The Office of Constable: The bedrock of modern day British policing](#), undated, p3 [last accessed 7 May 2020]; [Schedule 1, The Policing Protocol 2011](#), para 12

<sup>5</sup> College of Policing, [Code of Ethics](#), July 2014, para 5.5

<sup>6</sup> Police Federation, [The Office of Constable: The bedrock of modern day British policing](#), undated, p2 [last accessed 7 May 2020]

<sup>7</sup> [para 21, The Policing Protocol Order 2011](#)

## Ranks

The current police officer rank structure (as summarised in the table below) in England and Wales is set out in [regulation 4](#) of the Police Regulations 2003. Whilst the rank structure in England and Wales is set out in regulations, these regulations were constrained by past primary legislation which specified many of the ranks that must be regulated for (section 9H and 13 of the Police Act 1996, which has now been repealed).<sup>8</sup> The current rank structure is little changed from that used by the first British police forces in the 1800s.<sup>9</sup>

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and the City of London Police have modified rank structures to account for their size and responsibilities.

English and Welsh police force rank structure <sup>10</sup>		
Forces outside of London	MPS	CoLP
	Commissioner	
	Deputy Commissioner	
Chief Constable	Assistant Commissioner	Commissioner
Deputy Chief Constable	Deputy Assistant Commissioner	Assistant Commissioner
Assistant Chief Constable	Commander	Commander
Chief Superintendent	Chief Superintendent	Chief Superintendent
Superintendent	Superintendent	Superintendent
Chief Inspector	Chief Inspector	Chief Inspector
Inspector	Inspector	Inspector
Sergeant	Sergeant	Sergeant
Constable	Constable	Constable

In June 2015, in response to a request by the Home Secretary, the College of Policing published a review of leadership in policing.<sup>11</sup> This review looked at how the police service could be reformed to encourage more diversity (of background and skills) in leadership roles. Among the College's recommendations was that the rank structure should be reviewed.<sup>12</sup> The College argued that the current rank structure is overly bureaucratic and

<sup>8</sup> [s48, Policing and Crime Act 2017](#)

<sup>9</sup> College of Policing, [Leadership Review: Recommendations for delivering leadership at all levels](#), June 2015, paragraph 5.3.3.

<sup>10</sup> r4, [Police Regulations 2003](#) and [Ask the police, Q300: What is the structure of the ranks in the police?](#) [last accessed 3/06/19]

<sup>11</sup> HC Deb, [Police Reform](#), 22 July 2014, Cc1265- 1126

<sup>12</sup> College of Policing, [Leadership Review: Recommendations for delivering leadership at all levels](#), June 2015, recommendation 2

“inhibits the development of an aspirational culture”.<sup>13</sup> They were supportive of a ‘flatter structure’ because it allows for “organisations to be more responsive to social shifts and agile in meeting demands”.<sup>14</sup>

The 2015-2017 Conservative Government argued that the College, not the Home Office, should be responsible for determining the rank structure of the police.<sup>15</sup> It put forward legislative proposals to allow for the Home Office, upon recommendation by the College, to bring forward regulations to set police ranks and allow for any ranks currently specified in primary legislation to be removed and replaced. [Section 47 and 48](#) of the Police and Crime Act 2017 provided for these reforms. However, no secondary legislation to amend the rank structure of the police has been brought forward under the 2017 Act yet.

The National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) was tasked to undertake the review of the rank structure.<sup>16</sup> The Home Office had expected the review to be completed by April 2016, but no report has been made public.

## 1.2 Police specials

Police specials (aka special constables) are volunteer police officers. Most police forces expect their specials to volunteer around 16 hours a month.<sup>17</sup> Specials are warranted officers who have the same powers as their paid counterparts.<sup>18</sup> Unlike police officers, they are not members of a police force. Instead they are members of the ‘Special Constabulary’ and appointed by a chief officer to serve in a force.<sup>19</sup> Chief officers must appoint specials in line with the Police Special Regulations 1965 (as amended). The recruitment of police specials is a matter for police chiefs.<sup>20</sup>

The National Police Chiefs Council (the coordinating body for UK police forces) publishes a national strategy for the special constabulary. The [current strategy](#) runs from 2018 to 2023. It focuses on increasing the “capacity” and “capability” of specials rather than “simply increasing numbers”.

Police specials are not typically paid but they are entitled to travel expenses. They can also expense costs incurred when volunteering outside their normal hours.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid, paragraph 5.3.4

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, paragraph 5.3.5

<sup>15</sup> Home Office, [Police and Crime Bill Factsheet: Police Ranks](#), February 2016, paragraph 8

<sup>16</sup> Home Office, [Police and Crime Bill Factsheet: Police Ranks](#), February 2016, paragraph 7

<sup>17</sup> HM Govt, [Becoming a Special Constable: A Guide for Employees](#), September 2019 p6

<sup>18</sup> Metropolitan Police Service, [Special constable \(Volunteer police officer\)](#), last accessed 8 January 2021

<sup>19</sup> s27, Police Act 1996 (as amended)

<sup>20</sup> s27, Police Act 1996 **Note:** the amended version of the 1996 Act is available to MPs and their staff through the Library’s subscription services.

Some specials get paid leave from their regular employers to volunteer with the police. Employers which subscribe to [Employer Supported Policing Scheme \(ESP\)](#) pledge to pay their staff to take time off to volunteer with the police.

## Should police specials be paid?

Under current regulations police specials can be paid an “allowance” when approved by their local policing body (either their Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Combined Authority Mayor or City of London Police Authority).<sup>21</sup>

Two police forces, West Midlands Police and Devon & Cornwall Constabulary, paid allowances to specials during the coronavirus pandemic. In both forces, specials received a one-off payment when they completed a set number of shifts within a designated time period.<sup>22</sup>

Paying specials has been piloted in the past. In the mid-2000s the Home Office sanctioned allowances for specials as part of a scheme to encourage people to volunteer with the police. However, take up of the scheme at a force level was low and the idea did not gain traction.<sup>23</sup>

The PCC for Devon and Cornwall (Alison Hernandez- Conservative) has called on the Government to legislate to enable forces to use specials as a paid reserve. She said the change would help Devon and Cornwall cope with higher demand in the summer months.<sup>24</sup>

## 1.3

## Police community support officers (PCSOs)

PCSOs were introduced in the early 2000s as a new staffing resource for police forces. The role was designed as a specialist resource for neighbourhood policing.<sup>25</sup> PCSOs are supposed to provide “visible patrols” which reassure the public and combat disorder. They also work with local partner agencies to understand crime and disorder in their area.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> r4(2)(b), *The Special Constables Regulations 1965* (as amended) **Note:** the amended version of these regulations is available to MPs and their staff through the Library’s subscription services.

