

CPOSA

Chief Police Officers' Staff Association

Submission to the
Senior Salaries Review Body
2026

Index

Opening Statement	3
Response to Last Year’s SSRB Report	6
Introduction and Summary	8
Response to Request for Information From SSRB	12
Pay Award	17
Methodology	19
Pay and Morale Survey – Autumn 2025	19
Focus Groups.....	20
CPOSA Pulse Survey - 2025	20
NPCC Survey on Applicants for Chief Officer Vacancies	21
Additional Information	21
Pay Degradation	22
Workforce, Pay and Reward	24
Introduction	24
Experience.....	25
Attrition.....	27
Recruitment	30
Base Salary	32
Pensions	34
Overall Package.....	38
Motivation and Wellbeing	42
Working Hours	43
Sickness and Wellbeing.....	46
Governance	50
Mobility and Relocation	54
Assistant Chief Constable Pay	56
Rest Days	64
Summary of Recommendations	68
Appendix 1	69

Opening Statement

Joint statement between the National Police Chiefs' Council, the Chief Police Officers' Staff Association and the Police Superintendents Association

This joint statement reflects the shared position of the National Police Chiefs' Council and the police staff associations (CPOSA and the PSA) on the challenges facing the police service and the critical role that pay plays in sustaining an effective, professional workforce.

Demand on the police service continues to rise in volume and complexity, particularly in high-harm areas such as safeguarding, online crime, and mental health. These demands require experienced, skilled officers, staff and leaders who feel valued and supported. At the same time, the workforce is under intense strain, with evidence of burnout, reduced experience levels, and a continuing challenge to recruit and retain people in key roles, which affects the services that can be delivered. There is also a need for clarity going forward from Government on the role and breath of the policing mission in a system wide approach to reducing crime and increasing public safety, to support workforce morale and wellbeing.

Unlike any other public service outside the armed forces, police officers are required to move towards danger, not away from it. This unique obligation, which combined with restrictions on industrial action, places a heightened duty on Government to ensure fair, competitive, and sustainable pay and conditions.

Structural deficits, rising inflation, and limited room for investment are now common across forces. Reserves are low, borrowing is often at prudent limits, and essential modernisation, particularly in digital infrastructure, is being delayed. These constraints directly limit forces' ability to shape their workforce to meet operational need.

The service is trapped in a tightening loop of demand that requires more capacity and capability. Financial pressure restricts investment and workforce strain that impacts turnover and reduces experience, further weakening the service's ability to meet demand. This cycle is raising operational risk and eroding public confidence.

Pay is a factor affecting motivation, retention, and the attractiveness of policing as a career, into specialist roles or progressing into leadership roles. Officers continue to report financial pressure and reduced disposable income despite recent awards. Without a fair and competitive framework, policing cannot retain experience or attract the skills required for modern public protection.

Medium-term financial plans in many forces already fall short of what is needed to sustain competitive pay growth. Without addressing this, regardless of the greater flexibility on officer numbers, the capability gaps will widen, impacting workforce stability.

The Pay Review Body plays a critical role in setting out the realities the service faces and the factors Ministers must consider. This includes:

- the unique requirements placed on police officers.
- the rising demands and risks of modern policing.
- the need to retain skilled and experienced people.
- leadership challenges at all ranks.
- and the limitations created by the current financial environment.

We all recognise the macro-economic and affordability constraints facing government. However, pay decisions must balance these with the need to maintain a resilient, motivated workforce capable of delivering public safety. This has a direct impact on public wellbeing and economic prosperity.

The Government, as set in the White Paper published on 26th January, is embarking on significant police reform and structural change, setting out proposals for a new national policing body, a refocus on local policing and enhanced leadership and standards, including the development of license to practice; all of which will impact the future workforce requirements. These ambitions will only be realised if pay, conditions, and workforce policy support the people who must deliver that reform. The success of future policing models

depends on securing and retaining the right skills, strengthening leadership, and ensuring capacity is sustainable. Effective pay and conditions are not a cost in isolation but a foundation for reform, productivity, and long-term public confidence.

Response to Last Year's SSRB Report

CPOSA thanks the SSRB for the careful consideration given to the evidence we submitted last year and for the presentation of that evidence in your report to the Home Secretary. We are also grateful for the contact you made with the Home Secretary when the announcement of the pay award was significantly delayed.

The outcome of the SSRB process last year was disappointing for CPOSA members. Aside from the flat rate pay award in 2022, this was the first time that CPOSA members have had a differential pay award to all other ranks. This, combined with the delay in announcing the award has caused members to question whether the roles they undertake and the risks they take day on day are truly valued. The issue that perhaps magnified those concerns was the fact that all of those we lead were given a 4.2% award and, additionally, those who govern us were also given a 4.2 % award. We do understand that SSRB made very different recommendations for PCCs and that ultimately the Home Secretary made the decision due to the announcement on PCC reform. However, the fact that chief officers were treated differently to both groups has caused great dissatisfaction as it singled out just the 279 members we represent, which equates to just 0.19% of the 145,550 offices within England and Wales.

This perception by our members needs to be taken in the context of broader issues too, such as the delay in introducing a remedy to rectify the CPI mismatch relating to pensions. Once more not prioritised as it only affects a small number of staff despite it having been done so for some other public sector employees back as far as 2015.

Whilst the percentage of the workforce that chief officers represent is small, the issues highlighted will have a substantial impact on attraction to the role of chief officer and on progression and retention.

Our final comment on last year's report is that around remit and scope and the ability of CPOSA to bring issues to the table on pay and conditions. In your report you state:

'As we noted at the beginning of this Chapter, any future requests made to this Review Body to take positions on questions not explicitly asked of us in Ministers' remit letters should be coordinated across all policing stakeholders and accompanied by evidence from all interested parties'.

We wholeheartedly agree that this would be the best position to enable SSRB to consider requests. However, as a staff association, we do believe there should be the ability of any party to bring forward a proposal even if other parties are not in agreement.

As an example, within this submission we have broadened last year's proposals for ACCs. We will evidence why pay point 1 should be immediately removed and that they should receive an on-call allowance. We have undertaken further research that shows the significantly reduced gap between ACCs and chief superintendents and the impact this has caused. We know that last year the NPCC disagreed with the inclusion of ACCs within the on-call remit and we now know that the promised ACC pay reform work is delayed. CPOSA believes the issues we raise need resolution as a matter of urgency, but this may not align to the priorities of the NPCC. As such, we must be able to bring evidence to the pay review body for determination. Other matters to take into account are that the Home Office does not always include proposals the staff association suggests and that our members have no right to strike nor the ability to negotiate pay in any other forum. In addition, the PABEW has not been effective in progressing matters the staff associations have raised. Whilst we are hopeful that the new Chair will help deliver more outcomes, we need to be mindful of the ability of the PABEW to deliver, taking into account the limitations of its terms of reference. As such, we feel it important that where we have been unable to agree to get joint evidence, we retain the ability to submit evidence for consideration.

Introduction and Summary

'As a chief constable, you are a heartbeat away from losing your job, and likely for something you had no part in, or control of'.

The past year has been an incredibly challenging one for our members and has highlighted the precarious position chief officers face when having to make critical and difficult decisions. As such, CPOSA welcomes the opportunity to provide written evidence to the Senior Salaries Review Body. Our submission provides clear evidence to support our four recommendations:

Recommendation 1: CPOSA believes that chief officers should not receive any less of a percentage pay award than the rest of the service. CPOSA believes the pay award for September 2026 should be fully funded and be at least 4 % across all ranks within PRRB and SSRB with an additional 0.3% uplift for chief officers to recalibrate the 2025 pay award differential.

Recommendation 2: That ACC paypoint 1 is removed from Sept 2026.

Recommendation 3: That the scope of the on-call allowance is broadened to include ACCs.

Recommendation 4: That the rest day proposals the NPCC have placed before the PRRB and SSRB for all ranks are applied to chief officers.

We reported last year that the independent Affinity Health survey found that chief police officers' mental health had significantly declined and that due to the level of our concern, CPOSA would commission a 'pulse' survey.

This was undertaken in the late summer of 2025 and sadly, the results show a further decline in the mental health and wellbeing of our members.

- 42% of respondents were classed as showing 'normal' levels of symptoms for anxiety which is even lower than the deeply concerning 47% in 2025. It was also down from 73% in 2021 and 61% in 2018. Severe levels are now seen in 10% of members, worse than the 8% reported in 2025.
- Levels of depression are also higher than in previous years. 75% are classed as showing 'normal' levels of depression. Worse than the 74% reported in 2025, with moderate levels of depression up to 6% from 5% last year and severe levels increasing from 1% to 3% in just 12 months.
- There is a notable difference in the mental health of women and men with 64% of women showing mild, moderate or severe levels of anxiety against the 55% of male respondents. It also shows that the level of mild, moderate or severe levels of depression is two percent higher in females than the 25% reported by men.
- Sickness has risen in the last 12 months with 16.5% of members reporting sickness compared to 12.6% in 2025.

This year has seen satisfaction with base pay hit an all-time low of 33% which is significantly less than the highest level of 69% seen in 2025. Whilst some of this can be attributed to the delay in announcing the pay award, the free text comments suggest it is far deeper than just that one issue.

Part will be due to the significant reduction in the real terms value of their pay. To illustrate this, for every £10,000 earned in 2010, our members receive almost £2,500 less now than had their pay kept pace with CPI. Even in the past five years, for every £10,000 earned in 2021, members are now receiving £995 less than had their pay kept pace with inflation.

Over the past few submissions, we have expressed concern at the decreasing level of experience within chief police officer ranks. Policing is complex and involves high risk organisational and operational decision making. The level of inexperience within chief

officer ranks has again hiked, with 70% of respondents to the survey stating they have less than five years' experience. This is against levels of 55% in 2023 and 65% in 2024 and compounded by the projected high attrition, with 53% of those surveyed stating they intend to leave within the next five years. CPOSA asks this is considered when making pay recommendations as policing needs to retain experience and talent to navigate the organisation through the complexity that the current context of policing involves.

During 2025, there were a total of 53 chief officer posts advertised, with a total of 127 applicants. Thirty (57%) were filled by external candidates.

CPOSA welcomes the abolition of PCCs and is engaged with the Home Office to inform the design of the new governance model. CPOSA has two broad asks in the redesign:

1. That the lessons learned about the relationship between PCCs and chief constables is used to design out issues that have meant the relationship has been sub-optimal or broken.
2. Any powers to remove a chief constable by the Home Secretary is subject of the fair checks and balances that section 38 of PRSA currently affords. Without such protections, CPOSA fears the impact on those willing to lead such high-risk organisations will be significant.

CPOSA are seeking a fully funded pay award of CPI+1% for all ranks within policing and is also seeking an additional 0.3% uplift to bring us into line with the award to PCCs and all other ranks in 2025.

At present, we have based CPI on that of January, but we ask the SSRB to take account of the CPI figure closest to publication of the report to the Home Secretary to take account of the projected inflationary increases resulting from the conflict in the Middle East.

Element	Amount
CPI (based on Jan 2026)	3%
Pay Restoration	1%
2025 Award Differential	0.3%
Total	<u>4.3%</u>

*CPI is based on January 2026

The role of assistant chief constable is the first within the police chief officer pay structure. This submission will illustrate that through incremental pay and reward changes to the chief superintendent rank, the pay gap between chief superintendent and assistant chief constable has reduced dramatically from 15% in 2019 to 5.82% in 2025. It is unlikely the cumulative impact of these changes were fully understood on implementation and is now an issue that demands urgent attention and remedy.

Last year saw a differential pay award between chief officers and other ranks. This meant that chief superintendents were awarded 4.2% against ACCs who got 3.9%. In addition, the on-call allowance, which can be claimed by superintending ranks, rose 40% to £35 per day. We have calculated that these two elements for chief superintendents have contributed to a further reduction of 0.64% in the pay differential.

In this year's submission, CPOSA is recommending the removal of pay point 1 for ACCs as well as enabling them to claim an on-call allowance.

Finally, we have included our observations on the NPCC proposals to reform the accrual of worked rest days which we fully support.

Once more, CPOSA thanks you for your time in considering this written evidence and we look forward to meeting you in the oral evidence session where we can give more detail and context to the information provided in this submission.

Response to Request for Information From SSRB

CPOSA's views on the proposals arising from Year 2 of the NPCC review of allowances (as per Remit Letter).

There are three areas within this work that involve CPOSA members or may have an impact.

- The payment of allowances on reduced pay – This work is being progressed as a result of a tribunal finding. CPOSA recognises the need to continue this work, and it does affect our members.
- Compensation for additional hours worked - CPOSA has been engaged in this work and welcomes its progression. We have been involved in the rest day working recommendations and will be working with the NPCC to see the impact of any proposed changes on members. We will also seek evidence to better understand the potential for members to be included in any change.
- Acting Up Allowance, including temporary promotion and salary (guidance only, to review in 2 years' time). There has been much confusion over police chief officers being moved into higher ranks on a temporary basis. This has been clarified following the Judicial Review CPOSA took out against the PCC of Staffordshire and we will seek to combine this learning in the guidance for other ranks.

The Policing White Paper (*From Local to National: A New Model for Policing*) released in January 2026, and associated initiatives and reforms – either planned, or underway – and their impact (or anticipated impact) upon police forces, and on chief officer recruitment, retention and morale.

Engagement with the NPCC prior to the publication of the White Paper means that many of the issues chief constables have sought to address are reflected in the White Paper.

Broadly, the paper seeks to reform policing by:

- Forming a National Police Service
- A commitment to an improved, consistent local policing service
- Reviewing the overall number of police forces and the police funding formula
- Overhauling police governance
- Delivering a workforce strategy
- Mandating national standards for leaders
- Reforming the police governance system
- Revising the thresholds for investigations the IOPC undertake
- Implementing a new police performance system, among other measures.

As the models develop, the engagement with CPOSA must reflect the impact on our members. As we outlined within the introduction, we are already seeing issues that need immediate attention being paused for the implementation of the White Paper when, in reality, some changes are many years away. The White Paper cannot be used as a convenient excuse to pause essential work that is currently affecting the workforce.

The impact of the announced disestablishment of the PCC role for policing generally, and upon chief officers specifically – and CPOSA’s understanding of next steps, incl. what alternate accountability and oversight measure(s) will be introduced and when.

CPOSA has been consistent in highlighting significant concerns with some aspects of PCC governance and therefore welcomes the decision to move towards a new oversight model. We discuss this further within this report under the heading of Governance.

CPOSA is engaged in the oversight board and sub-committees looking to introduce the new system of Governance.

There are two key issues for CPOSA in this matter:

- The lessons learned by all sides within the PCC Governance model must be understood and, where possible, addressed within any new oversight model and revised policing protocol order.
- The proposals for new powers for the Home Secretary must protect the operational independence of the chief constable. In addition, the proposal for the Home Secretary to remove a chief constable must have the protections that are enshrined within the PCC powers under section 38 of the Police and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

The Leadership Commission review announced in October 2025 – incl. its objectives, engagement with forces and CPOs, and progress to-date.

CPOSA has been engaged with the Leadership Commission, having been invited to give evidence at a 'Roundtable', being involved in reference group discussions and having submitted written evidence along with other stakeholders.

The Commission has also been out to three different forces to collect evidence in the field. Engagement has taken place with both the private and public sector and other policing bodies.

Evaluation of the revised pay scale for CCs and DCCs now fully implemented.

CPOSA supports an evaluation of the chief constable and deputy chief constable pay reform against the original objectives.

It is still at an early stage and will require evaluation over a number of years to better understand the impact on posts which are advertised periodically.

We are also mindful that any restructure that involves force mergers as outlined in the White Paper will require another assessment of pay.

However, CPOSA, the APCC and the NPCC agreed a data set at upon implementation and we are pleased this data has delivered more clarity on applicants for posts, including external applicants and appointees. The results are shown within this report.

Evaluation of the 'retire and rehire' scheme, and whether this should be amended or expanded to other ranks.

