

Emergency services sector update

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Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 03 |
| <u>Police and fire</u> | |
| Wellbeing and mental health support in emergency services | 04 |
| <u>Police</u> | |
| £100m funding for police to tackle violent crime | 06 |
| Key findings and recommendations from the IOPC youth panel | 06 |
| Data-driven policing and public value | 08 |
| Police workforce statistics | 09 |
| Home office approves IOPC guidance and concludes firearms review | 09 |
| Police chiefs ask independent police pay body to consider a three-year deal for officers | 09 |
| <u>Fire</u> | |
| New national leadership framework launched for fire services | 12 |
| Response times to fires attended by fire and rescue services | 12 |
| Fire and rescue incident statistics | 13 |
| Sources of further information | 14 |

Introduction

Welcome to RSM's latest emergency services sector briefing which provides a useful source of insight into recent developments and publications affecting the sector.

A central theme overarching both police and fire and rescue services is mental health. Those working in emergency services deal with a range of challenges and with recent research showing that rates of poor mental health is growing across all services, it's more important now than ever that staff and officers are offered the support to deal with the situations they face every day.

Also, in this edition, we delve into a number of publications across the police sector including the Police Foundation's report on data-driven policing and ways in which it contributes to public value, the Independent Office for Police Conduct's findings and recommendations from its youth panel and the Home Office's statistics on workforce. Our focus on fire and rescue services, covers the National Fire Chiefs Council's new leadership framework and the latest statistics published by the Home Office on both response times to fires attended and on fire and rescue incidents.

We hope you find this update a useful source of insight. As ever, if you have any queries, or have any suggestions for topics for future editions, please contact either myself, or your usual RSM contact and we will be delighted to help.

Daniel Harris
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Police and fire

Wellbeing and mental health support in emergency services

Mind, a mental health charity in England and Wales, has published findings from its research on wellbeing and mental health support in emergency services. Mind has been providing a dedicated programme of mental health support to 999 staff and volunteers across the sector since 2015. The 2019 research received over 5,000 respondents across police (41 per cent), fire (20 per cent), ambulance (28 per cent) and search and rescue services (11 per cent). Research from Mind reveals that emergency services staff and volunteers are over twice as likely to say that their service encouraged them to talk about their mental health, compared to four years ago.

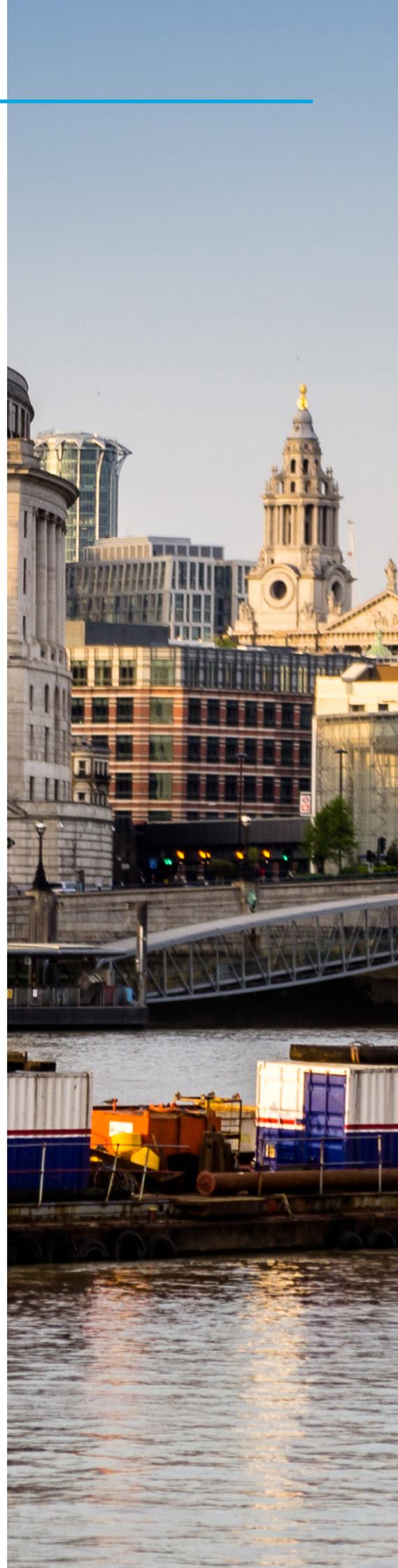
Other key findings from the research include:

- 64 per cent of emergency services personnel said they felt encouraged to talk about their own mental health, compared to 29 per cent in 2015;
- 53 per cent said their service supports people with mental health problems well, compared to 34 per cent in 2015;
- 65 per cent reported they were aware of what support was available to them to help them manage their mental health, compared to 46 per cent in 2015;
- 59 per cent felt that attitudes towards mental health at their organisation were changing for the better;
- 45 per cent reported to have 'good' or 'very good' mental health and 21 per cent reported having 'poor' or 'very poor' mental health, compared to 53 per cent and 14 per cent in 2015 respectively;
- search and rescue volunteers report the best mental health (69 per cent stating it is 'good' or 'very good') while ambulance personnel reported 'the worst' with only 34 per cent stating it to be 'good' or 'very good';
- the top three reported mental health problems were depression (48 per cent), anxiety (48 per cent) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (21 per cent); and
- 'excessive workload' remained the most frequently cited cause of poor mental health among respondents. 'Trauma' moved up from fifth place in 2015 to second place in 2019. These were followed by 'pressure from management', 'long hours' and 'organisational upheaval.'

Questions for committee's consideration



- Given the increased importance on wellbeing and mental health, are the committee sighted on how these risks are managed within the workforce?
- Are KPIs in place to determine any impact on service delivery / performance because of mental health absence or capture statistics on early retirements due to mental health?





Police

£100m funding for police to tackle violent crime

Philip Hammond, Chancellor of the Exchequer, has announced a further £100m funding will be made available to police forces in the worst affected areas in England and Wales for knife and violent crimes. In addition, it will also fund police forces to have more officers available to respond to crime or patrol in communities. The new funding 'covers one year' and consists of £80m Treasury funding with £20m from Home Office reprioritisation for

the financial year 2019/20. The funding follows the additional £970m that the police received in April 2019, including additional funding that the Chancellor announced at last year's Budget. Police and crime commissioners have already committed to the recruitment and training of nearly 3,000 extra police officers. Longer-term funding for the police will be confirmed at this year's Spending Review.

Questions for committee's consideration



- Have you received the funding and either recruited accordingly or created a strategy to tackle violent crime?
- Does your force link into partner agencies to understand and work on the root causes?
- Is this a significant risk area for your force and how do you receive assurances on the effectiveness of your arrangements?

Key findings and recommendations from the IOPC youth panel

The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) commissioned 'Leaders Unlocked' to recruit and run an IOPC youth panel (16–24-year olds) in the aim to identify and recommend ways to better engage with young people and increase their confidence in the police complaints system. Leaders unlocked aims to help the IOPC understand the reasons why young people have little confidence in the police complaints system, the barriers which prevent their engagement and potential solutions to increase trust and confidence. The youth panel organised a series of meetings across England and Wales where they met with over 800 young people.

The key themes from the IOPC youth panel's key findings include:



Powerlessness

The panel found a significant issue with feeling powerless in the face of authority. The panel stated feelings of not being taken seriously and perceived that the police have 'unchecked or absolute' power and are not answerable to any other authority. The report notes that a factor behind powerlessness includes young people not understanding their rights. It is also noted that many respondents state that they do not have the confidence to make a complaint.



Marginal and minority voices

The panel found that identity and diversity characteristics have an impact on trust and confidence. The report notes that young people from marginalised and minority groups feel they are less likely to be believed and more likely to be discriminated against.



Dynamics of trust

Many people 'simply do not trust authorities, and especially the police.' The panel stated that they didn't have faith in the outcome of complaints, as they couldn't see that complaints lead to positive results. They also expressed concerns and doubts about the IOPC's relationship with the police.



Social influences

Social media and wider social influences was highlighted by young people as playing a key role. They had stated that negative stories and images of police conduct spread very quickly on social media, contributing to a 'skewed picture' of reality.