<sup>22</sup> *Police Professional*, [WMP first force in country to pay its special constables](#), 17 June 2020; Office of the PCC Devon and Cornwall, [Devon and Cornwall Special Constables eligible for £750 coronavirus allowance](#), 23 December 2020

<sup>23</sup> PQ220551, answered 14 March 2005, HC Deb 432, c61-2W

<sup>24</sup> PCC Devon and Cornwall, [Devon and Cornwall Special Constables eligible for £750 coronavirus allowance](#), 23 December 2020

<sup>25</sup> Home Office, [From the neighbourhood to the national: policing our communities together](#), July 2008, para 1.20

<sup>26</sup> College of Policing, [National Policing Police Community Support Officer: Operational Handbook](#), June 2015, p8

PCSOs were originally given several specific powers in statute (mostly related to tackling anti-social behaviour).<sup>27</sup> Their powers were reformed in 2017 and now chief officers can delegate powers to PCSOs. Chiefs can delegate whichever powers they want, **except** for powers explicitly reserved for regular police officers (including the power of arrest and the power to stop and search).<sup>28</sup>

The majority of PCSOs still specialise in local policing (93% as at March 2021). Some PCSOs (2% as at March 2021) now specialise in roads policing with a small number specialising in other areas (such as local investigations and backroom support).<sup>29</sup>

The recruitment of PCSOs is a matter for chief officers. One police force, Norfolk Constabulary, chose to abolish PCSOs in 2018.<sup>30</sup> Instead it staffs its neighbourhood policing teams with police officers and police staff.<sup>31</sup> Its chief officer (Simon Baily) says Norfolk's neighbourhood teams are able to be more focused on "threat, harm and risk" and be more proactive as a result.<sup>32</sup>

## 1.4 Police staff

Civilian staff provide administrative support in police forces. These people do not have police powers but are expected to uphold policing standards.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Home Office, [Policing a New Century: A Blueprint for Reform](#), Cm5326, December 2001, p85-86

<sup>28</sup> See: House of Commons Library, [Police powers: an introduction](#), December 2020, section 1.1

<sup>29</sup> Home Office, [Police workforce, England and Wales: 31 March 2021](#), July 2021, table F3

<sup>30</sup> *BBC News*, [Norfolk Police: Abolition of PCSOs plan going ahead](#), 29 March 2018

<sup>31</sup> Home Office, [Police workforce, England and Wales: 31 March 2021](#), July 2021, table F3; *Police Professional*, [PCSO role will not be brought back as force looks to invest in a presence that 'puts fear into criminals'](#), 15 August 2019

<sup>32</sup> *Police Professional*, [PCSO role will not be brought back as force looks to invest in a presence that 'puts fear into criminals'](#), 15 August 2019

<sup>33</sup> College of Policing, [Code of Ethics: A Code of Practice for the Principles and Standards of Professional Behaviour for the Policing Profession of England and Wales](#), July 2014, pV

## 2 Police Federation

The Police Federation for England and Wales (PFEW or simply the Federation) is the staff association for rank-and-file police officers (those up to the rank of chief inspector).<sup>34</sup> It represents roughly 130,000 police officers across England and Wales.<sup>35</sup>

The Police Federation is a statutory body that has legal obligations to act in the public interest.<sup>36</sup> It must maintain high standards of conduct and transparency.<sup>37</sup> In doing so the Federation aims to build public confidence in the police.<sup>38</sup>

### 2.1 Core functions

The Federation has three core functions:

- **It represents its rank-and-file officers in pay and conditions negotiations.**<sup>39</sup> The Police Federation did make an annual submission to the [Police and Remuneration Review Body](#) (PRRB- the independent body which advises the Home Office on police pay). It conducts an annual [pay and morale survey](#) of its members to inform this submission.<sup>40</sup> Following the 2021 pay deal the Federation said it would no longer “engage” with the PRRB (see section 3.1 of this briefing for details).
- **It seeks to influence policy effecting rank-and-file officers and the police service.** The Police Federation’s Parliamentary sub-committee engages at both Westminster and Cardiff. It seeks to influence legislative and policy changes to support the strategic objectives of the Federation.<sup>41</sup>
- **It represents its members interests in a variety of matters including discipline, diversity, health and safety and welfare.**<sup>42</sup> This includes providing legal advice and assistance to members who meet criteria

<sup>34</sup> Police Federation, [Aims and objectives](#), [last accessed 10 March 2021]

<sup>35</sup> Ibid

<sup>36</sup> s59(1A), *Police Act 1996* (as amended)

<sup>37</sup> Ibid

<sup>38</sup> Police Federation, [Aims and objectives](#), [last accessed 10 March 2021]

<sup>39</sup> Ibid

<sup>40</sup> Police Federation, [Police Remuneration Review Body \(PRRB\)](#), [last accessed 10 March 2021]

<sup>41</sup> Police Federation, [Parliamentary](#), [last accessed 10 March 2021]

<sup>42</sup> Ibid

set out in its '[fund rules](#)'. The Police Federation provides legal advice and assistance in around 6,000 cases a year including criminal trials, misconduct investigations and hearings (including those lead by the Independent Office for Police Conduct), employment matters, civil actions, inquests and judicial reviews.<sup>43</sup> Federation support supplements Home Office legal insurance provided to all police personnel.

## 2.2 Organisation

The Federation is split into force level branches which are organised into regions.<sup>44</sup> Officers elected as branch representatives perform their branch duties as part of their working hours.<sup>45</sup> Each branch chair and secretary, alongside representatives of protected characteristics groups make up the Police Federation's National Council. The National Council elects the National Board which includes the National Chair of the Federation.<sup>46</sup> The National Chair, currently [John Apter](#), works fulltime for the Federation and is its spokesperson.