The retire and rehire scheme is open to all ranks, but it is not a right, it has to be agreed by the organisation or PCC. The application of the NPCC guidance is therefore inconsistent for both chief constables, who have to have any application approved by the PCC, and all other ranks have to have the application approved by the chief constable.

It is worth reminding the SSRB that the retire and rehire scheme is at no cost to the tax payer. The applicant simply takes their lump sum and then abates their pension whilst they are still employed within policing.

We know that one of the key factors when considering exiting from the organisation is the fear of pensions tax changes. Other public sector employees such as doctors are able to avail themselves of various methods to negate the risk of future tax rises. The retire and rehire scheme is the only feasible option open to them. As chief officers have the heaviest tax burden of all ranks, it is natural for them to be the most popular user of the scheme.

It is not available to all members of CPOSA for the reasons stated above, but it is critically important to help reduce the volume of people leaving at the earliest opportunity. Contrary to the evidence of the NPCC last year, such keenness to exit at the earliest possible point has not always been the norm in the chief officer ranks, it is a more modern phenomena and pensions tax is one factor that has led to it.

Details of the spread and demands of national portfolios/responsibilities across forces and upon chief officers.

CPOSA agrees there should be detailed work to define the full nature and impact of national work and its spread across forces. Sadly, the SSRB full report was published too late to include this within our evidence this year. CPOSA will seek to work with the NPCC to complete the work over the next year.

CPOSA's view on what pay award figure the SSRB should recommend, and why.

We have covered this within the body of the report.

Pay Award

CPOSA have been asked by the SSRB what pay award we believe chief police officers should get and why.

CPOSA believes the pay award for September 2026 should be at least 4 % across all ranks within PRRB and SSRB with an additional 0.3% uplift for chief officers to recalibrate the 2025 pay award differential.

This comprises:

Element	Amount
CPI*	3%
Pay Restoration	1%
2025 Award Differential	0.3%
Total	<u>4.3%</u>

*CPI is based on January 2026

This paper outlines the significant evidence that is available to justify this award and CPOSA believes it should be applied across all ranks, both those within PRRB and those in SSRB. To have an award lower than CPI will further devalue the real terms level of pay that a chief officer receives. It is an unsustainable position that chief officers find themselves in and on reading the section on pay degradation SSRB will see that members are having to contend with far more complexity, risk and demand that ever before. It is indefensible for Government to give a pay award that further denudes the value placed upon chief officer roles.

CPOSA recognises that inflation will vary from month to month and that Government projections suggested the level will reduce this year. However, with the conflict in the middle east continuing, we are likely to see a significant impact. We therefore invite SSRB to determine the CPI element upon submission of the report.

As with the PSA, there is compelling evidence within this report that pay restoration must take place. It simply cannot be the case that a role that attracted a level of award is financially devalued to the extent that it has been. We believe the incremental increase of an additional 1% is measured and achievable.

Other than the flat rate pay award in 2022, chief officers have always seen the same pay award as other ranks, and we have always sought parity with all of our colleagues within PRRB. To the best of recollection, last year was the first time a differential pay award has been agreed. Whilst it might be seen as a limited differential, the impact has been significant, particularly due to the fact that both those whom we lead, and those who govern us received the higher award of 4.2%. As well as the impact on morale and sense of worth, there has been a practical impact. You will see within the section on ACC pay (page 56) that the pay gap between ACCs and chief superintendents has reduced from 15.01% to 5.82% over recent years due to incremental changes to chief superintendent pay and rewards. This cannot be right, and the impact of a differential pay award has just compounded this further.

We believe it is for Government to fund the pay award based upon the evidence that is provided to SSRB. Affordability should be the sole responsibility of Government, and it is for them to decide on the number of resources they can afford at the level of pay the SSRB believes is appropriate. Consistent devaluing of the amount police officers are paid for the role will continue to have an impact on attraction, progression and retention at all ranks and we must ensure fair pay for the significant risks the demands of the role dictates.

Recommendation 1: CPOSA believes that chief officers should not receive any less of a percentage pay award than the rest of the service. CPOSA believes the pay award for September 2026 should be fully funded and be at least 4 % across all ranks within PRRB and SSRB with an additional 0.3% uplift for chief officers to recalibrate the 2025 pay award differential.

Methodology

Pay and Morale Survey – Autumn 2025

Undertaken in the Autumn of 2025, this was a joint pay and morale survey in association with the National Police Chiefs’ Council. This online survey attracted 196 responses, with 155 being from those officers under the remit of SSRB¹. At the time CPOSA had 279 members whose pay is determined through this pay review body, giving a response rate of 56%. At least one response was received from each of the 43 forces and there was good representation across ranks (see fig 1 below).

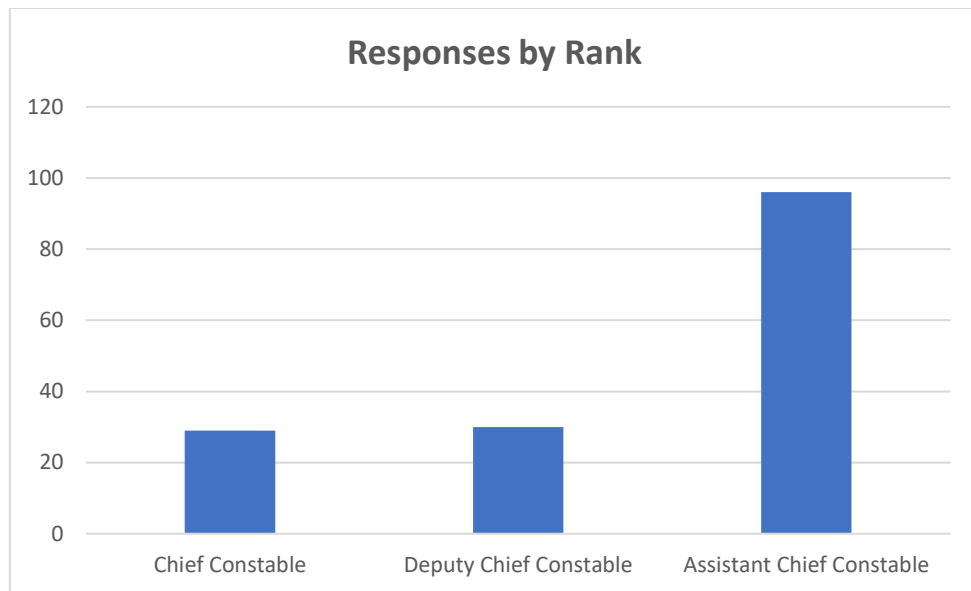


Fig 1. A chart illustrating response by rank.

¹ The full survey covers all CPOSA members, not only those covered within the SSRB remit e.g. police staff, British Transport Police, Civil Nuclear Constabulary, Ministry of Defence Police etc. The data used within this report relates purely to police officers from England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Focus Groups

We arranged three focus groups, one each for chief constables, deputy chief constables and assistant chief constables. These member focus groups will help CPOSA inform the Senior Salaries Review Body by developing some of the areas highlighted within the online survey. These discussions enable more in-depth evidence for some of the issues and allow more detailed description within each area.

CPOSA Pulse Survey - 2025

We reported the findings of the third triennial wellbeing survey of members conducted by Affinity Health in the last submission which had been undertaken in 2024. Such was the concern at the findings that we commissioned a 'pulse survey' in the late summer/autumn of 2025. The surveys are independent and delivered by Affinity Health at Work which was formed in 2006 with an aspiration to partner academic rigour with practical, real-world approaches to improve health and wellbeing at work. The CPOSA research was led by Jo Yarker PhD, MSc, CPsychol with the assistance of researchers.

The pulse survey comprised 255 responses, a 65.9 % response rate from the membership at that time with a good spread of regions, force banding, role, tenure, age and other demographic characteristics. Where relevant, the data within this survey has been used to support this submission. For the first time, we have asked the provider to give an insight of the experiences broken down by gender and some of these are included within this paper.

A fact sheet highlighting key issues is attached at **Appendix 1**

NPCC Survey on Applicants for Chief Officer Vacancies

The NPCC now gathers the data for chief officer vacancies, so the information does not directly read across to the data CPOSA has gathered over the past few years. However, there is far more detail than last year with a full year's data which has enabled a better assessment of the trend for applicants for posts. It also informs us of the internal appointees against external appointees.

CPOSA Survey – The Impact of On Call

CPOSA conducted a review of members examining the issue of on call in 2023. This survey has recently been re circulated and had 130 responses. The information has been included within the section on ACC pay.

Additional Information

Documentary research has also been undertaken supported by meeting attendance throughout the year. Where appropriate, sources have been cited to enable provenance.

Pay Degradation

We will continue to highlight that chief officer pay has been in decline for many years and the following chart (see fig. 2 below) shows pay awards when compared against CPI in September for each year 2010 to 2025.

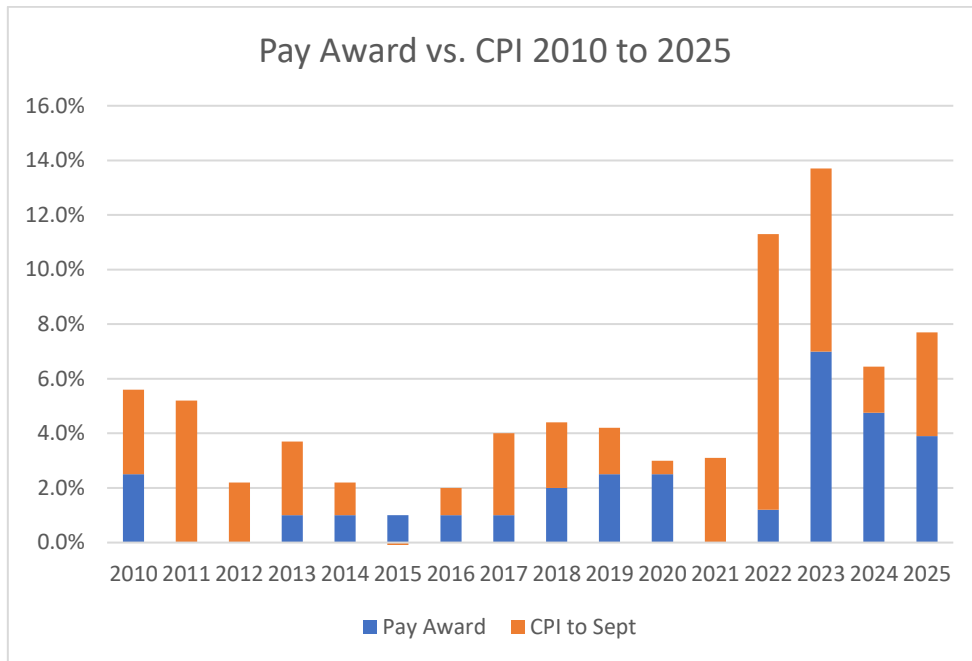


Fig 2. A chart showing annual pay awards vs. CPI in September of each year².

CPOSA once more highlights the disparity between pay and inflation. When examining the period from 2010 to 2025, our members have seen a continuing decline in the real value of their base pay which has been compounded for ACCs by the increase in pay and allowances that a chief superintendent receives. The year 2021 saw no increase in pay for all ranks, whilst CPI sat at 3.1%. This was followed by a ‘flat rate’ pay settlement in 2022 which had a significantly disproportionate effect on chief officer pay. That award averaged 1.2% for our members against a settlement across the whole organisation of 5% with CPI that year standing at 10.1%. In 2023, the pay increase sat at 0.3% and above CPI and whilst 2024 saw a 3.1% increase 2025 saw it almost static at just 0.1% above CPI.

² CPI taken from gov.uk and pay from the NPCC 2022 is shown at average of 1.2% (pay award 0.6% to 1.8% for CPOSA members).

CPOSA and the PSA have sought a gradual increase in pay by recommending 1% above CPI both last year and this year with the intention of gaining some ground towards pay restoration. However, recent years have seen no improvement on the years of decline when compared against the cumulative rise in inflation. To illustrate this, for every £10,000 earned in 2010, our members receive almost £2,500 less now than had their pay kept pace with CPI. Even in the past five years, for every £10,000 earned in 2021, members are now receiving £995 less than had their pay kept pace with inflation.

Our evidence consistently shows that base pay is an important factor in recruitment, progression and retention within police chief officer ranks. We have highlighted our concerns over experience and retention during what have been some of the most challenging periods that policing has faced and this can only be addressed by fair pay for those who lead the most challenging of public services.

Workforce, Pay and Reward

Introduction

Within the first section of our evidence relating to workforce, pay and reward, we will outline our evidence related to the experience, attrition and recruitment of the current chief officer cohort.

The second section will examine our members' satisfaction in base salary, pensions and the whole remuneration package.

The final section will provide our members' experience in relation to their motivation and wellbeing.

The evidence CPOSA presents is deeply concerning and illustrates an executive leadership within policing where mental health is further declining, even against last year's worrying figures, with higher levels of depression and anxiety and significant variations when considering gender. In addition, the expectations of what is required from chief officers is increasing exponentially and significantly impacting on officers' work life balance.

Simply by reading the news, the substantial challenges facing police leaders is evident with their vulnerability as individuals demonstrable. Whilst policing rightly attracts accountability, the levels of scrutiny far exceed any other public servants.

These challenges continue and whilst the publication of the White Paper provides a strategic pathway for change, the need for the retention of talented executive leaders is ever more necessary.

CPOSA believes our members are frequently dealt with as unimportant elements of the workforce, particularly when considering pay, pensions and broader treatment by those with employment responsibilities. The delay of the pay award is one element of this and

when it came, the fact that both those whom we lead and those that govern us had an award of 4.2% landed particularly badly. In its rawest form, it may only be 0.3% difference, but the sandwiching effect had a significantly detrimental impact when combined with the other factors. This has been further compounded by how we believe we have been treated on other issues, such as the timeliness of the delivery on the rectification of the CPI mismatch on pensions where the delay is now extended by a further year. Whilst the number of chief officers is low, the impact of such treatment on attrition is a strategic issue that Government must recognise and address.

Members' satisfaction in remuneration has declined substantially from 42% describing their base pay as satisfactory or very satisfactory last year to 33% this year. Whilst some of this decline will likely be attributable to the delay in announcing the 2025 pay award, we also know from our focus groups and other forums that declining real term pay for roles that are more and more demanding, alongside significant scrutiny, are factors that are impacting on satisfaction. Satisfaction for pensions benefits has bounced back slightly from the lowest ever recorded level of 16% last year to 28%. This should not be seen as 'good news' as it is still the second lowest level of satisfaction on record and represents satisfaction of just 1:4 of the workforce.

Satisfaction with overall remuneration has declined to the lowest level ever recorded at 31%, whilst the percentage of members who state the overall remuneration package actually encourages them to leave has increased from 34% to 41%.

Experience

The strategic challenges facing policing requires highly skilled and capable chief officers to lead forces through necessary changes to culture, the organisational structure and operational delivery. Experience is one element that is incredibly important and the following two charts provide evidence to show the declining experience of chief officers. Fig. 3 below illustrates the total experience our members have as chief officers and highlights that 70% have less than five years completed service. This inexperience has

worsened since our last submission when this figure sat at 65% and has declined even further from the submission before last when it sat at 55%.



Fig. 3 Years completed as a chief officer – all ranks.

Fig. 4 shows the year-on-year decrease in experience of those who responded to the CPOSA survey. The percentage of officers with less than five years' service has increased from 55% in 2023 to 71% in 2025.

