



The Association of Scottish Police Superintendents

Member's Resilience Survey
2015

ASPS Resilience Survey April 2015

Introduction

This is our third survey of members over the last two years and the survey reflects some trends that provide real cause for concern.

I am particularly pleased with the response rate of 85% which greatly assists us in providing an evidence base for future action. I would also wish to thank the Police Mutual Foundation for sponsoring not only this survey but for also providing Health Checks at our recent Conference.

There is some good news; the survey provides positive evidence of members achieving a buzz from the work they do which the vast majority see as a vocation. However the survey also provides evidence of members suffering from Anxiety and Depression. I am disappointed that yet again we are reporting that many members believe that senior managements approach to managing performance is harsh and unhelpful; members do not consider their efforts are appreciated and an increased number of members believe they are subject to bullying behaviours.

I am pleased that the Wellbeing Group established by the Police Service of Scotland with Scottish Police Authority representation late last year is establishing an action plan focussed on outcomes. I also welcome the Chief Constables announcement at our conference of a review focussing on the current number of Superintending ranks, their role and the structures within which they work.



Craig Suttie

General Secretary

The Association of Scottish Police Superintendents

Survey Aims

1. To gather information about:
 - **ASPS Members health and well-being**
 - **How members are feeling about their jobs**
 - **The stresses and strains members are under**
 - **What hours members are working**
2. To provide data to help ASPS identify problems and lead discussions to resolve issues;
3. To compare 2015 data with data collected in 2014 and the baseline data collected in 2013 (at the point of the formation of the Police Service of Scotland); and
4. To help individual members, as they fill in the questionnaire, to reflect on their own health and well-being and, thereby, take action to improve it.

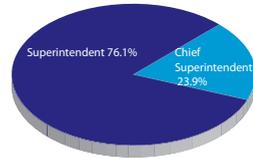
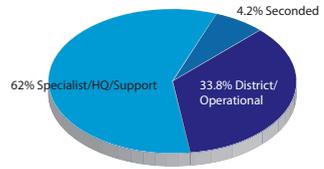
Response Breakdown

We surveyed 167 superintendents and chief superintendents working in Police Scotland and of those who received the questionnaire 142 responded.

	Invitations sent	Responses Received	Response Rate
2015	167	142	85%
2014	190	124	65.3%
2013	165	98	59.4%

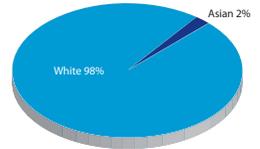
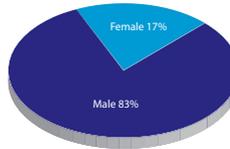
The Respondees were as follows:

- 33.8% District/Operational
- 62% Specialist/HQ/Support
- 4.2% Seconded
- 23.9% Chief Superintendent
- 76.1% Superintendent



Gender and Ethnicity:

- 83% Male
- 17% Female or transgender
- 98% White
- 2% Asian, BME

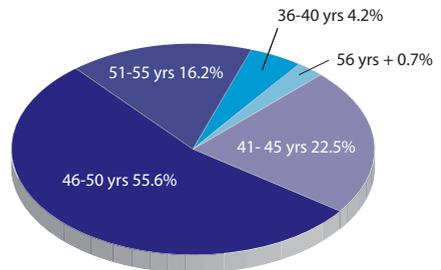


The Majority of Superintendent Ranks who responded are in the following age groups:

- 22.5% - 41-45 years
- 55.6% - 46-50 years
- 16.9% - 51-55 years

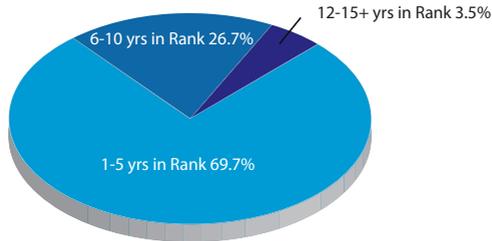
With:

- 4.2% - 36-40 and
- 0.7% - 56+



Number of years in Rank:

- The Majority of members have between 1-5 years in the rank (69.7%)
- Of these about a quarter (23.2%) have one or less years in rank
- About a quarter have between 6-10 years in the rank (26.7%)
- The remainder have 12-15+ years in the rank (3.5%)



What We Found Out

- 82% of Members get a buzz from working in the rank
- 90% see being in Police Scotland as a personal vocation
- 67% say being a superintendent is an important part of “who I am”
- 53% are ambitious, want to do well and gain promotion
- 87% of Members said looking after their health is a priority
- 69% said they have a tendency not to say “no” to anything asked of them
- 67% said they are good at managing their time
- 48% said they work hard because they don’t want to be seen as weak

Organisational Issues:

- 83% said that everyone tends to work long hours
- 67% said there is a perception that working long hours shows you are performing well
- 77% said people feel that they mustn't be seen as fallible, seek support, admit they can't cope, etc
- 67% said that diversity is recognised (it is understood that different people have different needs)
- 85% said that there are 'in' crowds and cliques
- Only 30% said it is ok to challenge the norms
- 89% said that achieving performance targets is the top priority
- 66% said senior management's approach to managing performance is harsh and unhelpful

Chief Officer Issues:

- 98% said that Chief officers work long hours themselves
- 70% said that Chief officers say that work/life balance is important
- 82% said that Chief officers do not reinforce the importance of work/life balance through their behaviour
- 64% said that Chief officers are supportive of those that work with them
- 56% said that Chief officers show appreciation of them and the work they do
- 39% said that Chief officers stop the pressure they are under from being passed on to those officers working for them
- 37% said that Chief officers show bullying behaviours (eg unfair criticism, intimidation, verbal insults, misuse of power)