## 2.3 Membership and income

Some eligible officers are **not** members of the Federation. Officers must opt in to become a member.<sup>47</sup> Members pay subscription of £24 a month (discounted for first year probationary officers).<sup>48</sup>

Membership fees represent most of the Federation's income.<sup>49</sup> The Federation also generates income by utilising its headquarters, [Federation House](#), as a hotel and conference centre.<sup>50</sup>

The Federation's income from membership fees was decreasing. In 2018 (the last year it has provided a report on accounts) it reported "a significant drop in income from members".<sup>51</sup> Its income from membership subscriptions was £28.8 million, down from £29.2 million in 2017.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Police Federation, [Legal advice and assistance](#), [last accessed 10 March 2021]

<sup>44</sup> Police Federation, [Structure of the Federation](#) [last accessed 10 March 2021]

<sup>45</sup> [r23](#), *The Police Regulations 2003*

<sup>46</sup> Police Federation, [National Board](#), [last accessed 10 March 2021]

<sup>47</sup> [r4](#), *The Police Federation (England and Wales) Regulations 2017*

<sup>48</sup> Police Federation, [Becoming a member](#) [last accessed 10 March 2021]

<sup>49</sup> Police Federation, [Reports & accounts](#),

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>51</sup> Police Federation, [Reports & accounts](#),

<sup>52</sup> Police Federation, [Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2018](#), undated, p4

## 2.4

### Recent history

In the early-2010s the Police Federation was experiencing a “profound crises in trust among its members, political stakeholders and the public”.<sup>53</sup> The Coalition Government was pursuing major policing reforms alongside austerity policies which contributed to job losses across the police service. Federation members felt it was a “weak voice” in the political debate on policing at the time.<sup>54</sup> Against this backdrop, the Federation’s involvement in the “[Plebgate](#)” row served to further undermine the organisations credibility.<sup>55</sup>

In 2013 the Federation commissioned the Royal Society for Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) to conduct an independent review of its operation and structures. [The RSA’s final report](#) (published January 2014) concluded the Federation required “top to bottom change in culture, behaviours, structures and organisation.”<sup>56</sup> It made 36 recommendations aimed at helping the Federation to become “a credible voice for rank and file police officers and genuinely serve the public good as well as its members’ interests”.<sup>57</sup>

The report was accepted by the Federation and supported by Theresa May (who was then Home Secretary). Mrs May committed to legislating as part of the RSA’s proposed reforms.<sup>58</sup> As a result:

- [Section 49](#) of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 amended the Police Act 1996 to give the Federation a statutory duty to carry out its functions in the public interest.
- [Section 50](#) of the 2017 Act ensured the Police Federation was subject to the Freedom of Information Act. Thus making it liable to respond to freedom of information requests.
- The [Police Federation \(amendment regulations\) 2015](#) amended the Police Federation Regulations 1969 to make membership of the Police Federation non-compulsory. Officers are now required to opt into Federation membership. The 1969 Regulations were eventually replaced by the [Police Federation \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2017](#) to support the implementation of all the RSA’s recommendations.

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<sup>53</sup> RSA, [Police Federation Independent Review Overview of evidence: landing page](#), January 2014

<sup>54</sup> RSA, [Police Federation’s Independent Review: Overview of evidence](#), January 2014, p6

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, p10-11; *BBC News*, [Police Federation must change, says independent review](#), January 2014; *BBC News*, [‘Plebgate’ row: Timeline](#), November 2014

<sup>56</sup> RSA, [Police Federation Final Report: landing page](#), January 2014

<sup>57</sup> Ibid

<sup>58</sup> [HCWS387. Police Federation reform](#), 12 March 2015

## 3

## Pay

Police officer pay is set annually by the Home Office on the advice of the [Police Remuneration Review Body](#) (PRRB). The PRRB's [terms of reference](#) require it to consider:<sup>59</sup>

- the frontline role and nature of the office of constable in British policing.
- the fact that officers cannot join a trade union.
- the need to recruit, retain and motivate suitably able and qualified officers.
- the funds available to the Home Office, as set out in the Government's departmental expenditure limits, and the representations of police and crime commissioners and the Northern Ireland Policing Board in respect of local funding issues.
- the Government's wider public sector pay policy.
- the Government's policies for improving public services.
- the work of the College of Policing.
- the work of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs).
- all relevant legal obligations on the police service in England and Wales and Northern Ireland, including anti-discrimination legislation regarding age, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion and belief and disability
- the operating environments of different forces, including consideration of the specific challenges of policing in rural or large metropolitan areas and in Northern Ireland, as well as any specific national roles which forces may have
- any relevant legislative changes to employment law which do not automatically apply to police officers
- that the remuneration of the remit group relates coherently to that of chief officer ranks

Each year the Home Secretary sends a remit letter to the PRRB setting out the considerations it wants it to take into consideration when making its annual recommendations.<sup>60</sup>

The PRRB usually takes written and oral evidence from the Home Office, the Treasury, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCCs), the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS),

<sup>59</sup> PRRB, [Terms of reference](#), last accessed 23 July 2021

<sup>60</sup> **Note:** The Home Secretary has powers s64B(5), Police Act 1996 to give directions about the "matters on which it is to recommendations" when referring a matter to the PRRB.

Police Federation of England and Wales, the Police Superintendents' Association and the Chief Police Officers' Staff Association.<sup>61</sup>

## 3.1 2021 pay deal

In 2021, in line with Treasury policy, all police officers earning below £24,000 received a consolidated pay award of £250. All other officers experienced a pay freeze.<sup>62</sup>

The NPCC described the pay deal as a “hard pill to swallow” following the service’s efforts during the pandemic.<sup>63</sup> The Federation noted that other public services (local government and fire & rescue services) received a 1.5% pay rise. It said this showed that “not all public services are treated equally by this Government, and some are valued more than others”.<sup>64</sup> The Police Superintendents Association (PSA) said it is “deeply concerned over the government’s continued devaluing of the police workforce”. It argued that the 2021 pay deal showed the government was “disregarding” the “fair and transparent process in place” to determine police pay.<sup>65</sup>