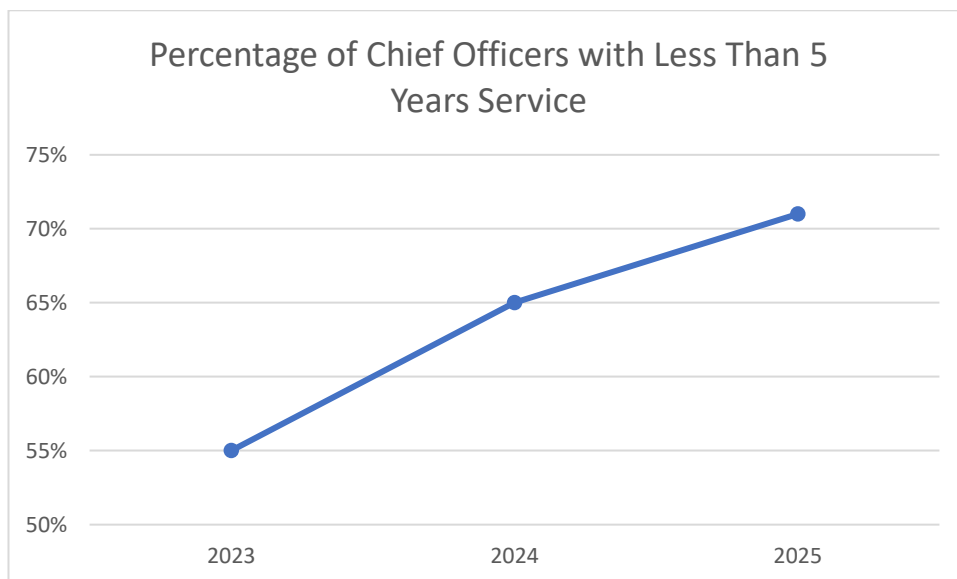


Fig. 4 Year on year decrease in experience of Chief Officers.

Total experience as a chief officer is only part of the picture with fig. 5 below illustrating the significant level of inexperience within each rank. Overall, 68% of respondents had less than 3 years' experience in their current rank. In detail, 55% (52% in 2024) of all chief constables have less than three years' experience at that rank, this increased to 80% (70% in 2024) for deputy chief constables and is also concerning for assistant chief constables, where 69% (66% in 2024) had less than 3 years' experience in the rank.

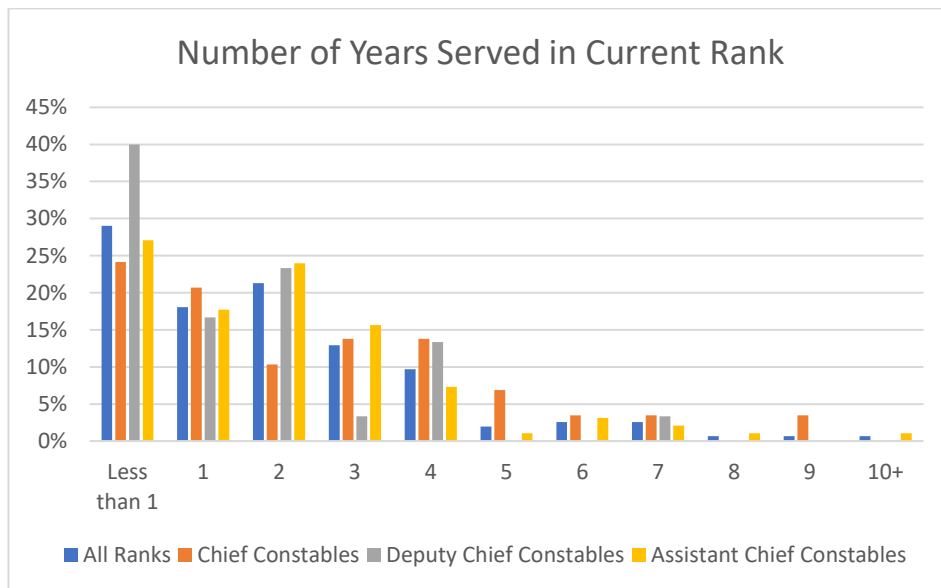


Fig. 5 Years completed in their current rank – all ranks.

Attrition

Last year, we provided significant evidence of CPOSA's concern over attrition rates that, combined with the evidence we have presented on experience, paints a troubling picture. With the need for high quality leadership comes the requirement for retention, more so when the baseline of experience is so low. The number of members expressing their intent to leave within three years remains significantly high, with 39.4% saying they will do so compared to 42% reported last year (see fig. 6 below). Those seeking to leave within five years remains high at 53%.

Date likely expected to retire in	Chief Officers
Less than 1 year	5.8%
Between 1 year and 2 years	16.8%
Between 2 years and 3 years	16.8%
Between 3 years and 4 years	13.5%
Between 4 years and 5 years	14.8%
Between 5 years and 7 years	11.6%
Between 7 years and 10 years	13.5%
Over 10 years	7%

Fig. 6 When do chief officers intend to retire.

Box 1 below outlines what members have said could be done to encourage retention.

CPOSA believes it is important to continue to raise this issue as we do not feel it has gained the traction it deserves, especially given the high expectations communities rightly have about their police leadership. Any organisation that has to deal with the highest level of risk would deem this lack of experience and projected high attrition as a critical issue. In policing it appears to be accepted with no strategic plan that seeks to address it and at a time when there are ambitious Government plans for policing where talent and experience will be required to land the significant changes required. We ask the pay review body to take this into account as they report to Government.

What Members Feel Could be Done to Encourage Retention

- Increase in benefits and overall remuneration package along with less local political interference.
- Guarantees that pension reform will not impact future financial plans I have made with my family. A pay award that is commensurate with the level of risk and responsibility held.
- Allow me to secure my pension entitlement lump sum without having to leave.
- I love policing, but with the tax implications and pension there is little incentive.
- Move to a position like NHS consultants so there is flexibility around the police pension scheme.
- I think fixed term appointments should be moved for Deputy Chief Constables and better protections put in place for Chief Constables.
- Ability to retire and rejoin as a guarantee without having to ask.
- Greater value of the role and responsibilities we have - pay commensurate with other sectors.
- Much improved overall remuneration package that compensates for the personal impact and risks carried by this role.
- The loss of PCCs is by and large a positive thing. However, stabilising oversight is a priority.
- Removal of fixed term contracts and fair pay for ACCs.
- Recognition within the Home Office of the demands on policing and police officers, counternarrative to the constant criticism, review of demand on chief officers.
- Yes - much more could be done to stop the abuse that senior women get over and above their male colleagues.
- Less politically motivated and more objective genuinely transparent , based on skills and ability, Chief Constable selection process.
- Fairer approach to investigations into Chief officers who are sitting ducks.
- It will all depend on the outcome of police reform and working relationships with those who govern policing.

Box 1 Comments regarding retention.

Recruitment

During 2025, there were a total of 53 chief officer posts advertised, comprising 29 at assistant chief constable rank, 15 at deputy chief constable and 9 at chief constable. The new NPCC data set details the number of external vs internal applicants for the first time and illustrates the number of external applicants appointed. The data shows (fig. 7 below) there were a total of 127 applicants for the posts advertised, with 79 being external applicants. Of the 53 posts advertised, 30 (57%) were filled by external candidates.

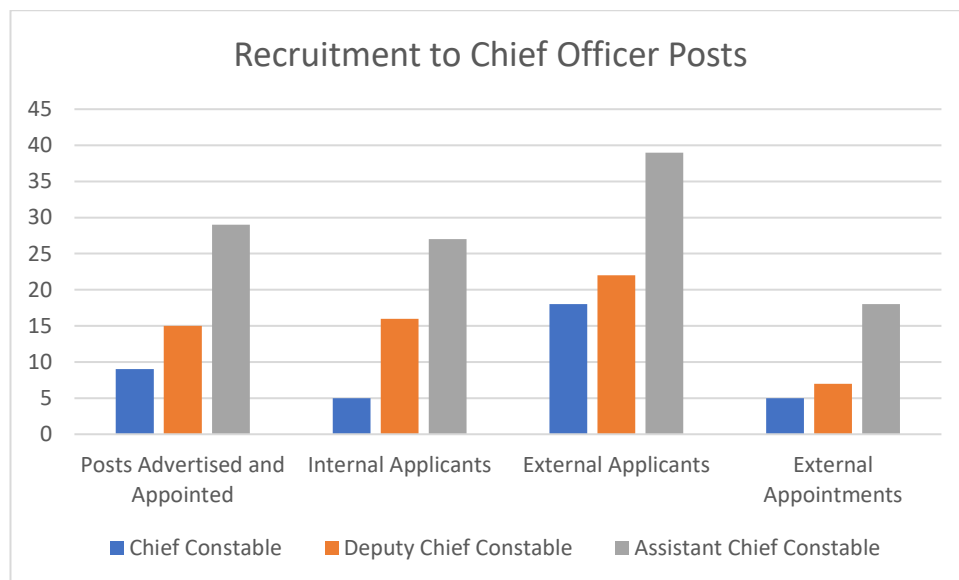


Fig. 7 Recruitment to Chief Officer Posts.

In 2025, there were 2.56 applicants for each chief constable role advertised against a long-term average of 2.88 applicants per post. There were 18 external applicants for the posts filled with 5 (56%) external applicants appointed out of the 9 posts filled.

There were a similar number of applicants per post for deputy chief constable roles with 2.53 applicants per role advertised which is marginally higher than the long-term average of 2.28. There were 22 people applying for forces other than their own vs the 16 internal candidates. Seven (47%) of the posts were filled by external candidates.

The data available for this year’s assessment of applicant per post was more complete than last year’s, enabling a better assessment against previous years. The data is illustrated in fig. 8 and fig. 9 below.

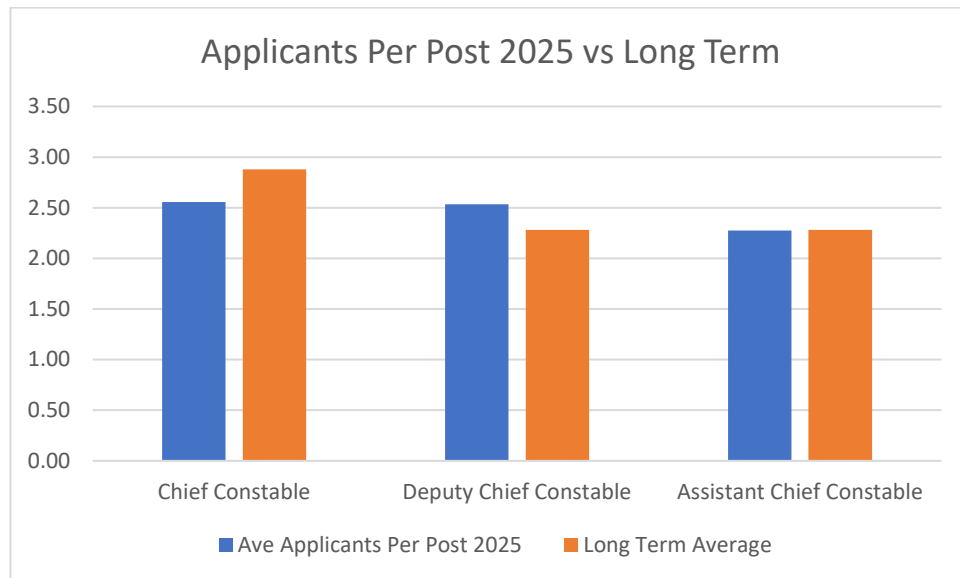


Fig. 8 Applicants Per Post.

Assistant chief constable vacancies saw 2.28 applicants per post which is consistent with the long-term average with 39 external applicants vs 27 internal applicants. There were 18 (62%) external appointees for the 29 posts advertised and filled.

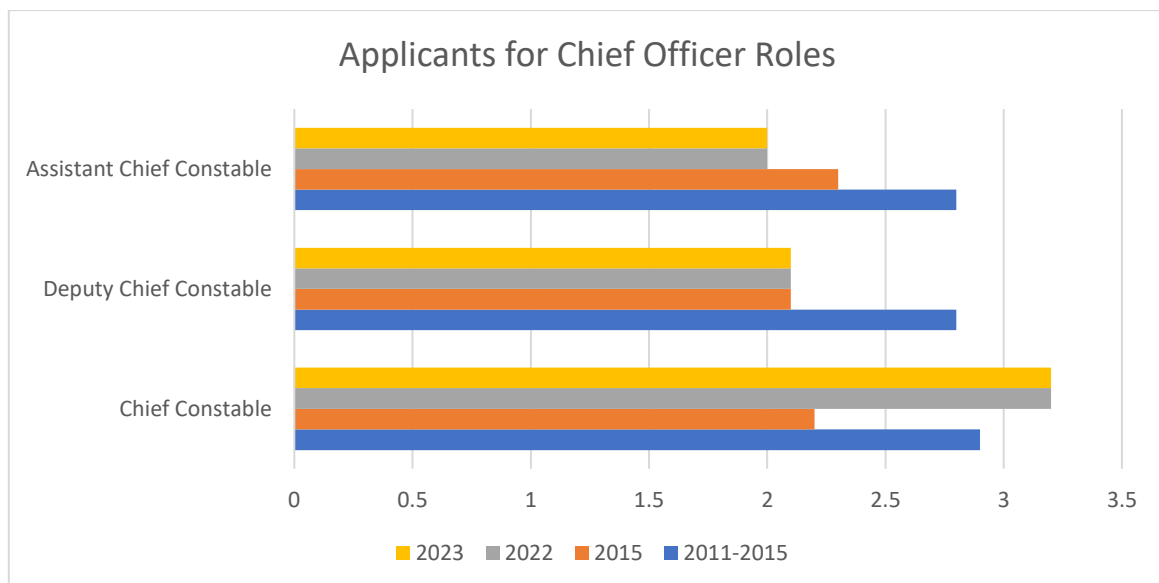


Fig. 9 Applicants for chief officer roles over the long term

Base Salary

Satisfaction with base salary (see fig. 10 below) has been on a downward trajectory since 2017, taking a significant drop in 2022 and in 2023, when just 36% of respondents said they were either satisfied or very satisfied with base pay. Whilst there was a very slight increase to 42% in 2024, this year has seen it decline to 33% which is an all-time low. CPOSA members do not have the ability to protest by working to rule or striking which has seen productive results towards pay restoration elsewhere. In addition, the continuing reduction in the pay gap between ACC and chief superintendent has had an impact in how those at the ACC rank will have answered this question.

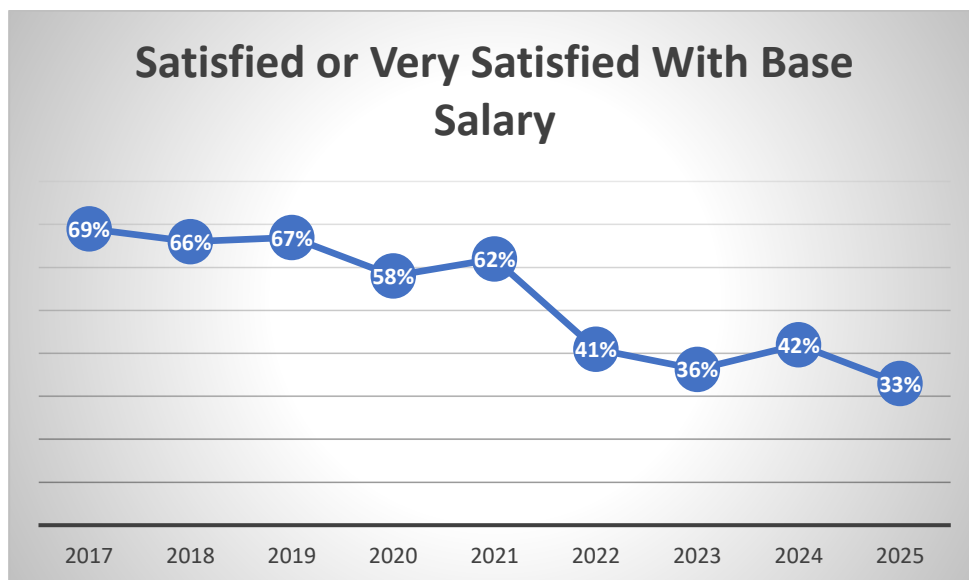


Fig. 10 Satisfaction with base salary.

We asked members why they had answered how they did when they were asked about satisfaction with base salary. Box 2 below outlines a selection of those comments.