Line Manager Issues:

- 95% said their line manager works long hours
- 82% said their manager says work/life balance is important
- 41% said their line manager reinforces the importance of work/life balance
- 63% said their line manager stops the pressure they are under being passed on to their team
- 82% said their line manager is supportive of their team
- 81% said their line manager shows appreciation of them and the work they do
- 17% said their line manager shows bullying behaviours (eg unfair criticism, intimidation, verbal insults, misuse of power)

Issues Relating to Work Demands:

- 95% said their role places high levels of demand on them
- 94% said their role involves regular tight deadlines
- 76% said their role involves an excessive breadth and depth of responsibility
- 87% said they receive inordinately high volumes of emails
- 91% said they are required to attend numerous meetings
- 57% said they are involved with a lot of work with local partners such as local authorities and charitable organisations
- 71% said they are expected to manage difficult HR issues
- 92% said they are expected to perform on-call duties on rest days
- 70% said there is an expectation they will take on additional responsibilities for public order, firearms cadres, etc without consideration of how this impacts on their workload
- 68% said they are expected to be at work and/or answer the phone at unreasonable times
- 80% have been exposed to a large number of traumatic incidents

Issues Relating to Work:

- 73% receive work phone calls at all times of the day or night
- 68% said it is difficult to balance the demands of work with what they need/want to do in their non-work life
- 92% take work home
- 58% said they have insufficient resources/staff to do their job
- 39% said they receive helpful feedback on their performance
- 63% said they receive all the training required to do their job
- 58% have a say over their work location
- 52% have a say over how their career develops

Issues Relating to Recent Changes

- 26% are more concerned about their career progression than a year ago
- 39% are more worried about their personal finances than a year ago
- 77% said the demands of their job have increased in the last year
- 46% said they enjoy their work less than a year ago
- 23% are concerned pension changes will mean they have to work longer

Career Aspirations:

- Almost 31% aspire to move from superintendent to chief superintendent
- Almost 13% aspire to move to Chief Officers

Particular Concerns:

- Increased Work Demands
- Decrease in Pension Provision
- Reduced Work Resources
- Personal or Family Security
- Reduced Career Options

Health and Well-being

Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS)

- Anxiety and Depression were measured using the HADS Questionnaire
- Responses were used to categorise respondents' levels of symptoms into:
 - Normal
 - Mild
 - Moderate
 - Severe

Anxiety Levels

- Whilst the majority of Members scored **Normal** – 54%
- 20% scored **MILD**
- 20% scored **MODERATE**; and
- 6% scored **SEVERE**

Depression Levels

- Whilst the majority of Members scored **Normal** – 71%
- 22% scored **MILD**
- 5% scored **MODERATE**; and
- 2% scored **SEVERE**

Specific Areas of Concern:

Absence, leave and rest days survey questions

- The survey asked respondents about the number of days and spells of sickness absence taken in the last months
- The survey also asked the following questions about leave and rest days:
 - Did you take leave/rest days to avoid sickness absence in the past year?
26% YES
 - Did you take leave/sick days due to caring responsibilities in the past year?
25% YES
 - In the past 12 months, have you taken all your annual leave? **23% YES**
 - In the past month, have you taken all your rest days? **28% YES**

Working Hours:-

- 82% may be in breach of the European Working Time Directive
- The majority (75%) cite they are too busy to record their hours and it's not a priority so there's no point in recording
- 89% report that everyone tends to work long hours
- 97% report that Chief Officers and 97% their line managers work long hours
- 76% report Chief Officers say work/life balance is important but don't always reinforce it
- However only 4% said that they record their working hours accurately

When Asked to tick all reasons that apply to why hours were not recorded accurately

- 47% - I am too busy it is not a priority
- 40% - There is no point
- 25% - My working hours are not an issue for me
- 21% - It is not possible to record the hours worked at home
- 18% - There is no appropriate system
- 12% - Recording my hours truthfully may count against me.

Risks:-

- Despite 41% of Respondents being treated for 1 or more health condition, 89% report taking zero sickness absence;
- Added to the long hours and tendency not to take full leave/rest days, 26% take leave to avoid sickness absence;
- This shows an emphasis on feeling that you have to be at work;
- The costs associated with presenteeism can be higher and can be more costly to the organisation in the longer term than those incurred due to absence

Risks to Mental Health:

As well as reporting high levels of demand on them, there is evidence that members do not have much personal control or sufficient resources:

- 58% have a say about their work location
- 58% have insufficient resources

Situations of high demands/low control/low resources present a particular risk to mental health.

- 26% of members show moderate to severe levels of anxiety
- 7% show moderate to severe levels of depression

It is important to note that such problems are unlikely to be reported openly and individuals may not seek the help they need since there is a perception that they must not be seen to be fallible, seek support or admit they can't cope.

Conclusion

The challenge for the Police Service of Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority is to work with members to improve individual wellbeing. This will in turn enhance the ability of members to deliver the high quality service our communities deserve.

Through our members surveys we now have an established evidence base which is augmented by the Ethics Review and local inspections by HMIC. We will also soon have the results of the force wide opinion survey.

ASPS look forward to working with colleagues to support a culture that values wellbeing as well as demonstrating a commitment to making a positive difference with clear and measurable outcomes. The ASPS Executive have agreed to establish an ASPS Wellbeing Group led by our President to monitor and report on progress as well as implementing initiatives relevant to members. I would particularly welcome participation in the wellbeing group from members who have an interest in this area and do not sit on the ASPS Executive.

Members must also take their own responsibility to their wellbeing seriously and I would expect the ASPS Wellbeing group to provide advice and practical assistance in this respect.



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