The Police Federation held an extraordinary general meeting following the pay announcement at which it voted to for a motion of no confidence in the Home Secretary. The Federation concluded that this Government “cannot be trusted or taken at face value in the way we would expect.”<sup>66</sup> The Federation also voted to withdraw its support and engagement with the PRRB. It said the PRRB “is not truly independent” claiming that its hands are “constantly tied by the Government”.<sup>67</sup> At the PSA’s annual conference in September 2021, PSA President Paul Griffiths announced that it too would be withdrawing from the PRRB process and called on the Government to “constitute an independent review” of how police pay is set.<sup>68</sup>

The PRRB itself has expressed concerns about the way the Government sets its remit. Its 2021 noted:

The Chancellor of the Exchequer’s announcement of the public sector pay policy for the financial year ending (FYE) 2022 set the context for our report this year. We fully recognise the extraordinary pressures placed on the economy and on public sector finances by the COVID-19 pandemic that have restricted our remit this year. However, it is

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<sup>61</sup> PRRB, [Seventh Report England and Wales 2021](#), July 2021, para 1.10 to para 1.12

<sup>62</sup> Home Office, [Recommendations of the Police Remuneration Review Body on policy officer pay in England Wales](#), July 2021

<sup>63</sup> NPCC, [Pay freeze for officers a hard pill to swallow](#), 22 July 2021

<sup>64</sup> Police Federation, [Statement from John Apter, National Chair and Alex Duncan, National Secretary](#), 21 July 2021

<sup>65</sup> PSA, [PSA Secretary responds to PRRB Report](#), 21 July 2021

<sup>66</sup> Police Federation, [PFEW no longer has confidence in the current Home Secretary](#), 22 July 2021

<sup>67</sup> Ibid

<sup>68</sup> PSA, [PSA President's conference address 2021](#), 14 September 2021

disappointing that this has again affected the independence of the Review Body process, and our view is that we should be permitted to fully exercise our role in making recommendations on pay uplifts for the next pay round.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> PRRB, [Seventh Report England and Wales 2021](#), July 2021, executive summary, para 25

## 4 Recruitment and training

The recruitment and training of police personnel is delivered locally by individual police forces. Forces must follow some statutory rules regarding their recruitment and training processes. For example, [regulation 10](#) of The Police Regulations 2003 sets out the mandatory qualifications prospective police officers must obtain and [The Police \(Promotion\) Regulations 1996](#) sets rules for promotion through the ranks. The College of Policing (not the Home Office) is responsible for proposing new regulations relating to police recruitment, training and probation. The College also sets mandatory training and assessments for some specialist policing roles (for example firearms and public order).<sup>70</sup> Some police forces also procure training and recruitment services from the College.

### 4.1 Making police officer a graduate profession

The College of Policing has recently implemented fundamental reforms to police recruitment and training processes. These reforms have been designed to standardise police training and make the police a graduate profession.

The reforms include:

- The development of [three new entry routes](#) to become a police constable.
- The introduction of a [Police Educational Qualifications Framework \(PEQF\)](#) for police officer roles.
- The development of the [National Policing Curriculum](#) to support the long-term professional development of all those who work in policing.

#### New entry routes

All new police constables are now recruited through one of three new entry routes.<sup>71</sup> Not all applicants are required to have a degree, but the entry routes are designed to ensure that all officers gain a degree level qualification when they complete their police training. The entry routes are:

- **Degree entry:** candidates with a degree in any subject can apply to join the police. Upon entry they take part in a two-year training programme.

<sup>70</sup> College of Policing, [Armed policing: National Police Firearms Training Curriculum](#), [last accessed 19 August 2019]. College of Policing, [Public order: Command](#) [last accessed 19 August 2019]

<sup>71</sup> College of Policing, [Entry routes for police constables](#), [last accessed 19 August 2019]

At the end of their training they are expected to gain a graduate diploma in policing.<sup>72</sup>

- **Pre-join degree:** The College has worked with universities to develop a specific ‘policing degree’.<sup>73</sup> New recruits who join the police with this degree are fast tracked through the training process.<sup>74</sup>
- **Apprentice route:** candidates without a degree can apply. Upon entry they will spend three years working as a ‘police apprentice’. At the end of their training they are expected to gain a degree level apprenticeship qualification in policing.<sup>75</sup>

## Police Educational Qualifications Framework (PEQF)

The PEQF will eventually provide a standardised training and accreditation for all police officers. For now, it provides standardised accredited training for new police constables.

In December 2019 the College said the new training for officers joining the police “will be up and running in more than 30 police forces across England and Wales over the next year”. They said they were continuing to work with all forces to support its implementation across England & Wales.<sup>76</sup>

## National Police Curriculum

The National Police Curriculum has been introduced to guide all training to police personnel. The curriculum has been designed to align with the College’s [Authorised Professional Practice](#) documents. The curriculum includes seven ‘subjects’ (for example, ‘ensuring public safety’ and ‘protecting vulnerable people’). Police personnel can gain recognised qualifications through the curriculum.<sup>77</sup>

## Debate

The Government and the College of Policing argue that these reforms will ensure that those who work in policing have the right skills and knowledge. It is argued that a well-trained and professionalised police service will be better placed to meet the challenges of the future.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> College of Policing, [Entry routes for police constables](#), [last accessed 19 August 2019]

<sup>73</sup> College of Policing, [Pre-join degree in Professional Policing: Information for prospective students](#), [last accessed 19 August 2019]

<sup>74</sup> College of Policing, [Entry routes for police constables](#), [last accessed 19 August 2019]

<sup>75</sup> College of Policing, [Entry routes for police constables](#), [last accessed 19 August 2019]

<sup>76</sup> College of Policing, [Legal challenge around training for new officers rejected](#) [last accessed 16 March 2020]

<sup>77</sup> College of Policing, [National Policing Curriculum](#), [last accessed 19 August 2019]

<sup>78</sup> See: College of Policing, [Policing Education Qualifications Framework Consultation](#), February 2019, College of Policing, [Policing Education Qualifications Framework: Frequently Asked Questions for](#)

The former Chair of the National Police Chiefs Council, Chief Constable Sara Thornton and Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Cressida Dick have supported the reforms. They argue that the policing profession should have accredited qualifications that recognise the complexity of the vocation.<sup>79</sup> The Home Affairs Select Committee have also supported the reforms. They have said that the police service should strive for the...