Comments by Members About Base Salary

- *The gap between Chief Supt and ACC has reduced considerably in the last year, despite the difference in qualification and workload. The salary no longer reflects the large step up to be a Chief officer.*
- *Commanders carry a large amount of responsibility and the difference in pay btw C/Supt and Cmdr comparatively does not appear to be quite right.*
- *The level of responsibility, risk and public scrutiny of decision making and actions is greater than ever. It makes executive police leadership very challenging and you are always looking over your shoulder.*
- *For the hours I am required to work I earn less per hour than a Chief Supt. Also there are no allowances for on call and I am unable to accrue RDILs*
- *The role is more political than ever and the level of reward v risk is not commensurate with other jobs of this stature and nature.*
- *I didn't enter public service thinking this was a career where I was going to get rich. I receive a significant amount of money for my salary. I do not think my salary however, reflects the responsibility I hold nor the risk I carry as a Chief Constable.*
- *I do not see that the breadth of responsibility and risk ownership, both at a directorate, portfolio and operational command level is comparable with other public sector and civil service roles with similar pay bands. In comparison to accountability, hours and risk in roles outside of policing it does not sit comfortably.*
- *I earn the same as a DCC in a small force as I did as an ACC in a larger force so the step up in leadership terms has not been financially beneficial and I have found the role as DCC much trickier, complex and the hours much longer that of an ACC even in a larger force.*
- *Base salary sits at the point in which you see cliff edge on your personal income tax, meaning I don't actually take home a salary that is significantly more than my colleagues still serving as Chief Superintendents.*
- *Given the scale of responsibility, the time demands, the pressure and the vulnerability chief constables are poorly rewarded in comparison with other senior executive leaders.*
- *Salary is not bad but the level of risk held on behalf of the force and personal impact makes it much less appealing.*
- *Very frustrated with the delay in pay award for Chief Officers this year.*
- *Salary is good, however taxation and deductions significantly detract from the earnings, given the scale of responsibility and personal impact this has for Chief Officers it feels to not be reflective, especially with the current cost of living.*

Box 2. Comments by members about base salary.

Pensions

Satisfaction with pension benefits has bounced back from last year's all-time low of 16% to 28% stating they were either satisfied or very satisfied. This should not be seen as positive news but affirmation that last year was an anomaly consistent with the observations, we raised that members were unsighted of the value of their pensions due to the remedy in place following the McCloud judgement. The long-term analysis still shows a consistent downward level of satisfaction from 2017 when 47% of members were either satisfied or very satisfied with their pension benefits to 28% this year.

CPOSA members will also see an increase of 0.44% in the contribution rate for their pensions as of 1st April 2026.

This follows consultation by the Home Office relating to the tiered contribution system brought into place in 2015. Unfortunately, the tiered levels were not updated each time there was a pay award which, by 2025, left no members in the lower band. All had migrated to the remaining top two bands.

The consultation confirmed broad support for retaining a tiered contribution structure, with a preference for approaches that are administratively sustainable, fair and capable of delivering the required member contribution yield. Respondents also highlighted the importance of protecting lower-paid members, supporting scheme participation and ensuring that contribution structures do not act as a disincentive to promotion or retention.

In light of the consultation responses, the government will proceed with implementing a revised member contribution structure that reflects the feedback received. These changes are as follows:

1. **Retaining the Tiered Structure:** The existing three-tier structure will be retained.
2. **Increasing Tier Thresholds:** The thresholds for each contribution tier will be increased in line with known pay increases since 2015.

3. **Switch from FTE to Actual Pay:** Member contribution tiers will now be determined based on a member’s actual pensionable pay from the previous scheme year, rather than FTE salary.

4. **Ongoing Review:** Contribution thresholds will continue to be reviewed as part of the regular scheme valuation cycle, rather than being automatically uplifted by a fixed index such as CPI.

New Contribution Structure as of 1 April 2026:

Tier Actual pay Rate

1	£37,035 or less	12.88% (currently 12.44%)
2	More than £37,035 but less than £79,588	13.88% (currently 13.44%)
3	£79,588 or more	14.22% (currently 13.78%)

This revaluation is the latest change that will see pensions costing more but with less benefits to members. This, combined with degradation of base pay, is having a significant impact on the remuneration members are receiving for roles that are subject of significantly more responsibility and scrutiny than those who have undertaken the role before them.

Fig. 11 below depicts the declining level of satisfaction between 2017 and 2025, with fig. 12 breaking the data down by rank.

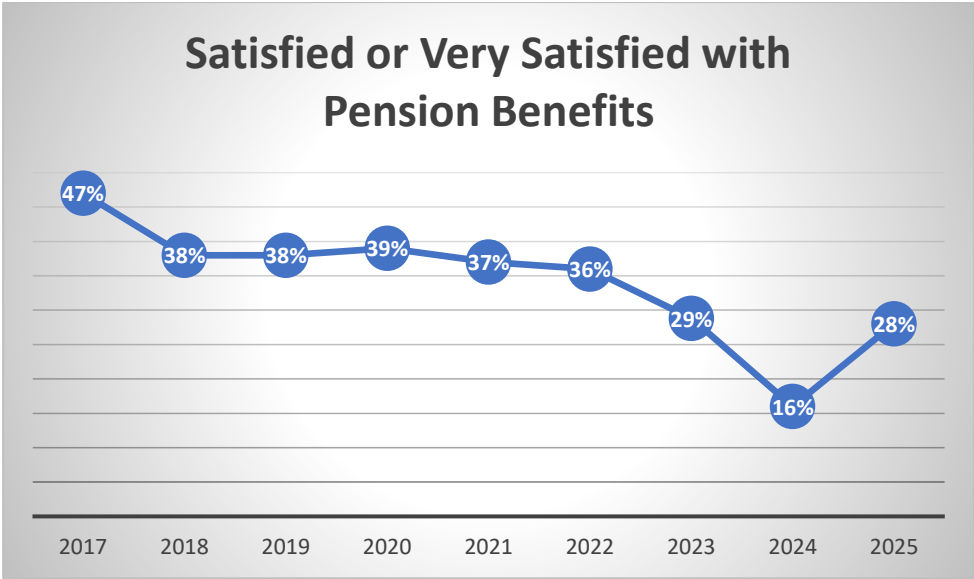


Fig. 11 Satisfaction with pensions benefits.

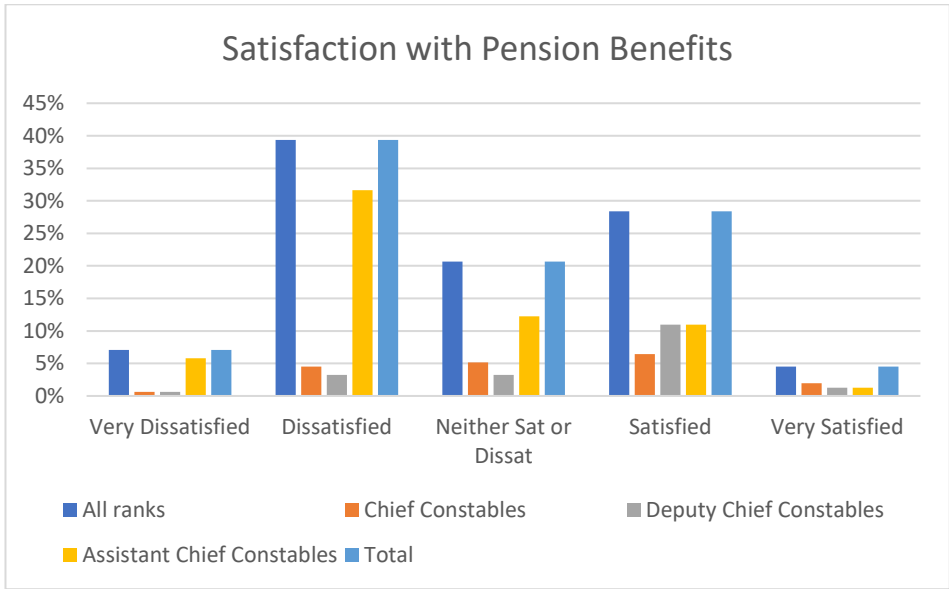


Fig. 12 Pensions satisfaction level by rank.

We asked our members why they have answered the question on how satisfied they are in the way they have. Box 3 below draws out some of those comments which are broad ranging.

Comments Regarding Satisfaction with Pension Benefits by Member

- The confusion caused by remedy has left taxation a real challenge, also in addition breaching the annual allowance each year is not conducive to making me want to stay in Policing longer.
- We have a good pension - but equally pay for it.
- Again feel like a good pension, but given the changes, I am going to be less well off than those you joined only a few years earlier.
- The changes have been detrimental for policing and retention.
- A good pension but my satisfaction is tempered by the enormous sums of tax I am liable for by virtue of annual allowance breaches.
- I consider that following remedy our pension remains a good one and incentivises progression and retention. I am however concerned that this will be significantly impacted should the Chancellor announce reductions in the tax free lump sum.
- The uncertainty that exists with potential impact on taxation of lump sum is concerning and makes future planning challenging.
- I am taxed on my lump sum significantly more than my predecessors - when arguably policing has never been harder.
- I believe that the 2015 CARE scheme, whilst not as generous as the previous scheme, is still a good pension scheme.
- Cant get a pension statement and the pensions trap remains an issue.
- It is unsatisfactory that the terms of the pension that i joined with have changed and are now less favourable.
- The amount of tax that is payable on allowances is really high, other professions have taken steps to reduce the impact on individuals but we haven't.

Box 3. Free text comments on satisfaction with pensions benefits

CPOSA asked Affinity Health to explore a wide range of issues in both the full and pulse survey, and these reinforced the concerns members expressed internally. Box 4 below provides the data from their survey that describes the impact of pensions on wellbeing.

Affinity Health Survey – Findings on the impact of pensions on provision on wellbeing

- 77% respondents cited **pension scheme changes as a significant contributor to stress**, up 3% from the full 2024 survey.
- 86% cited **tax liabilities as a significant contributor to stress** (up 3% from the full 2024 survey).
- 43% of members reported being **more worried about their personal finances** than they were a year ago, an increase of 18% from 2021.
- 72% reported being **concerned that they will have to work for longer** due to changes in pension arrangements, an increase of 20% from 2021.
- Tax liabilities and pension scheme changes were again noted in the top three areas of particular concern by respondents.

Box 4. The impact of pensions on wellbeing.

Overall Package

Members are in receipt of additional benefits to their base pay and as in previous years, the survey has found them all to be within permitted rules and are not being used inappropriately. PCCs and chief constables are restrained in legislation to pay only those allowances permitted in Police Regulations or those agreed by the Home Secretary.

In addition to the restrictions, there is also transparency as, in line with other public sector colleagues at our level, all pay and allowances are required to be published in the annual accounts of the organisation.

Our survey returned almost identical findings (see fig. 13) to last year and showed that 97% of respondents had the benefit of a car, lease car or car allowance. The next highest category of payment is medical insurance with 13% of members having such an allowance paid. The 'other' category was selected by 9% of respondents and includes items such as CPD, professional fees, broadband, a security alarm etc. Three percent of members said they receive no additional benefits.

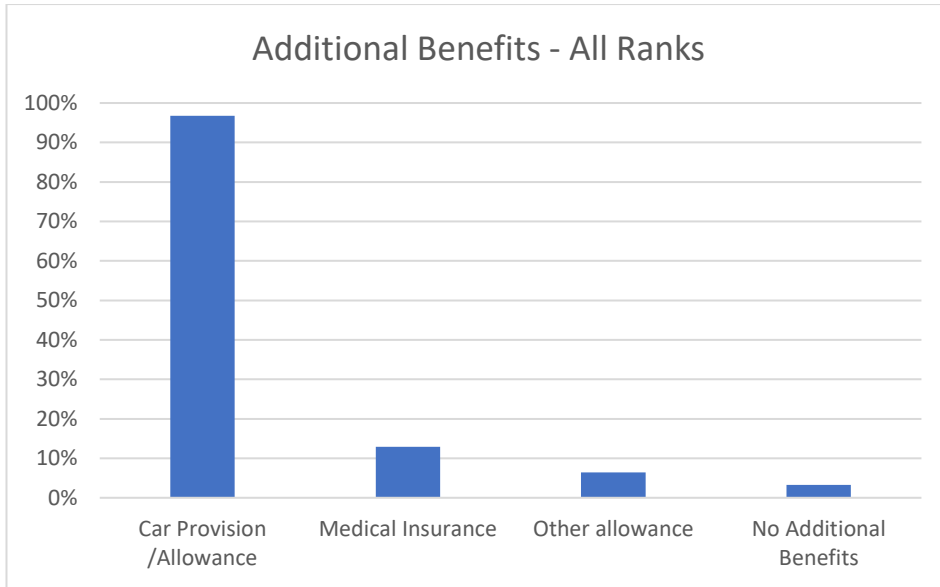


Fig. 13 Additional benefits

Satisfaction with the overall package (see fig. 14) has significantly reduced this year with just 31% of respondents stating they are either satisfied or very satisfied. At its peak in 2019/2020, satisfaction levels sat at 60%. The last three years have seen levels in their 30's with 35%, 37% and 31% being recorded. This report gives substantial evidence as to why this is the case showing the correlation between dissatisfaction and the widening gap between base pay and inflation. The continuing erosion of pension benefits is also a major factor of concern in that the overall package no longer remunerates members for the challenges and responsibilities their roles attract.

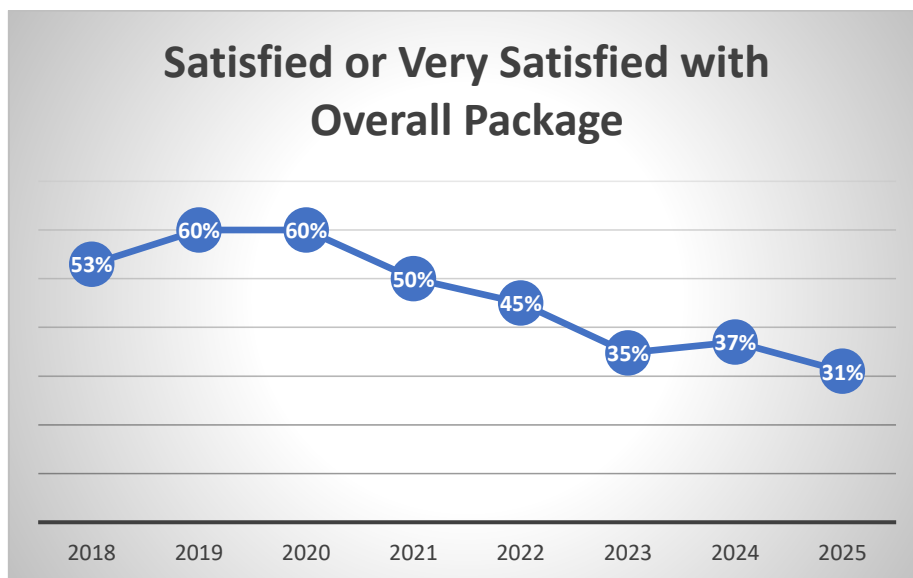


Fig.14 Satisfaction with overall package

Members were asked for comments on their satisfaction with the overall package available to them. Some comments are presented in box 5 below.