Visibility and accessibility

Many young people that took part stated that they wouldn't know where to go to make a complaint. When explaining the complaints process to young people, the panel found that the process may deter young people from complaining, with young people showing concern for how long making a complain could take. The youth panel concluded that the complaints system currently does not feel open to all. The panel felt that more should be done to make the system inclusive and accessible to individuals across the youth population.

The youth panel sets out a number of recommendations across four 'solution areas': communications and social media; community engagement; diversity and people; and future of the youth panel. The panel worked with key IOPC professionals to co-create the recommendations that are based on ideas collected during the peer engagement events.

Data-driven policing and public value

The Police Foundation has launched its report, 'data-driven policing and public value.' The Police Foundation describes data-driven policing as the use of a wide variety of digitised data sources in the aim to inform decision making and improve processes. When talking about public value, the Police Foundation states that this refers to the full value that a police force contributes to society across a number of measurable aspects including outcomes, efficient use of public funds, impact on citizen satisfaction with the police and impact on public trust in, and perceived legitimacy of, the police.

The Police Foundation hopes that data-driven approaches may also be able to help improve levels of public and victim trust and confidence in the police. However, it is noted that implementing new technologies and approaches can be a 'highly complex process.'

The report looks at ways in which the police can meet the challenges they face by the 'imaginative use of data-driven technologies' and how data-driven policing can contribute to public value. The report is divided into a number of chapters covering the following:

- 1 cuts to police budgets; current crime trends and the challenges these are presenting; and changing public expectations about the way they interact with the police. It also highlights the risk that the police may be overwhelmed by data if new ways of managing it are not found;
- 2 examining the 'near horizon' regarding two technological developments that are currently in place but set to grow in significance. One of these is the 'internet of things' and the other, blockchain;
- 3 an account of police innovation and experimentation with data-driven approaches. The material in this chapter is structured around the nine public value dimensions;

4 considering the many challenges yet to be overcome regarding full scale adoption of a data-driven approach. The report explores potential issues with police misuse or mishandling of data; the problem of data bias; concerns over privacy; policy and regulatory gaps within which UK policing is currently having to operate; and major technology and workforce issues with regard to the adoption of new technologies and approaches; and

5 the final chapter sets out 11 recommendations including; all police forces should review policies and procedures regarding data stewardship; central government should provide additional funding for police officer training in a number of priority areas related to the data-driven policing agenda; a new, coordinated approach to data accuracy in policing systems is needed; and the UK policing needs a common set of data standards and data entry codes to be used across the country.

Questions for committee's consideration



- Is your force using the data driven approach and do you receive assurance that data is accurate, accessible, GDPR compliant?
- How is the data used to identify themes to focus data model and demand model or do the committee receive assurances on a data driven approach?
- Have you received assurances that the force has reviewed the 11 recommendations, considered them and have agreed implementation plans?

Police workforce statistics

The Home Office has published statistics on the police workforce as at 30 September 2018, and experimental statistics on misconduct and criminal investigations for the year ending 31 March 2018.

Key statistics include:

-  there were 200,448 workers employed by the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales, of which 122,395 were police officers;
-  police officer numbers rose by 466 between 30 September 2017 and 30 September 2018;
-  in the year ending 31 March 2018, 2,809 cases considered worthy of investigation as misconduct or gross misconduct following either a public complaint or a misconduct allegation;
-  in the year ending 31 March 2018, 81 officers and 23 staff members were found guilty after a criminal investigation; and
-  the most common outcomes at a misconduct meeting for officers was management advice (29 per cent) and written warnings (27 per cent).

Questions for committee's consideration



- Is the committee sighted on any update reports from Professional Standards and/or do you receive assurance that this is being managed internally?

Home Office approves IOPC guidance and concludes firearms review

Sajid Javid, Home Secretary, has approved the revised IOPC guidance, completing the Home Office's review into police use of firearms, which was commissioned following concerns officers could be deterred from volunteering for armed roles if they did not feel sufficiently protected. Sajid Javid stated, 'any use of force by the police must be proportionate and necessary and the public must have confidence that investigations following a police shooting incident are independent and robust.' Latest Home Office figures show that recruitment of firearms officers have increased by 3 per cent compared to the previous year to 6,459 as of March 2018, following a £144m funding boost for armed policing at the 2015 Spending Review.