...maintenance of consistent quality standards, based on accredited professional qualifications, a well-established evidence base, and high levels of practitioner knowledge.<sup>80</sup>

However, not everyone in policing has welcomed the changes. Those who oppose the reforms argue they will make it harder for the police to attract minority ethnic candidates, be expensive to implement and result in officers spending too much time studying in classrooms.<sup>81</sup> Some have questioned the value of academic knowledge in policing. They say that practical skills are more important 'on the beat'.<sup>82</sup>

The Chief Constable of Lincolnshire Police, Bill Skelly is one of the loudest critics of the reforms. He estimated they will result in 10% of his workforce being off the frontline and in the classroom at any one time. He says this will cause him "massive deployability issues". He sought Judicial Review of the changes with the support of his Police and Crime Commissioner. They were seeking permission to delay the implementation of the PEQF till 2023.<sup>83</sup> However, the courts refused to grant a judicial review to Lincolnshire.<sup>84</sup> Following the judgment the College committed to 'move forward' and bring Lincolnshire into the new training regime.<sup>85</sup>

## 4.2

### Police uplift programme

In July 2019, in his first speech as Prime Minister Boris Johnson pledged to put "another 20,000 police on the streets" by March 2023.<sup>86</sup> The work to meet this pledge is known as the "police uplift programme". An estimated 50,000

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[Quality Standards Assessment \(QSA\): Pre-join Degree in Professional Policing](#), April 2018, HL Deb, [Police: Recruitment Criteria](#), 2 April 2019 and Home Office, Speech: [Speech to the Police Education Qualification Framework conference](#) (Brandon Lewis), March 2017

<sup>79</sup> Oral evidence: [Policing for the future](#), HC 515, Q496- 497

<sup>80</sup> Home Affairs Select Committee, [Policing for the future, Tenth Report of Session 2017–19](#), paragraph 202

<sup>81</sup> College of Policing, [Developing and delivering an educational qualification framework for policing: The Collge of Policing response to the consultation](#), December 2019, p6

<sup>82</sup> College of Policing, [Developing and delivering an educational qualification framework for policing: The Collge of Policing response to the consultation](#), December 2019, p6

<sup>83</sup> Lincolnshire Police, [Chief Constable on degree requirements of recruits](#), 9 August 2019

<sup>84</sup> Lincolnshire Police, [PEQF - Judicial Review Dismissed on Technicality](#), 5 December 2019; College of Policing, [Legal challenge around training for new officers rejected](#), 5 December 2019

<sup>85</sup> College of Policing, [Legal challenge around training for new officers rejected](#), 5 December 2019

<sup>86</sup> Prime Minister's Office, [Boris Johnson's first speech as Prime Minister: 24 July 2019](#), 24 July 2019

police officers will need to be recruited to meet the pledge.<sup>87</sup> The police are targeted to recruit 6,000 new officers by March 2021 and a further 6,000 by March 2022.<sup>88</sup>

The Home Office is releasing regular information about the progress of the programme on its webpage [police officer uplift statistics](#). As at 30 June 2021, [9,814 police officers](#) have been recruited through the uplift programme.

The uplift programme sets recruitment targets for local police forces based on the police funding formula.<sup>89</sup> Local police leaders were provided £45m worth of grant funding to establish recruitment programmes.<sup>90</sup> They are awarded further grant funding when they meet their recruitment targets.<sup>91</sup> A central team staffed by NPCC, Home Office and College staff supports forces to meet their targets. It runs a national advertising campaigning and organises regional assessment centres.<sup>92</sup>

In December 2020, the Minister of State for policing, crime and fire services Kit Malthouse, announced that the second year of the uplift programme would include targets to increase the number of officers in counterterrorism (CT) and regional organised crime units (ROCU). Existing experienced police officers will be recruited to fill the new CT/ ROCU roles and new officers will be recruited to backfill the vacancies created.<sup>93</sup> Of the 6,000 officers targeted to be recruited in year two of the programme (March 2021- March 2022), 380 will be allocated to CT/ ROCU operations (around 6%).<sup>94</sup>

## Impact of coronavirus

In July 2020 policing leaders said they were “on track to hit the target set for March 2021” despite the coronavirus pandemic. Police leaders adjusted their plans owing to the pandemic. For example, College moved their regional assessments online to accommodate social distancing.<sup>95</sup>

In April 2020 the Home Office announced that half of the funding earmarked for forces who meet their recruitment targets (£84m) was to be ‘repurposed’ to “allow for expenditure on both COVID-19 related pressures and continued police uplift programme recruitment activity”. The decision to provide force’s with funding up front did not affect their recruitment targets. The Home

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<sup>87</sup> Home Office, [National Policing Board: Minutes 22 July 2020](#), 22 July 2020, para 4

<sup>88</sup> Home Office, [Home Office announces first wave of 20,000 police officer uplift](#), 9 October 2019; Home Office, [Provisional police grant report England and Wales tables](#), 17 December 2020 table 7

<sup>89</sup> Home Office, [Police Grant \(England and Wales\): Provisional Police Grant Report \(England and Wales\) 2021/22](#), December 2020, para 1.8

<sup>90</sup> [HCWS51. Police Funding 2020/21](#), 22 January 2020

<sup>91</sup> Home Office, [Police Grant \(England and Wales\): Provisional Police Grant Report \(England and Wales\) 2021/22](#), December 2020, para 1.8

<sup>92</sup> NPCC, [Chief Constables Council](#), 2-3 October 2019, p120- p139

<sup>93</sup> [HCWS663. Provisional Police Grant Report \(England and Wales\) 2021/22](#), 17 December 2020

<sup>94</sup> Home Office, [Provisional police grant report England and Wales tables](#), 17 December 2020 table 7

<sup>95</sup> Home Office, [20,000 Police Officer Uplift Programme](#) (letter to the Home Affairs Select Committee), 1 May 2020

Secretary said she remained “confident” that forces would deliver on their recruitment targets.<sup>96</sup>

## Recruitment of Black and Minority Ethnic officers

The Home Office, the NPCC and the College have recognised the opportunity the uplift programme presents for forces to increase diversity in their workforce. They have committed to work together to share best practice and ensure consistent recruitment practices are used to attract diverse recruits.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Home Office, [20.000 Police Officer Uplift Programme](#) (letter to the Home Affairs Select Committee), 1 May 2020

<sup>97</sup> Home Office, [National Policing Board: Minutes 22 July 2020](#), 22 July 2020, paras 3-15

## 5 Wellbeing and safety

### 5.1 Police wellbeing

There have been concerns that the wellbeing, particularly the mental wellbeing, of police personnel is not being adequately supported.