Comments Regarding Satisfaction – Overall Package

- Overall the money does not measure up to the stress, demand and personal risk as a chief.
- A role of this nature and pressure should have health insurance included.
- If the pension arrangements could be reformed I would be content with the package.
- I receive South East Allowance and a lease car (I am also on the top increment for ACC). Combined, these make the package more appropriate to the hours and responsibilities required.
- This is largely owing to pension, less base pay, for me, and the uncertainty for the future.
- Does not reflect the risk and responsibility.
- As set out earlier incomparable with other sectors.
- The only additional benefit I get is a work provided vehicle. Given I travel between 25000 and 30000 miles a year for work this is frankly the least they can do - and is almost certainly cheaper than alternative transport arrangements.
- For the same reasons above, i don't feel it appropriately remunerates for the breadth and scale of the role performed.
- It seems to be about the right level on balance but the workload and breadth of responsibilities can sometimes make it feel too low.
- For a combination of the reasons above - erosion of pension, comparison with private sector.
- The car and fuel provision does to some degree offset the low base pay which on a month to month basis assist re cost of living/lifestyle but then it is not pensionable.
- I'm satisfied but don't feel it compares well with other roles considering the level of responsibility. I am paid no extra for additional roles such as national portfolio work or Counter Terrorism Commander duties.
- We get no on call allowance and as a ACC i do considerable firearms, Gold and Public order cover. It seems remiss that this on call allowance does not extend to ACC's.
- The value of my salary and benefits continues to decline.
- Compared to others in leadership roles with less accountability, impact, risk management, reputational harm and public scrutiny we are not paid in comparative terms. Examples include the Chancellor at my local university gets (£273,000) and the Chief Exec of my local health board (£225,000).
- Having worked in a very large force for 6 years and working in excess of 80 hours per week and weekends on a base salary as a specialist firearms commander and public order Gold, I now work with other Government agencies where many of the staff with much less responsibility and risk significantly out earn senior police. The

disparity between Chief Police Officers, other agencies, and the private sector is stark.

- I am satisfied provided annual inflationary rises.
- I remain in role due to my overall enjoyment of the job, and public service. I would be better off financially if retired, took my pension and took on a less demanding role.
- It is ok overall.
- ACC pay has completely lost touch with DCC/CC pay. My allowances have been reduced by 50%. If you add the on call allowances on to most Chief Supers pay - they now are better paid than ACC. I work nearly 100 days per year on call, I work one weekend in 4 - doing 7 full days and nights on call. I manage the highest end of threat, harm and risk but feel I am not properly valued through pay and allowances.

Box 5 Comments by members on overall package

One of the questions we ask our members seeks to identify the effect the overall package has on their intention to leave (see fig.15). In 2022, 44% of respondents believed the overall remuneration package encouraged them to leave the police service. Whilst it reduced over the next two surveys, the level rose again to 41% this year. When examining this data alongside the experience and retention data, CPOSA strongly believes that members do not feel they are being listened to, they feel undervalued and feel there is no other option other than to leave policing at the earliest opportunity. Historically, this was never the case and we believe there is a general apathy around the value being placed on the roles our members hold.

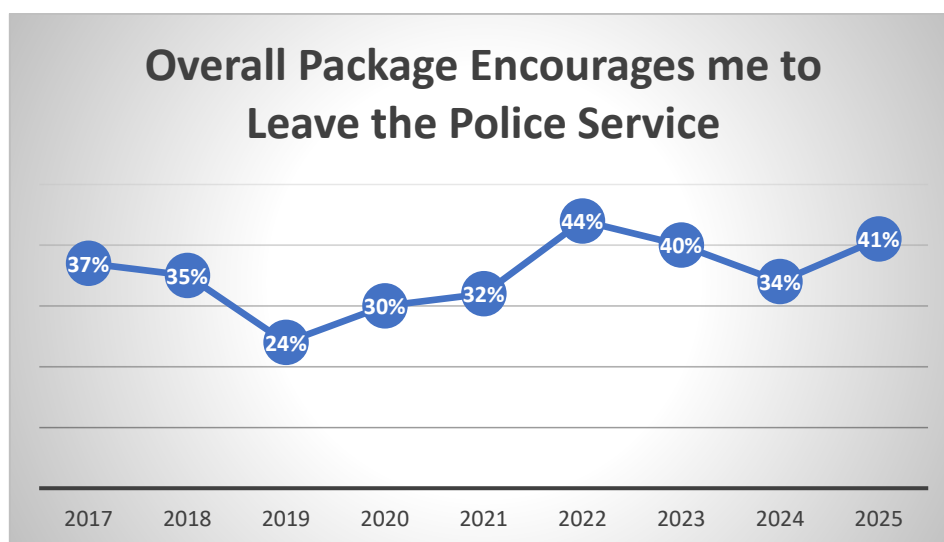


Fig.15 Impact of overall remuneration

Motivation and Wellbeing

As with previous surveys, CPOSA asked our members 'On a scale of one to ten, with 1 being extremely low and 10 being extremely high, how motivated are you to do a good job'. The results are illustrated in fig. 16 below. The three years between 2021 and 2023 saw a decline from a high in 2021 where 97% scored 8, 9 or 10 to 89% in 2023. Whilst the level bounced back slightly last year, this year has seen it drop to its lowest ever level when just 86% of members rated their motivation to do a good job at either 8,9 or 10 out of 10. Whilst such levels can be seen as high, the trajectory of deterioration is significant.

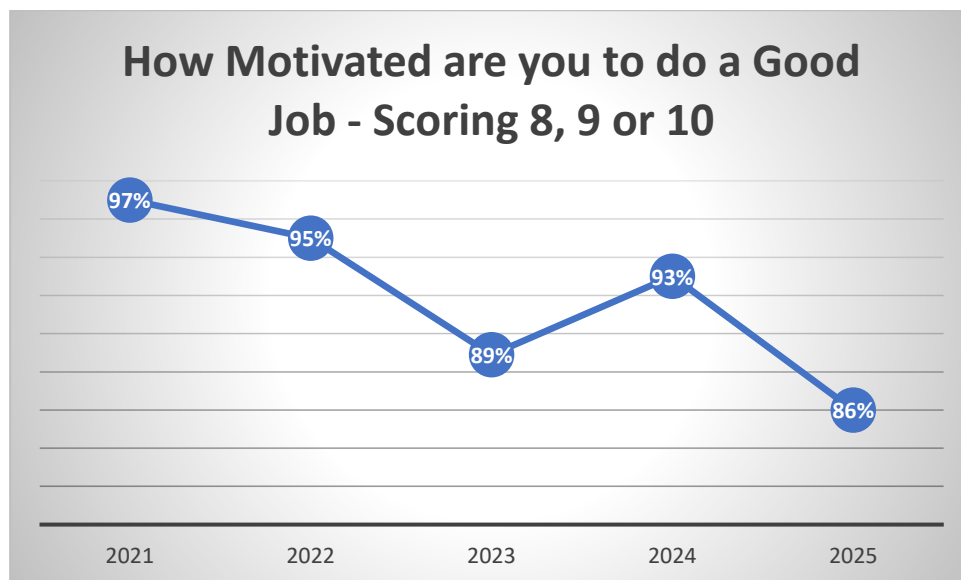


Fig. 16 Member motivation

As reported last year, the full 2024 Affinity Health Survey showed that 95% say they 'get a buzz' from working as a chief officer³ with 96% agreeing that being in the police service is a vocation for them and 78% agreeing that being a chief officer is part of who they are.

³ Affinity Health CPOSA Member Survey2024.

Working Hours

Analysis of the data⁴ shows that in 2025, 39% of members worked in excess of 60 hours a week with 6% saying they worked in excess of 70. Fig. 17 below illustrates the hours members worked during the reporting period, broken down by rank.

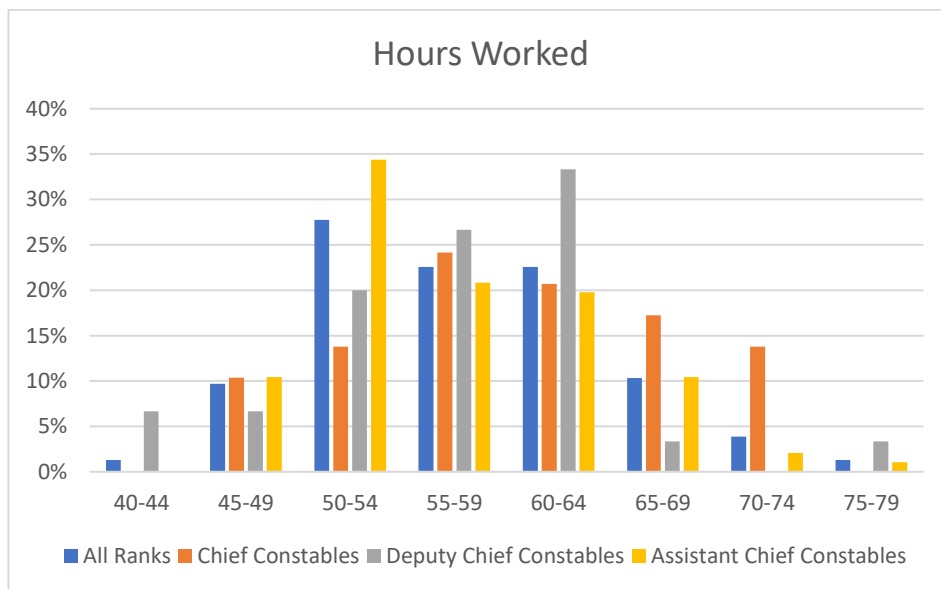


Fig. 17 Hours worked by members.

As can be seen in fig. 18 below, just 37% of members describe themselves as being either satisfied or very satisfied with their working hours. This figure has been stable over the past four years but this followed a step decline in 2020 where levels sat at 52%.

⁴ NPCC/CPOSA Pay and Morale Survey 2025.

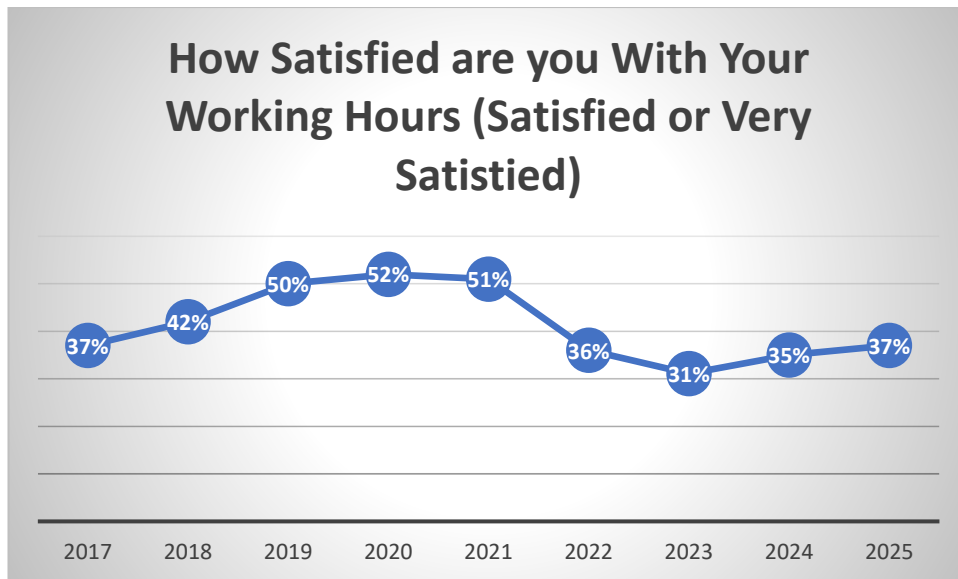


Fig. 18 Satisfaction with working hours.

The full 2024 Affinity Health survey and 2025 ‘pulse’ survey examined the impact of working hours on our members. The key findings for demand, working hours and work-life balance can be found in box 6 below:

Affinity Health Results
Demand, Working Hours and Work-Life Balance

- 3% reported working in excess of 70 hours a week.
- 25% are working in excess of 60 hours a week.
- 58% are working 50-60 hours a week.
- Only 54% agreed they are able to balance the demands of work with what they and want and need to in non-work time.
- Only 12% of people agreed the demands placed in chief officers are commensurate with normally working less than 48 hours a week, down from 14% in 2021.
- 53% report their line managers work reasonable hours themselves, down from 62% in 2021.
- 82% reported that the excessive working breadth and depth of responsibility caused the excessive working hours, up from 77% in 2021.

- Only 56% agree that their Chief Officer colleagues reinforce the importance of work-life balance through their behaviour.
- Only 42% agree their chief officer colleagues work reasonable hours themselves.
- Work demands remain at the very high levels with 98% saying that **the role places them under a high level of demand.**
- 73% state their role involves an excessive breadth and depth of responsibility, leading to excessive working hours.
- 33% of respondents feel their **demands have risen by an excessive amount.**
- 94% of respondents feel that the demands of their role **ensure they do need to take work home to complete outside of working hours** (up from 85% in 2021). One respondent noted that they often use annual leave days to catch up on paperwork at home.
- Increased job demands was **again the third highest area of concern this year** (behind the impact of external influences, such as inspection regimes or political interference and the decrease in pension provision, the same areas as in 2021).

Box 6. Demands and working hours (taken from the pulse and full survey).

CPOSA members were asked to comment about their working hours in the pay and reward survey. A selection of comments is shown in Box 7 below.

Comments on the Hours Worked

- On call in force and on call for national cadre work means a lot of impact on home life. On top of this with inspection regimes etc.
- I would be unable to do less to keep up with current scrutiny, demand and performance expectations.
- No issue with working long hours.
- It is a 7 day a week job, many calls, emails and texts outside of hours and to keep up, reading and emails at night and weekends.
- I don't find it unreasonable to work more than 40 hours at this rank, but I do think that there is a question around the sustainability of going at that kind of pace and impact on health longer term.
- The demands on evening and weekends are increasing, as are the number of times staying away from home.

- My partner is also senior in the police and we have two young children. We do have flexibility but also work very long hours. To try and reduce the impact on the children and work, the impact is reduced sleep.
- On top of the hours worked, you cannot calculate the huge amount of time spent with work on your mind.
- Even on holiday, I am still the only chief constable and therefore never off duty. It is more accurate to say I work 168hrs a week. I am never without my work phone in reach.
- I think I have a reasonable balance in terms of hours, recognising that I expect to be available outside of core hours as something that 'goes with the turf'. I cover a reasonable level of formal gold cover and provide chief officer cover in addition, but again this is an important part of the role in my view and not an adjunct to what I do on a day to day basis.
- It's a constant battle to control the hours worked and balance this with family life.
- I have very little personal time and am no longer capable of doing things I used to enjoy in lesser ranks. My evenings are generally taken up reading in advance of future meetings / commitments and I work every weekend on rest days to clear work - usually around 4 hours each day, in addition to the occasional function.

Box 7 Comments on satisfaction with hours worked.

Sickness and Wellbeing

We reported last year that those leading the research for us stated the CPOSA 2024 levels of anxiety and depression were higher now than they were during Covid-19, particularly the symptoms of anxiety amongst respondents. The improvement seen in the general population and improvement in wellbeing of NHS healthcare professionals is not being seen in CPOSA members. Due to this, CPOSA asked Affinity Health to conduct a shorter 'pulse' survey to cover some of the key areas of concern that had been highlighted.

Despite this, the CPOSA annual survey shows that 91% of members have taken no sick leave meaning most are staying in the workplace despite the concerning mental wellbeing impact highlighted by Affinity Health. Fig. 19 shows the number of sickness days members have taken.

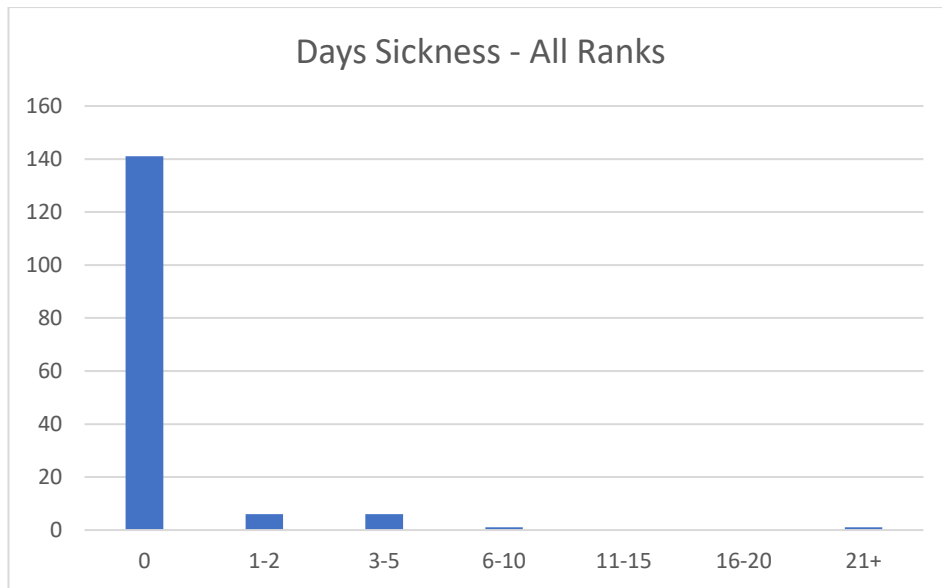


Fig. 19 Day sickness – all ranks.