Police chiefs ask independent police pay body to consider a three-year deal for officers

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) has published its annual submission to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) for 2019/20. The PRRB makes recommendations on police officer's pay in England and Wales. Police chiefs are required to make recommendations about officer pay increases and these are considered alongside recommendations from the Home Office, police and crime commissioners and staff associations. NPCC's submission puts forward two options for the review body to consider: an increase of between 2 and 2.5 per cent from September 2019 or a three-year pay deal worth over 6 per cent with 4 per cent payable from September 2019 in order to maximise the initial pay increase.

Questions for committee's consideration



- Have you received assurances around the associated impact of this increase to both operational performance and financial performance?





Fire

New national leadership framework launched for fire services

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) has launched its new 'leadership framework' which aims to support and develop fire and rescue service leaders now and in the future. The framework outlines the leadership behaviours that is required at every level in the fire and rescue service. It also sets out some of the key requirements to support and develop people's careers. The new framework supports NFCC's 'People Strategy', which has six key areas for improvement:

- 1 strengthen leadership and line management in order to support organisational change and improved community outcomes;
- 2 develop cultural values and behaviours which make the fire and rescue service a great place to work for all our people;
- 3 develop ways of working that can respond to service needs;
- 4 provide excellent training and education to ensure continuous improvement of services to the public;
- 5 continue to support the health and well-being of all NFCC's people; and
- 6 strengthen the ability to provide good service by diversifying staff and creating a fair and equal place to work.

Response times to fires attended by fire and rescue services

The Home Office has published the latest statistics on response times to fires attended by fire and rescue services in England between April 2017 and March 2018.

Key statistics include:

- the average total response time to primary fires was eight minutes and 45 seconds and for secondary fires was nine minutes and 10 seconds;
- 54 per cent (29,550) of primary fires were responded to within eight minutes and 60 per cent (49,669) of secondary fires were responded to within nine minutes;
- fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) in predominantly urban areas had an average total response time of seven minutes 39 seconds to primary fires and FRAs in predominately rural areas was 10 minutes 32 seconds;
- the average response time to dwelling fires involving casualties and/or rescues was seven minutes 33 seconds; and
- in total, 21 services have shown a decrease in average response times to primary fires, 23 have shown an increase and one showed no change.

Fire and rescue incident statistics

The Home Office has published statistics on fire and rescue incidents in England in the year to September 2018.

Key statistics include:

- fire and rescue services (FRSs) attended 582,551 incidents, an increase from 568,824 in the previous year;
- of all incidents attended by FRSs, fires accounted for 31 per cent, fire false alarms accounted for 40 per cent and non-fire incidents accounted for 29 per cent;
- FRSs attended 181,436 fire incidents, a 6 per cent increase from the previous year and 169,813 non-fire incidents, a decrease of 2 per cent;
- FRSs attended 25,293 medical incidents, a 40 per cent decrease from the previous year (42,506); and
- FRSs attended 231,262 fire false alarms, a 3 per cent increase compared with the previous year (223,639).

Questions for committee's consideration



- Is the committee assured that the Service performs well against the national benchmarks and are action plans in place for areas where performance could be improved?



Sources of further information

- Mind**
'Wellbeing and mental health support in the emergency services'
https://www.mind.org.uk/media/34555691/20046_mind-blue-light-programme-legacy-report-v12_online.pdf?_ga=2.60570541.1253664172.1553509257-1386109628.1553509257
- HM Treasury**
'£100 million funding for police to tackle violent crime'
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/100-million-funding-for-police-to-tackle-violent-crime>
- IOPC**
'Key findings and recommendations from the IOPC youth panel'
https://policeconduct.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/research-learning/iopc_youth_panel_report_march2019.pdf
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'Data-driven policing and public value'
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'Police Workforce, England and Wales, 30 September 2018'
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- Home Office**
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'New national Leadership Framework launched for fire services'
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- Home Office**
'Response times to fires attended by fire and rescue services'
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