As at March 2020, there were 2,578 police officers on long-term sick leave. More than half of long-term police officer absence is due to sick leave (other reasons for long-term absence include maternity leave, career break and suspension).<sup>98</sup>

The [2020 National Police Wellbeing Survey](#) identified some worrying mental health data. 10,774 police officers and 10,774 police staff responded to the survey (a response rate of 7.9% and 14.5% respectively). 64.1% of police officer respondents reported post-traumatic stress symptoms which would warrant an evaluation for PTSD. The average anxiety score for police officers was “moderately high” and their average depression score was “moderate”.<sup>99</sup>

**National Policing Wellbeing Survey 2019: Average scores for selected indicators**

	Police officer	Police staff
Emotional Energy (1-7 scale)	3.48	4.00
Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms (past 12 months) (1-10 scale)	4.84	4.29
Symptoms of Anxiety (past 3 months) (1-10 scale)	6.26	6.15
Symptoms of Depression (past 3 months) (1-7 scale)	5.74	5.76
Physical Wellbeing (past 3 months) (1-7 scale)	3.19	3.26

<sup>98</sup> Home Office, [Police workforce, England and Wales: 31 March 2020 third edition](#), July 2020, table 8

<sup>99</sup> Durham University, [National Policing Wellbeing Survey 2019: Summary of Evidence and Insights](#), May 2021, p9-11

Almost half of respondents to the Police Federation's annual 'pay and morale survey' (48%) said they had low personal morale in 2020. Three quarters of respondents said their force morale was low and 85% said the police service morale was low. In 2020 all three indicators were at their lowest level since the survey began in 2014.<sup>100</sup>

In July 2019 the Government published the [Front-Line Review](#) of policing. The Front-Line Review was the culmination of a year-long research project into the welfare of frontline personnel. The review highlighted that many officers feel undervalued, overworked and are not devoting adequate time to their welfare. It also identified that officers at lower ranks feel disconnected from senior leadership and are sceptical that they have the power to inform change.<sup>101</sup>

In response to the Front Line Review the Government committed to provide a 'national evaluation mechanism' of wellbeing provision available to police personnel and challenge police chiefs to devote more time to staff welfare. They also said they would continue to support Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services' (HMICFRS) assessments of wellbeing in their regular inspections.<sup>102</sup>

## Police wellbeing services

Police forces, the Police Federation and national and local charities all provide wellbeing support and services to police personnel.

**Police forces** have organisational responsibilities to support the wellbeing of their workforce. The College of Policing (the professional body for English and Welsh policing) provides support and guidance to forces on the delivery of wellbeing support. The College has published the [Blue Light Wellbeing Framework](#). The BLWF provides forces (and other emergency services) with standards to benchmark their health and wellbeing services.<sup>103</sup> Police forces are encouraged to voluntarily adopt the framework, but it is not compulsory. The College has also issued specific guidance on [responding to trauma in policing](#) and [psychological risk management](#).

The College manages the National Police Wellbeing Service (NPWS- aka Oscar Kilo). [Oscar Kilo](#) was established with Home Office grant money (£7.5m in 2019).<sup>104</sup> It provides support and guidance to all police forces on managing the welfare needs of their staff.<sup>105</sup> Oscar Kilo is also responsible for developing and promoting the BLWF.

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<sup>100</sup> Police Federation, [Pay and Morale Survey 2020 – Morale and Engagement Report](#), November 2020, p6-7

<sup>101</sup> Home Office, [The Front-Line Review Recommendation report](#), July 2019, p5-6

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, p8

<sup>103</sup> College of Policing, [Blue Light Wellbeing Framework](#), 2020, p3

<sup>104</sup> [PQ147968: Police sickness](#), answered 9 February 2021

<sup>105</sup> Oscar Kilo, [About Oscar Kilo](#), [last accessed 10 March 2021]; Oscar Kilo, [National Police Wellbeing Service](#), [last accessed 10 March 2021]

HMICFRS regularly assess how well forces are supporting the wellbeing of their staff through their police force inspection regime.<sup>106</sup> 37 forces were rated “good” and one (Kent Police) “outstanding” at treating their workforce with fairness and respect in 2019. Four forces were judged to “require improvement” in this area with one force (Cleveland) rated “inadequate” by HMICFRS.<sup>107</sup> Despite generally rating forces positively in this area, HMICFRS have been repeatedly critical of them for not developing costed long-term plans to address the complex welfare needs of their staff.<sup>108</sup>

The **Police Federation** has a wellbeing subcommittee which considers the health and wellbeing needs of its members.<sup>109</sup> It runs a welfare support line which provides counselling, clinical assessments and confidential support.<sup>110</sup> It has also published an [officer health and wellbeing booklet](#) which provides specific advice and guidance. In addition to practical support, the Police Federation runs national awareness campaigns and lobbies forces and the Government regarding the welfare needs of its members. Local Federation branches are likely to have projects that support the welfare of their members too.

**Charities** provide welfare support to police personnel. Two separate charities run specific police rehabilitation centres providing mental and physical rehabilitation to police personnel. [Flint House Rehabilitation Centre](#) is a registered charity which runs a centre in Oxfordshire. [Police Treatment Centres](#) is a charity which runs a centre in Scotland, Harrogate and Perthshire. The mental health charity Mind runs the [Blue Light Programme](#) which provides specific mental health support and advice to frontline emergency service workers.