The Affinity Health pulse survey found that sickness has risen in the last 12 months with 16.5% of members reporting sickness compared to 12.6% in 2025. Their full report in 2025 found there are several factors that have a negative impact under the following headings:

- The working environment
- Culture and behaviours
- Demand, working hours and work-life balance
- Being under investigation
- Financial concerns
- Additional duties
- The inspection regime
- The behaviours of some in governance positions

Box 8 below highlights the data relating to the levels of depression and anxiety our members are suffering.

Member Wellbeing – Pulse Survey Results

- 42% of respondents were classed as showing ‘normal’ levels of symptoms for anxiety which is even lower than the deeply concerning 47% in 2025 it was also down from 73% in 2021 and 61% in 2018. Severe levels are now seen in 10% of members, worse than the 8% reported in 2025.
- Levels of depression are also higher than in previous years. 75% are classed as showing ‘normal’ levels of depression. Worse than the 74% reported in 2025. With moderate levels of depression up to 6% from 5% last year and severe levels increasing from 1% to 3% in just 12 months.
- It is also noteworthy that 73% of members reported that HMICFRS inspections have had a negative impact on their wellbeing.
- There is a notable difference in the mental health of women and men with 64% of women showing mild, moderate or severe levels of anxiety against the 55% of male respondents. It also shows that the level of mild, moderate or severe levels of depression is two percent higher in females than the 25% reported by men.
- 33% of respondents feel their demands have risen by an excessive amount.

Box 8 Affinity Heath – Pulse Survey Results on Wellbeing.

Affinity Heath presented their findings to

- The Home Office
- The APCC
- HMICFRS
- Senior Women in Policing Network
- The College of Policing and Oscar Kilo (National Welfare)
- The NPCC
- The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC)

They outlined the following case for prioritised action:

- Several concerns regarding the working conditions of senior police officers highlighted in this report were also reported in the 2018, 2021 and 2024 CPOSA wellbeing surveys. This means that these working conditions have repeatedly been reported to be problematic by members. Employers have a duty of care to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable, they protect their employees from the risks of stress at work. This includes taking measures to control risks identified. As these factors have been reported over time, **they present foreseeable risks to the health of Chief Police Officers and Senior Police Staff across the UK.***
- This member survey does not examine the working conditions within each workforce, and therefore we are unable to comment on the extent to which policing organisations have taken reasonable actions to prevent and mitigate these risks to health. However, we recommend that controls and mitigations in place are documented, and rapid action is taken to protect individuals from harm to minimize personal impact and employer liability.*

Affinity Health also made four recommendations:

1. Targeted, systemic action to improve senior police officer health and wellbeing.
2. Strengthen support under PCC accountability.
3. Review investigation process and organisational support.
4. Continue to monitor and address financial wellbeing.

CPOSA will be conducting another pulse survey in 2026 and a full survey in 2027 and we will ensure the SSRB are sighted on the outcome of that work. In the meantime, CPOSA will work with other parties to ensure effective action is taken.

Governance

CPOSA welcomes the Government's announcement on the abolition of PCCs and the proposed replacement of a governance framework for policing. We are pleased to have been actively engaged with by the Home Office in groups set up to ensure transition to the next model. The research we have undertaken with members has consistently highlighted that the poor behaviour of some PCCs has had a significant impact on those willing to put themselves forward for promotion.

There is inevitable tension in democratic countries over the governance of the police between chiefs and their political supervisors⁵. Unlike other public sector bodies, there can be no operational direction and control of police resource by politicians in a democratic society. Instead, it is for politicians to act in the public interest while avoiding the temptation to use the police for their own partisan advantage⁶

In this context, CPOSA has two key high-level concerns with the replacement of PCCs and the more intrusive role of the Home Secretary in local policing and the proposed power to remove a chief.

The first is that the lessons learned about the relationship between PCCs and chief constables is used to design out those issues that have meant the relationship has been sub-optimal or broken.

The second is that any powers to remove a chief constable by the Home Secretary is subject of the fair checks and balances that section 38 of PRSA currently affords. Without such protections, CPOSA fears the impact on those willing to lead such high-risk organisations will be significant.

⁵ Governing the Police – Experience in Six Democracies Bayley D and Stenning P, Routledge 2016

⁶ Ibid pp1

The Affinity Health Survey highlights some of the concerns members have with PCCs/mayors or policing bodies. These include:

1. Just 67% of members either disagreed or strongly disagreed when asked whether the PCC or similar abided by the 8 high level principles within the Accountability Guidance when holding the chief constable to account during HMICFRS inspections and upon subsequent publications. This was down from 72% in 2024.
2. When chief constables were asked “How confident are you that the PCC would work with you to resolve issues at the earliest stage rather than using the powers they have to require you to retire or resign”, just 52% said they were confident or very confident that they would be. A reduction of 5% from 2024. Notably, there was a 16% increase in the response of ‘not at all confident’, up from 8% in 2024 to 24% in 2025.
3. When examining the same question shown in (2) above in the context of gender, there is some deeply concerning data. Whereas 64% of male respondents reported being confident or very confident to the same question, just 35% of females stated they were confident, with none stating they are very confident.

The relationship between PCCs and chief police officers is a regular topic of discussion within focus groups as well as surveys and is cited as reasons for not seeking promotion and retiring at the earliest opportunity.

As a staff association CPOSA continues to see those in governance positions abusing the legislative protections. Over the years, this has included such protections around selection of chief constables, suspensions and removal. The protections afforded within the law are essential for the protection of those who lead organisations that, by their very nature, deal with the complexity of high risk and uncertainty. Everything must be done to ensure our members are provided due process to ensure any suspension or removal is only undertaken after due process. Without such protections, CPOSA fears

members' vulnerability in being removed due to political expediency rather than the facts of the case.

The past year has seen one of our most concerning cases that highlights the willingness of those in governance positions to work outside of the law. When the serving chief constable of Staffordshire was suspended, the legislation that exists to enable an acting chief constable to be appointed was not being followed by the PCC. This legislation enables the existing deputy chief constable or, in their absence, an assistant chief constable to step up to the role of chief constable. In this case, the PCC's office informed the sitting DCC, who is a female member of CPOSA, that the PCC would be seeking to undertake an external temporary chief constable selection process. The PCC's office was notified by CPOSA that this would be against police regulations, but this was ignored and an advert placed. CPOSA contacted the PCC with a letter before action which outlined the protections in law that the sitting chief constable has and the requirements of the law to fill this post until the situation is resolved. Again, the PCC declined to pause the process. CPOSA was left with no choice but to progress the matter via the High Court. At the initial hearing the Judge agreed for a full hearing and suggested to the PCC that it might be wise to pause the selection process until the case was heard. The PCC proceeded with the process prior to the case being heard.

Following a full hearing at the High Court, the judgement handed down allowed the claim by CPOSA and held that the PCC had no power to appoint a temporary chief constable. It also acknowledged the PCC had sought advice from others but that all but one had failed to take into account the legislation that affords protection to chief officers in such circumstances. The one agency that had included the law cited legislation that had been repealed some years before. The judge awarded a full costs recovery to CPOSA.

This brief write up of the case may not illustrate the depth of the nature of the issues we faced. In short, our members do not have the employment protections afforded to the vast majority of those within the workforce. Instead we must rely on, and have confidence in, the protections Parliament legislates for. It is disappointing that those in

governance positions fail to comply with such legislation and we will work actively to ensure all members, particularly those from underrepresented groups, are treated fairly and in accordance with the law.

We would be happy to provide additional context in our oral evidence session.

The correlation between the behaviours of PCCs nationally and the willingness of people to apply for chief officer roles is well evidenced. The replacement of the existing governance system and the associated legislation must ensure it develops having learned the lessons from the past. If it does not, talented leaders will simply continue to decide not to apply for the most important leadership roles in policing or will leave the organisation at the earliest opportunity.

Mobility and Relocation

The past three years have seen two significant changes that are designed to have an impact on the mobility of the workforce. Firstly, pay reform for the chief constable and deputy chief constable roles and secondly, the provision of rental accommodation in lieu of a full relocation in limited circumstances. It is too early to fully assess the impact of those initiatives and CPOSA will work with the NPCC to provide a full analysis of both provisions.

This section examines the evidence presented by members on mobility, both for lateral transfer and on promotion or for higher pay.

Within fig. 20, the willingness of members to apply for a role on a level transfer is examined. The results are broadly similar to those seen last year and shows that 11% of respondents would be willing to transfer for no additional pay so long as there is provision of rental accommodation.

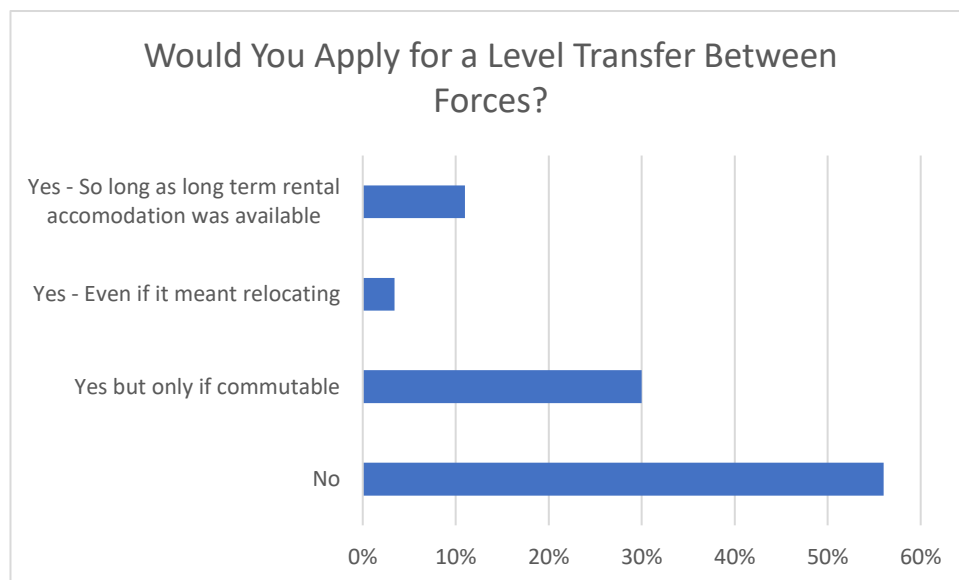


Fig. 20 Level transfer between forces.

Likewise, the response from members with a willingness to move on promotion (see fig.21) is broadly similar to last year. It saw 21% stating they would move if there were the availability of rental accommodation.

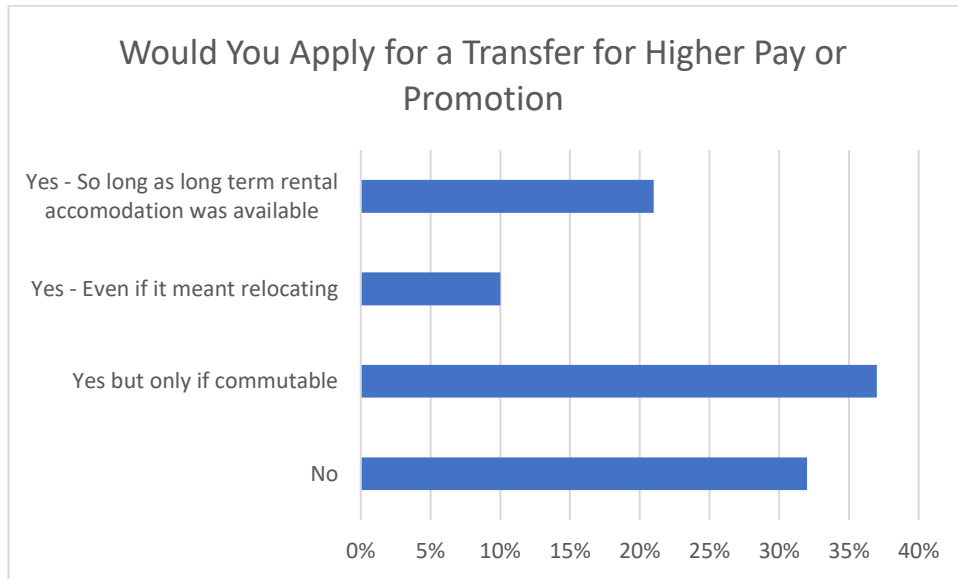


Fig.21 Mobility on promotion or for higher pay.

Members have consistently highlighted other matters which are impact factors when deciding whether to seek promotion in other forces. These include:

- Settled family life.
- Caring commitments.
- Family/childcare commitments.
- Concern over leadership and political governance of the force.

Assistant Chief Constable Pay

The role of assistant chief constable is the first within the police chief officer pay structure. This section will illustrate that through incremental pay and reward changes to the chief superintendent rank, the pay gap between chief superintendent and assistant chief constable has reduced dramatically from 15% in 2019 to 5.82% in 2025. It is unlikely the impact of these changes were fully understood on implementation of each, but they have now had such a cumulative impact that they warrant immediate action.

The NPCC stated last year that our request for ACCs to be included within the scope of an on-call allowance should wait for the work on pay reform that had been agreed after the chief constable and deputy chief constable pay reform. From recent discussions, it is apparent that the work to review ACC pay has been deprioritised and once again, we feel this is because of the small numbers we represent of the overall workforce. We also disagree with the NPCC position that any decision should wait for assessment of the impact of the White Paper. The Government's own information suggests any such changes are unlikely to be seen for many years and this matter is a critical issue that could be easily resolved. We believe this section provides significant evidence as to why immediate change is required to fix a problem that has been created by incremental change and where the overall effect on the pay structures may not have been understood.

Bearing in mind the latest NPCC position, CPOSA is also reasserting the need for the on-call allowance to be broadened to include ACCs, whilst we wait for the full ACC pay review.

As of September 2025, there are three pay points.

- Pay Point 1 - £125,188
- Pay Point 2 - £133,115
- Pay Point 3 - £141,050

In 2018 and 2019, the pay differential between the top pay point of chief superintendent and the first pay point of an ACC was 15.01%; by 2025, this had reduced to 5.82% by incremental changes to the way superintending ranks are paid against those of police chief officers. The first change came about as a result of the amendments to Police Regulations in 2021 which introduced the ability to pay Temporary Variable Pay (TVP) to those in superintending ranks and below. Using modelled data⁷ this reduced the pay differential between the two ranks by 2.54% to 12.56%. This was further reduced to 12.31% in 2022 as a direct consequence of the flat rate pay award of £1,900. In 2023, PRRB’s recommendation to increase the top rate for chief superintendents over two years was agreed. This was whilst chief police officers were part of PRRB and further reduced the pay differential by 3.08% in the first year and 2.77% in the second, reducing the gap between the two ranks to 6.45%. The pay differential in the 2025 pay settlement between those within the remit of PRRB and those within that of SSRB, alongside the increase of 40% in on call allowance has meant a further reduction of 0.64%. These are illustrated in fig.22 below.

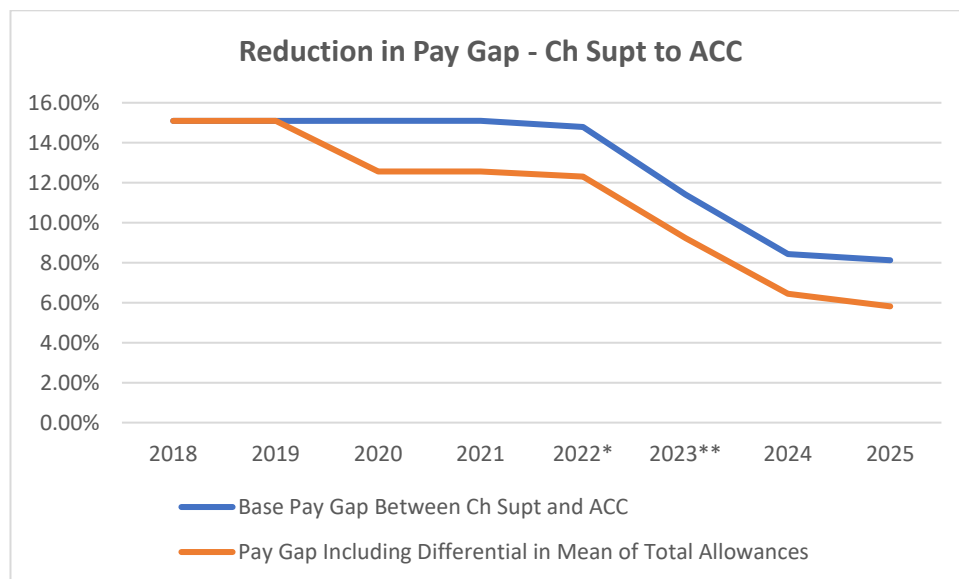


Fig. 22 Reduction in Pay Gap – Ch Supt to ACC.

I must highlight that all of the above is modelled on a mean average of the total allowances paid which were £4,317 for a chief superintendent at pay point 3 and £2,248 for an ACC on the first pay point. In fact, 105 (63%) of the 168 chief superintendents within the data set

⁷ Home Office Census 2024/25 and for 2025, an additional uplift of £10 per day on call for 1 week in 8,

had payments of allowances in excess of the mean average on pay point 3. CPOSA members will witness those whose pay differential is far less than the average when compared to their own if they sit at the bottom of the ACC pay scale.

Colleagues will also have seen the recent uplift in pay of assistant chief constables in Police Scotland.

In 2004, the Official and Staff Sides of the PNBS reached agreement on assistant chief constable (ACC) pay⁸, as follows:

The three point pay scale, from 1 April 2024 is as follows:

Pay Point 1	£151,816
Pay Point 2	£157,700
Pay Point 3	£161,231

Whilst we recognise the size of role and geographic spread of responsibility will have had an impact on the pay determination, it is sobering to see that the highest rate for an assistant chief constable in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is over £10,000 less than the lowest rate for the same rank across the border in Scotland.

The strength of feeling of those within the ACC rank is significant and the need for immediate change is well made out when considering how little the pay differential is and the thoughts of those within chief officer roles. Box 9 below shows a selection of the comments made.

⁸ PNBS Circular – 2025-03 Senior Officers Pay

Free Text Comments by Members on the Pay Differential between Chief Superintendent and Assistant Chief Constable

- There should not be pay progression points for ACCs.
- for the responsibility in comparison to Chief Supt the difference is not significant. With extra tax and allowances being removed it is less desirable .
- The gap between Chief Supt and ACC has reduced considerably in the last year, despite the difference in qualification and workload. The salary no longer reflects the large step up to be a Chief officer.
- Having been a C Supt very recently for a number of years the C Supt pay is very close to an ACC. The C Supt pay needed increasing which has been done and I believe proportionate, however having experienced both the demands in and out of working hours is more than a C Supt- and the pay sees very little differential - 5 pounds a day.
- The gap between Ch Supt and ACC is now very narrow, inflation eroding pay awards.
- Having taken promotion 4 months ago from a senior chief superintendent who is compensated for on call duties and disturbance to family during gold on calls which can be physically punishing through lack of sleep and then completing a full day of work, the hourly rate for an ACC reduces the reward for the risk and responsibility. The base rate is not much more than ch supt. The hours worked, including late evening events and weekend events to represent the force and chief constable has significant impact on family life. We all pay the highest levels of tax, so at the end of the month it feels the current base salary for a newly promoted ACC of a couple of hundred pounds more, is one that may well not be worth the leap- as the cost of living rises for us all. I understand there has been a delay in a pay award review for chief officers so this may rectify the not very significant pay gap between an ACC and ch supt.
- I am temporarily promoted and the difference between my current salary and my previous salary as a ch supt is marginal considering the additional responsibilities I have.
- ACC pay has completely lost touch with DCC/CC pay. My allowances have been reduced by 50%. If you add the on call allowances on to most Chief Supers pay - they now are better paid than ACC. I work nearly 100 days per year on call, I work one weekend in 4 - doing 7 full days and nights on call. I manage the highest end of threat, harm and risk but feel I am not properly valued through pay and allowances.
- When compared to the Chief Superintendent (Point 3) and DCC base salary current ACC base pay does not of itself reflect the risks and responsibilities of the role nor does it reflect properly the relative risks and responsibilities of the role compared to both DCC and Chief Superintendent. The gap is too narrow between ACC and Chief Superintendent and too great between ACC and DCC.

Box. 9 Comments regarding the pay differential.

Last year CPOSA sought to broaden the on-call allowance to ACCs. The NPCC did not support CPOSA’s view and instead believed that any changes should be made through a review. Due to the stalled full review, CPOSA seeks to re-present the case for the allowance to be paid to ACCs. We are also going to ask the NPCC to review their position with regards to deputy chief constables and chief constables.

The last substantive survey of members on this topic took place in 2023. The NPCC recently asked CPOSA to put a similar question set to members but with the addition of a question that sought to understand the addition burden over core hours.

Fig. 23 below shows the number of days a month that are worked on call. As you can see, the vast majority of members work between 0-14 days on call. It must be remembered that those days will include rostered rest days. When looking at ACCs, 44 or 52% work up to seven days on call with 34 or 40% working between 8 and 14 days on call.

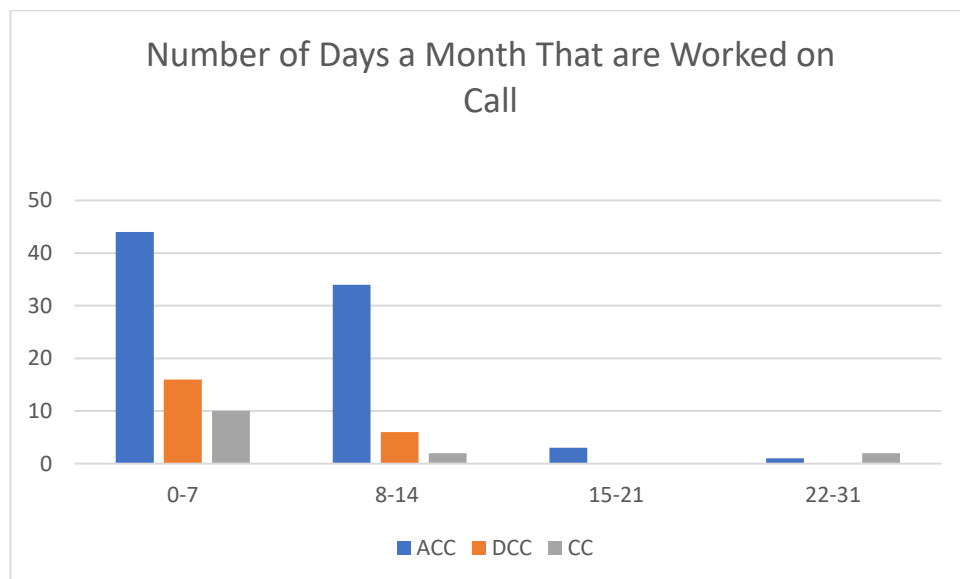


Fig. 23 Days worked on call

The question sought by the NPCC over and above the previous question set was to understand the hours worked by being on call. In other words, the hours worked as a direct result of being on call outside of core hours. When examining fig. 24, below, you can see the impact is significant. Whilst it again looks at all ranks, I will concentrate on the results

for ACCs. As you can see, 40% of ACCs worked over 15 hours, with 11% working in excess of 20. It must be recognised that the work being undertaken whilst working on call involves some of the highest risk and complexity. It is when you consider both the time spent alongside complexity and risk, that you recognise the weakness of the comparators the NPCC used, such as executives of utility companies, who will not have the same volume or risk to deal with. Policing is truly unique and sometimes the solutions may not be the 'norm' when considering allowances to take account of the addition risk and burden such work brings.

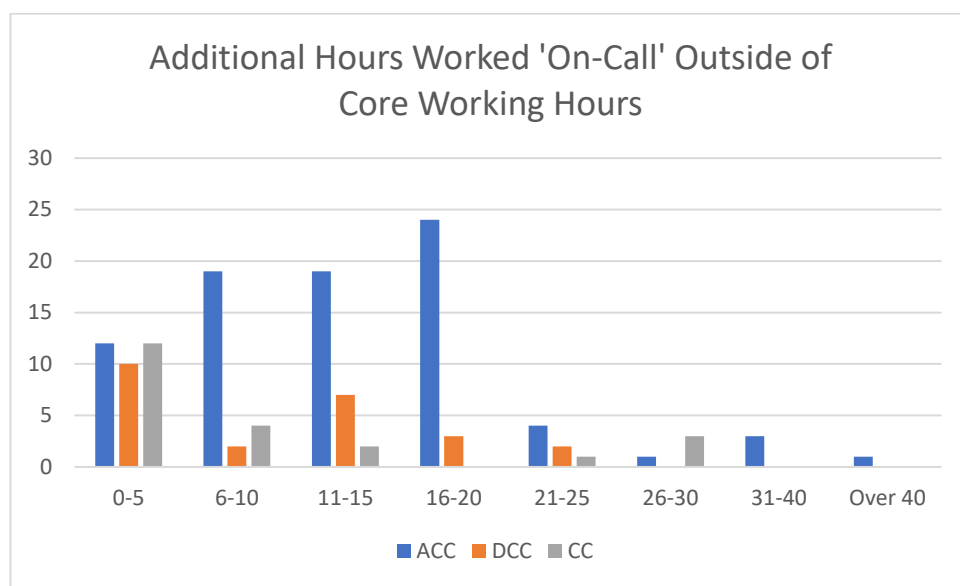


Fig. 24 Hours worked outside of core working

Finally, we asked members whether they feel chief officers should have parity with the superintending ranks when considering the on-call allowance. Fig. 25 shows the results to the question, with 95% of ACCs saying they should, with 96% of deputy chief constables and 31% of chief constables agreeing likewise.

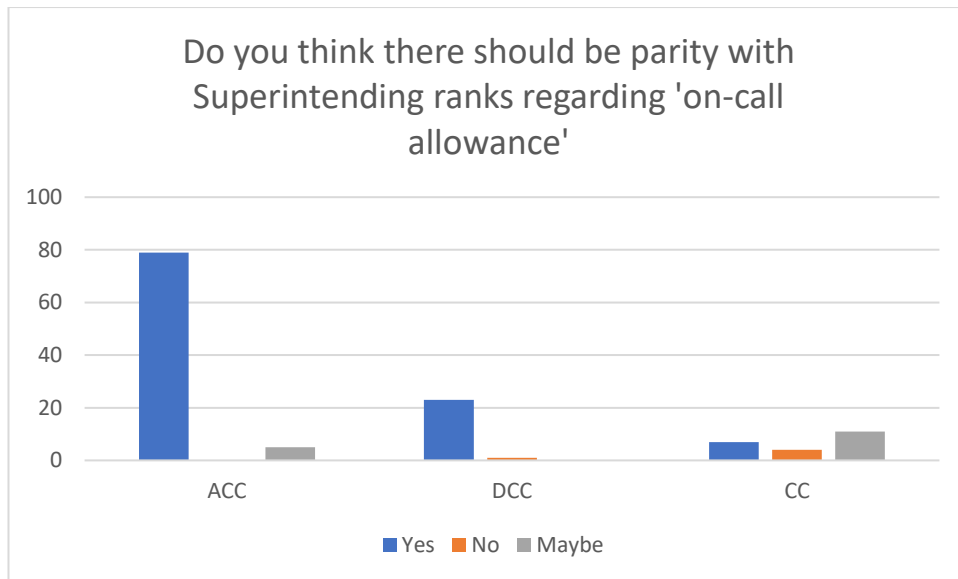


Fig. 25 Should chief officer get the on-call allowance

CPOSA agrees that chief superintendents made out the case that the complexity and risk within their ranks had increased and warranted the uplift of their pay. However, this is also demonstrable in the ACC rank, and the evidence is clear that the added risk and responsibility of an ACC warrants a far greater gap than that currently seen. This can be achieved through the removal of pay point 1 for ACCs alongside the payment of the on call allowance to that rank.

Last year's pay award differential, whilst small, is the latest incremental change that has led to the degradation of the attraction and reward of the most junior chief officer role. CPOSA has failed to get reassurance that a full pay review is going to be undertaken at the earliest opportunity. As a consequence, CPOSA asks that pay point 1 is removed in September 2026 and that the on-call allowance is broadened to include ACCs.

By removing pay point 1, you would increase the gap between the top rate superintendent and the lowest rate ACC to 12.52%, which, whilst it is still some 2.49 behind what it was, would recognise the complexity and risk a chief officer role attracts.

Recommendation 2: That ACC paypoint 1 is removed from Sept 2026.

Recommendation 3: That the scope of the on-call allowance is broadened to include ACCs.

We have provided this section to the NPCC and we hope they will be able to give any observations at the oral evidence stage of the SSRB process.

Rest Days

Prior to 2019, chief police officers' annual leave and rest days were ill defined. Following negotiation between the Home Office, the APCC, NPCC and CPOSA annual leave was included within Annex O of Police Regulations. At the same time, rest days were defined within Annex H and aligned to the entitlement as those of superintending ranks.

Annex H states:

Where the exigencies of duty have precluded:

- (1) the allowance of a day's leave on a public holiday, or*
- (2) the grant in any month of eight monthly leave days,*

to a member of a police force of the rank of superintendent or above he shall, during the next twelve month and so far as the exigencies of duty permit, be allowed or (as the case may be) granted a day's leave in lieu of any such day not allowed or granted.

Since that date, the accrual and loss of rest days has become a significant issue. The NPCC has engaged with CPOSA on the recommendations outlined in Box 10 below and CPOSA supports the recommendations made.

NPCC Recommendations Regarding Rest Days

Recommendation: Implement a cap for RDIL to be held and carried forward to the next year, to be implemented by 31 March 2030 and transitioned to, from April 2027.

Recommendation: Payment to be provided at plain time, for days not taken within 12 months, above the RDIL cap, to be set annually through the transition period.

Recommendation: To remove the determination, which enables a rest day in lieu to be taken within 24 months under exceptional circumstances.

Box 10 NPCC recommendations regarding rest days.

The following charts illustrate the management of worked rest days. Fig. 26 shows the number of days owed to police chief officers as a consequence of them working on a scheduled rest day. This will be for both planned operations and for those rest days where members are 'called out' due to being on call. It shows that 81 of those members surveyed (52%) have in excess of ten days owing to them, with 19 of those members surveyed (12%) having in excess of 30 days outstanding.

The Affinity Health Survey highlights the impact of demands on members' mental health and time off is seen as one of the most important factors in allowing people to 'recharge'. The survey outlines that 68% of members surveyed are required to be on call on their rest days. It is clear from these figures that many members then find themselves with cancelled rest days and with very limited opportunity to reschedule them.