## 5.2

### Police safety

All police personnel (including police officers) are covered by the [Health & Safety at Work Act etc. Act 1974](#). This means chief officers are required to ensure “as far as is reasonably practicable” the health, safety and welfare of all police personnel whilst they are at work. This does not mean that police forces should eliminate risk, but they are expected to:

- identify the types of risks police officers and other staff will encounter in operational policing activities;
- put in place all reasonably practicable steps to minimise those risks, including training, equipment and personal protective equipment;

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<sup>106</sup> HMICFRS, [PEEL assessment criteria: Legitimacy](#) [last accessed 10 March 2021]

<sup>107</sup> HMICFRS, [State of Policing – The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2019](#), July 2020, p72-75

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid*, p72; HMICFRS, [State of Policing – The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2019](#), July 2020, p92

<sup>109</sup> Police Federation, [Wellbeing](#), undated [last accessed 10 March 2021]

<sup>110</sup> Police Federation, [Welfare Support Programme](#), [last accessed 10 March 2021]

- ensure police officers and other staff are aware of and follow their force's guidance and policies regarding these situations;
- provide appropriate training for police officers and other staff who need to take risk-benefit decisions in the course of operational policing.<sup>111</sup>

Health and safety legislation also requires police personnel to take “reasonable care” of their own health and safety whilst at work.<sup>112</sup> The National Personal Safety Manual provides safety guidance to officers. The manual is over 1,000 pages long. The National Police Chiefs Council's (NPCC- the coordinating body for UK police forces) lead on self-defence and restraint has said it is “no longer tenable”. They say officers need a shorter document that promotes consistency across police forces.<sup>113</sup>

The NPCC published an [Officer and Staff Safety Review \(OSSR\)](#) in September 2020. The OSSR drew on available data, a specifically commissioned survey of 40,268 police personnel and independently commissioned research. It made a series of recommendations regarding the appropriate safety equipment and training needed by police personnel.

## Scale of the safety problem

According to data published in the OSSR, 92 police officers lost their lives in the line of duty between 2008 and 2019. 56 officers died as a result of an accident, 21 died of natural causes and 15 died as a direct result of a criminal act. More than half of the deaths (53%) involved a road traffic collision.<sup>114</sup>

There were just over 30,000 assaults on police officers in England and Wales in 2019/20 (excluding Greater Manchester Police). Just under two thirds of the recorded assaults (20,269) were offences “without injury” - an increase of just over 3% on the total for 2018/19. Around a third (10,410) of all assaults were offences where the assault was “with injury” - an increase of just over 2% on the previous year.

## Equipment

Police forces must provide their officers with uniform and equipment.<sup>115</sup> Each force has its own uniform and equipment policy.<sup>116</sup> Force level uniform and

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<sup>111</sup> Health and Safety Executive, [Striking the balance between operational and health and safety duties in the Police Service: An explanatory note](#), undated, para 6

<sup>112</sup> [Police \(Health and Safety\) Act 1997](#); Health and Safety Executive, [Application of health and safety law to the Police Service](#), undated

<sup>113</sup> NPCC, [Officer and Staff Safety Review](#), September 2020, p101

<sup>114</sup> NPCC, [Officer and Staff Safety Review](#), September 2020, p44

<sup>115</sup> [r45](#), Police Regulations 2003 (as amended)

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.* **Note:** Force level uniform policies should incorporate guidance on national appearance standards issued by the College of Policing. The College of Policing webpage displaying the national appearance standards is currently unavailable. See: [https://recruit.college.police.uk/Officer/Documents/Appearance\\_Standards\\_GuidanceDocument.docx](https://recruit.college.police.uk/Officer/Documents/Appearance_Standards_GuidanceDocument.docx)

equipment policies are internal documents, but some forces have made them public via Freedom of Information requests.<sup>117</sup>

All officers are equipped with personal issue body armour, a standard baton, handcuffs and a canister of irritant spray.<sup>118</sup> Other equipment will vary from force to force. Some specific equipment is issued to officers deployed to specific operations. For example, officers at public order events (protests/ football games) may be equipped with shields (amongst other things).<sup>119</sup>

There are national standards associated with some specific types of equipment. Chief officers **must** follow the [Code of Practice on Armed Policing and Police use of Less Lethal Weapons](#) when deploying officers with firearms and “less lethal weapons” (including Tasers). Forces can only issue their officers with firearms/ less lethal weapons approved by the Home Office. Officers deployed with firearms and less lethal weapons must meet a standard national selection criterion and pass nationally accredited training courses which they are reassessed against at regular intervals.<sup>120</sup>

The OSSR made specific recommendations concerning several different types of equipment designed to improve officer safety. Their recommendations tended to support the standardisation of procurement practices so that all officers are issued with similar models of standard equipment (batons, handcuffs etc).<sup>121</sup> The OSSR also assessed the effectiveness of new technologies (like body worn video cameras and needle resistant gloves) providing technical recommendations to chief officers about their safety effectiveness.<sup>122</sup> The OSSR also made recommendations about equipment that has been politically controversial: Taser and spit/bite guards.

## Training

Forces must ensure their officers pass an annual “personal safety training” (PST) and an “job related fitness test”. The duration and content of PST training differs between forces. Some forces deliver 5-hour PST courses whilst others deliver 16-hour courses.<sup>123</sup> The fitness test is a standard 15 minute “bleep test”; officers must reach level 5.5 to pass (higher fitness standards are required for some specialist’s roles).<sup>124</sup>

Forces were previously required to provide officers with 12 hours of PST a year. The 12-hour requirement was removed in the mid-2010s. The College of Policing argued that “learning outcomes” rather than “content time” was the

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<sup>117</sup> See for example, West Midland Police, [Uniform, Equipment & Appearance](#), November 2020; Wiltshire Police, [Standards of Dress](#), January 2021

<sup>118</sup> NPCC, [Officer and Staff Safety Review](#), September 2020, p97

<sup>119</sup> College of Policing, Public order APP: [Tactical options](#), undated [last accessed 10 March 2021]

<sup>120</sup> College of Policing, [Code of Practice on Armed Policing and Police use of Less Lethal Weapons](#), January 2020, Chapter six

<sup>121</sup> NPCC, [Officer and Staff Safety Review](#), September 2020, Chapter 4

<sup>122</sup> Ibid

<sup>123</sup> NPCC, [Officer and Staff Safety Review](#), September 2020, p2

<sup>124</sup> College of Policing, [Job-related fitness standards](#), undated

best way to evaluate PST. The OSSR found less contact time has caused some PST courses to be overly focused on physical skills to the detriment of non-physical skills like de-escalation.<sup>125</sup> It recommends a PST “national curriculum” is developed to improve consistency and officer satisfaction.<sup>126</sup>

## 5.3 Wellbeing and safety during the pandemic

Some have raised concerns about the wellbeing and safety of police officers during the pandemic. Some officers report feeling demoralised by coronavirus restrictions enforcement.<sup>127</sup> 65% of respondents to the Police Federation’s 2020 pay and morale survey said the pandemic has had a negative impact on their morale.<sup>128</sup>

The Police Federation say confusion caused by frequent changes to lockdown rules and ambiguity between law and guidance has put officers under increased “pressure”.<sup>129</sup>

Police officers are issued with coronavirus personal protective equipment (PPE) (a fluid resistant surgical mask and disposal gloves). Police personnel who come into close contact with the people suspected to have coronavirus are issued with extra PPE (disposal apron, goggles and, subject to risk assessment, fluid repellent over-suit).<sup>130</sup>

Frontline policing personnel were not given priority in the vaccine roll out despite the Home Secretary saying in January 2021 that she was “trying” to make this happen.<sup>131</sup> John Apter, the Chair of the Police Federation, called the decision not to prioritise police officers a “deep and damaging betrayal”.<sup>132</sup> The NPCC said it was “disappointed” police officers were not prioritised but they “accepted” the Joint Committee on Vaccine and Immunisation decision.<sup>133</sup> The Library has answered [frequently asked questions about the covid-19 vaccine rollout](#) in another briefing paper.

## 5.4 Police Covenant

The Government, through [Part 1 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill](#) is introducing a Police Covenant. The Covenant will be a statement of the

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<sup>125</sup> NPCC, [Officer and Staff Safety Review](#), September 2020, p89

<sup>126</sup> Ibid, p106

<sup>127</sup> Adam Wagner, Twitter thread: [How should COVID-19 regulations be policed?](#) 10 January 2021

<sup>128</sup> Police Federation, [Pay and morale](#), undated [last accessed 10 March 2021]

<sup>129</sup> Police Federation, [Lockdown rule changes put even more pressure on policing](#), 23 November 2020

<sup>130</sup> College of Policing, [Personal protective equipment \(PPE\) operational guidance](#), undated [last accessed 10 March 2021]

<sup>131</sup> *BBC News*, [Covid vaccine: Priti Patel 'working to get jobs to front-line roles'](#), 20 January 2020

<sup>132</sup> Police Federation, [PFEW condemns Phase 2 plans as 'utter betrayal'](#), 26 February 2020

<sup>133</sup> NPCC, [NPCC responds to news that officers will not be prioritised in vaccine rollout](#), 26 February 2021

duty police officers have and a commitment to ensure that their duty will not negatively impact them.

Former Home Secretary Sajid Javid first committed to introduce a Police Covenant in July 2019.<sup>134</sup> His successor, Priti Patel, affirmed her commitment to the idea shortly after her appointment. She promised to consult on the details.<sup>135</sup> The [consultation](#) was launched in February 2020. The [Government's response](#) was published September 2020.

## Pre-legislative consultation

The Government received 1,113 responses to their [Police Covenant consultation](#). Most responses were from serving police personnel. A small proportion from members of the public (5%), police widows, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and police families.<sup>136</sup>

An overwhelming majority of respondents (over 90%) thought a Police Covenant would be “beneficial”. More than 70% strongly supported the idea.<sup>137</sup>

### Scope of the covenant

The Home Office proposed the Covenant should be focused on physical protection, health and wellbeing and support for families. Consultation responses were broadly supportive of these areas of focus.

Many respondents wanted to see pay and pensions included in the Covenant. The Government has always said pay and pensions would be out of the Covenant's scope.<sup>138</sup>

Consultees were supportive of the Covenant covering all police personnel, retired police personnel and the families of serving and retired personnel. The Government concluded that excluding one group from the Covenant would be “damaging to the overall concept”.<sup>139</sup>

### Wording of the covenant

The Covenant will read:

This Covenant acknowledges the sacrifices made by those who serve or have served in our Police Forces, either in a paid or voluntary capacity, whether as an officer or as a member of staff. It is intended to ensure that they and their families are not disadvantaged as a

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<sup>134</sup> Home Office, [Home Secretary announces plans for a police covenant](#), July 2019

<sup>135</sup> Home Office, [Home Secretary at Police Superintendents' Association](#), September 2019

<sup>136</sup> Home Office, [Police Covenant for England and Wales: Response to the consultation](#), September 2020, p3

<sup>137</sup> Ibid, p6

<sup>138</sup> Home Office, [Police Covenant for England and Wales: Government consultation](#), February 2020, p6

<sup>139</sup> Home Office, [Police Covenant for England and Wales: Response to the consultation](#), September 2020, p14

result of that commitment and seeks to mitigate the impact on their day to day life or in their access to justice. Police officers are required at all times to uphold the important principles of policing by consent, the foundation of their long-standing relationship with the public. We ask a great deal of our police and we expect the highest standards to be maintained. In return, we have a responsibility to provide protection and support to the police.

The Covenant recognises that working within policing comes with a high level of personal accountability, duty and responsibility requiring courage and personal risk both on and off duty. This recognition extends to all those who support police forces in upholding the principles and practices of their vocation. Recognising those who have served in policing unites the country and demonstrates the value of their sacrifice. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

The text of the Covenant will not be in law instead it will be enshrined in law via a legal requirement on the Home Office to report on its principals annually. The Government expects the [National Policing Board \(NPB\)](#) to coordinate the Home Office's annual reports.<sup>140</sup> The NPB is chaired by the Home Secretary. Its membership includes senior leaders from across the policing system (Home Office ministers, senior civil servants, senior police officers, police and crime commissioners, etc). The Library has explained how the policing system is organised in the briefing [Policing in the UK](#).

The Government intends for the Police Covenant to build on existing work to support the wellbeing of police personnel. It says the formality of a legal requirement to report on the Covenant will help bring “coherence” and “robust governance” to the support provided to police personnel.<sup>141</sup>

The Government is not supportive of the Covenant being enshrined as legal duty (in the way it proposes strengthening the [Armed Forces Covenant](#). It says “more specific or prescriptive provisions as to the substance or effect of the Covenant” would impede its flexibility.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Home Office, [Police Covenant for England and Wales: Response to the consultation](#), September 2020, p14

<sup>141</sup> Ibid

<sup>142</sup> Ibid

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