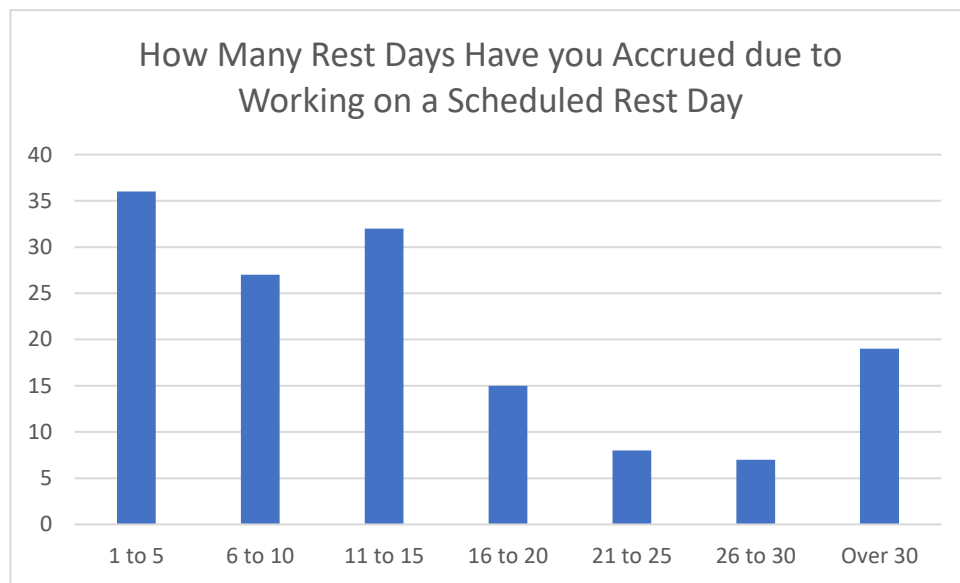


Fig.26 Rest days accrued.

Fig. 27 shows that 78 (50%) of members surveyed have not been able to take the rescheduled rest days within 12 months. All other ranks can extend the 12 month period to 24 months in 'exceptional circumstances'.

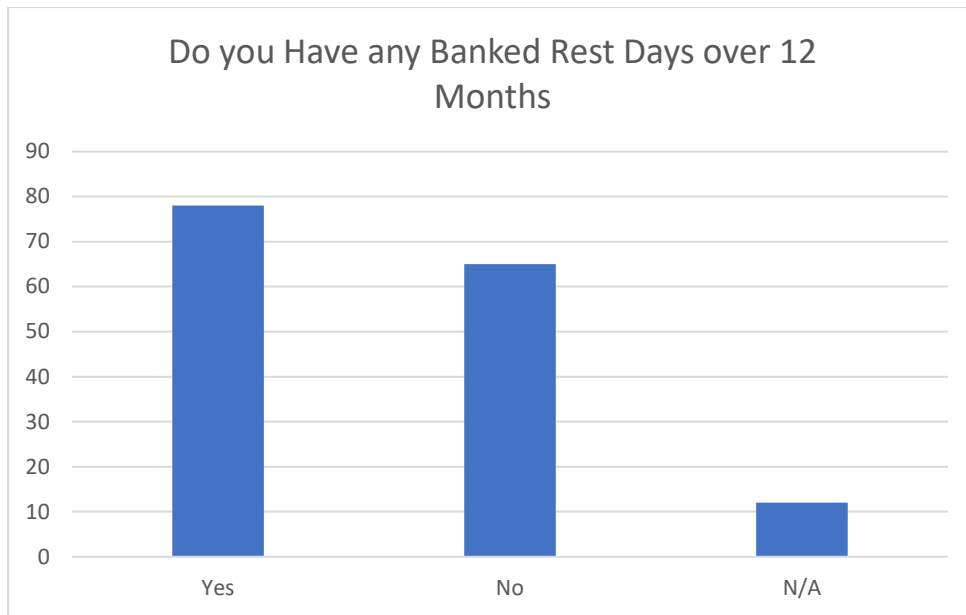


Fig. 27 Rest days banked over 12 months.

However, chief officers cannot and we know that 35% of our members surveyed have 'lost' their rest days as they have been unable to take them within the statutory period (see fig. 28).

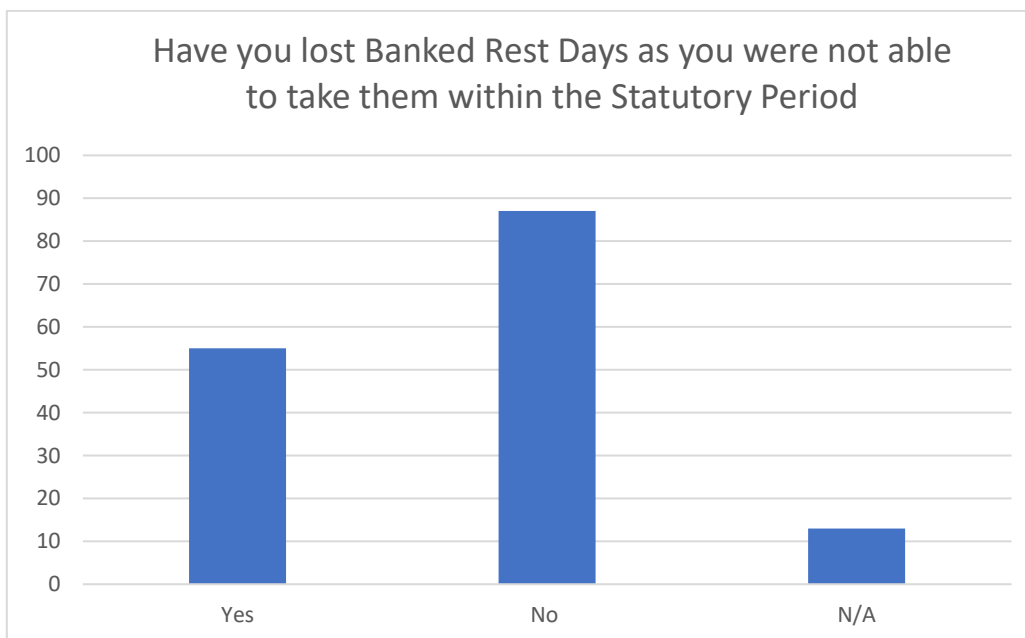


Fig. 28 Rest days lost as not taken in time

CPOSA believes the proposals made by the NPCC should be applied across all ranks to enable the effective management of rest days. We believe the financial impact on the

organisation of failing to enable the taking of accrued rest days will focus the mind and pressure the organisation to facilitate the taking of the rest days owed. This will achieve our primary aim, which is to ensure our members get their down time to have a positive effect on mental health and wellbeing.

Where the primary aim is not achieved and the taking of rest days within the statutory period has not been possible, it is only right that members should be recompensed for the time they have spent working over and above their core duty days.

Recommendation 4: That the rest day proposals the NPCC have placed before the PRRB and SSRB for all ranks are applied to chief officers.

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: CPOSA believes that chief officers should not receive any less of a percentage pay award than the rest of the service. CPOSA believes the pay award for September 2026 should be fully funded and be at least 4 % across all ranks within PRRB and SSRB with an additional 0.3% uplift for chief officers to recalibrate the 2025 pay award differential

Recommendation 2: That ACC paypoint 1 is removed from Sept 2026.

Recommendation 3: That the scope of the on-call allowance is broadened to include ACCs.

Recommendation 4: That the rest day proposals the NPCC have placed before the PRRB and SSRB for all ranks are applied to chief officers.

Results of the CPOSA Members Survey 2025

255 responses | 65.9% | Spread of region, force bandings, role, tenure and age

Introduction

Last year, Affinity Health's wellbeing survey of CPOSA members highlighted significant concern over chief officer health, wellbeing, our work environment and relationships with those who govern and inspect us.

Such was our concern, we undertook a 'pulse survey' during the late summer the results are shown within this briefing note and illustrates both the intense impact of the pressures within the chief officer ranks and also the dedication and commitment of our members.

Of particular concern following the pulse survey, is the continuing deterioration of members mental health, with members reporting greater levels of depression and anxiety. In addition, the relationship between members and those that govern policing shows a worsening position since last year. A gender disparity is seen within some of the areas examined, with female members showing higher levels of depression, anxiety and more of them concerned over their relationships with PCCs and within the work environment.

Good News

There has been a small increase in the percentage of respondents feeling they can switch off 'Often' or 'Sometimes' (up from 56% to 58%, 2% increase in reporting "Often").

Sickness absence has reduced slightly compared to 2024 (3% reduction), mostly concentrated to 1-5 days of absence with a 2% reduction in those reporting being absent for more than 20 days.

Similar levels of provision for regular health screening (26% provided), and a slight increase in provision of easily accessible health advice (69% provided, 6% increase from 2024).

Improvements in 5 of the 7 factors that contribute to stress with reductions ranging from 1% to 13%, (although pension scheme changes and tax liabilities were the only 2 to see increases of 1% and 3% respectively).

72% feel meetings they attend are productive and have purpose, continuing the trend of improvement for this (4% increase from 2024).

Slight increase in members feeling they have the necessary HR guidance to manage difficult people issues (77%, 3% increase from 2024).

Culture

Markers of a culture that is 'always on' have stayed stable or increased slightly from the CPOSA 2018 and CPOSA 2021 surveys.

49% agreed that the **force expects them to be at work and/or answer the phone at unreasonable times** (the same as 2024 and down 1% from 2021).

Too many members are expected to perform on call duties on their rest days with 68% agreeing they are expected to do so, slightly down from 70% in 2024.

36% agree that they **only receive work phone calls at all times of the day and night when they are on call** (down 1% from 2021).

50% agree that **the force expects me to be at work and/or answer the phone at unreasonable times** (up 1% from 2024).

There was some indication fewer respondents feel their Chief Officer colleagues stop pressure they are under from being passed on (6% reduction from 2024 to 70%).

Member Wellbeing

Just 42% of respondents were classed as showing 'normal' levels of **symptoms for anxiety** (worse than previous years - 47% in 2024, 73% in 2021 and 61% in 2018). Moderate (21%) and severe (10%) levels of **anxiety are both higher than in 2024, 2021 and 2018**, using the HADS measure.

Levels of depression are also higher than in previous years. 75% are classed as showing 'normal' levels of depression (74% in 2024, 82% in 2021 and 79% in 2018). Mild (16%) is slightly lower than in 2024 (20%), moderate (6%) and severe (3%) are **all higher than they have previously been (2024 was the previous highest).**

Changes in levels of depression and anxiety were more pronounced for females than males where 64% of female respondents show mild, moderate or severe symptoms of anxiety compared to 55% of male respondents. 27% of female respondents show mild, moderate or severe symptoms of depression compared to 25% of male respondents.

It is noteworthy that 73% of members reported that **HMICFRS inspections have had a negative impact on their wellbeing** (38% slight negative, 35% negative, up from 72% in 2024).

Demand, Working Hours and Work-Life Balance

Work demands remain at the very high levels seen in previous years. 98% say that **the role places them under a high level of demand** (compared to 99% in 2024, 97% in 2021 and 99% in 2018). One positive change is that people still felt that the meetings they attended were productive and had real purpose (72% compared to 68% in 2024, 69% in 2021 and 62% in 2018).

33% of respondents feel their **demands have risen by an excessive amount** (the same as 2024 and up from 28% in 2021), 51% feel they **have increased by a manageable amount** (up slightly from 51% in 2024 but down from 58% in 2021) and 16% feel they have stayed the same (down from 17% in 2024 but up from 14% in 2021).

Increased job demands was **again the third highest area of concern this year** (behind the impact of external influences, such as inspection regimes or political interference and the decrease in pension provision, the same areas as in 2024, 2021 and 2018).

Compared to 2024, there is a slightly higher percentage of respondents reporting typically working 40-50 hours per week (6% increase) and 7% fewer reporting typically working 50-60 hours.

Financial Concerns

77% of respondents cited **pension scheme changes as a significant contributor to stress**, up 2% from 2024, 19% from 2021 and 25% from 2018.

86% cited **tax liabilities as a significant contributor to stress** (83% in 2024, 76% in 2021 and 73% in CPOSA 2018).

46% of members reported being **more worried about their personal finances** than they were a year ago, a 3% increase from 2024 and a 21% increase from 2021.

77% reported being **concerned that they will have to work for longer** due to changes in pension arrangements, an increase of 5% from 2024 and up 25% from 2021.

The decrease in pension provision was again noted in the top two areas of particular concern by respondents.

Investigations

Of the 20 members who reported being or have been under investigation by the IOPC:-

40% rated the support provided by the organisation as "Effective" or "Very effective" in 2025, down from 50% in 2024.

80% of respondents rated the support provided by CPOSA as "Effective" or "Very effective" in 2025, compared to 78% in 2024.

Inspections

73% reported inspections carried out by HMICFRS in the last 3 years have had a "negative" or "slightly negative" impact on their wellbeing in 2025, compared to 72% in 2024.

67% of respondents agreed that the PCC abides by the 8 high level principles within the Accountability Guidance when holding the Chief Constable to account during the HMICFRS inspection and upon subsequent publication in 2025, down from 72% in 2024.

Issues relating to the Line Manager

For both those with a Non-PCC line manager and those held accountable to a PCC/Mayor/Policing Body, agreement that line managers show supportive behaviours rather than bullying behaviours (e.g. unfair criticism, verbal insults, misuse of power) has decreased, particularly for Commissioners/Chief Constables/Deputy Commissioners/Assistant Commissioners.

- While agreement with the statements lowered slightly in 2025 compared to 2024 for those with a Non-PCC line manager, there were larger reductions in agreement percentages for those held accountable to a PCC/Mayor/Policing Body.

20% of male respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that their Non PCC Line Manager stops the pressure they are under from being passed on to those of use that work for them whereas 29% of female respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Note: The distinction between Non-PCC and PCC/Mayor/Policing Body as line managers was first made in 2024. Therefore, to allow for direct comparisons rather than comparisons against Line Managers in general, only 2024 comparisons have been made.

PCCs/Mayors/Policing Bodies

All 255 respondents were asked about the effectiveness of the PCC/Mayor/Policing Body in complying with the 8 principles. Effectiveness was rated as lower than in 2024 for all principles (decreases ranging from 3% to 10%). For all 8 principles, between just 49% and 53% said the PCC were “Effective” or “Very effective” with complying with that principle.

67% of respondents agreed that the PCC abides by the 8 high level principles within the Accountability Guidance when holding the Chief Constable to account during the HMICFRS inspection and upon subsequent publication in 2025, down from 72% in 2024. The proportion of those strongly disagreeing rose from 7% to 10% in 2025

Of the 42 respondents who indicated they were held accountable to a PCC/Mayor/Policing Body, just 52% reported they are ‘Confident’ or ‘Very confident’ that the PCC/Mayor or Policing Body would work with them to resolve issues at the earliest stage rather than using the powers they have to require them to resign or retire, a 5% reduction from 2024. **Notably, there was a 16% increase in responses of ‘Not at all confident’ (up from 8% in 2024 to 24% in 2025).**

64% of male respondents reported being ‘very confident’ or ‘confident’ that the PCC/Mayor or Policing Body would work with them to resolve issues at the earliest stage rather than using the powers they have to require them to resign or retire. Only 35% of female respondents reported being ‘confident’ that the PCC/Mayor or Policing Body would work with them to resolve issues at the earliest stage rather than using the powers they have to require them to resign or retire with 0% reporting being ‘very confident’.

Line Management Appreciation

- 69% of those held accountable to a PCC/Mayor/Policing Body agree that their line manager shows appreciation of them and the work they do, in comparison to 85% of those with a Non-PCC line manager.

16% of male respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that their Non PCC line manager shows appreciation of me and the work they do and 15% of females disagreed or strongly disagreed.

24% of male respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that their PCC line manager shows appreciation of me and the work they do whereas 42% of female respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Line Management Behaviours

- 67% of those held accountable to a PCC/Mayor/Policing Body agree that their line manager shows supportive behaviours rather than bullying behaviours, compared to 90% for those with a Non-PCC line manager.

9% of male respondents disagreed with the statement “My Non PCC line manager shows supportive behaviors rather than bullying behaviors (e.g. unfair criticism, intimidation, verbal insults, misuse of power)” where as 12% of females either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

20% of male respondents disagreed with the statement “My PCC line manager shows supportive behaviors rather than bullying behaviors (e.g. unfair criticism, intimidation, verbal insults, misuse of power)” where as 54% of female respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed (18% strongly disagreed).