



Home Office



# Police Workforce, England and Wales, 31 March 2016

Statistical Bulletin 05/16

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## Further information

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The biannual *Police Workforce, England and Wales* publication and other Home Office statistical releases are available from the [Statistics at Home Office](#) pages on the GOV.UK website.

The dates of forthcoming publications are pre-announced and can be found via the [GOV.UK publication hub](#).

For further information about the statistics in this publication, email [crimeandpolicestats@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:crimeandpolicestats@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk), or write to: Crime and Policing Analysis Unit, 1<sup>st</sup> floor Peel Building, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF

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This statistical bulletin is produced to the highest professional standards and is free from political interference. It has been produced by statisticians working in the Crime and Policing Analysis Unit in accordance with the Home Office's [statement of compliance](#) with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, which covers Home Office policy on revisions and other matters. The Chief Statistician, as Head of Profession, reports to the National Statistician with respect to all professional statistical matters and oversees all Home Office National Statistics products with respect to the Code, being responsible for their timing, content and methodology.

# Contents

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1	Key findings .....	4
2	Introduction .....	5
3	Headline workforce figures.....	7
4	Joiners and leavers .....	12
5	Frontline and local policing .....	20
6	Diversity .....	24
7	Officer Wellbeing .....	32
8	Revisions analysis.....	37

# 1 Key findings

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## **Total workforce**

- There were 200,922 workers employed by the 43 police forces in England and Wales on 31 March 2016, a decrease of 6,807 or 3.3% compared with a year earlier.
- The number of police officers fell by 2.5% compared with the year to March 2015, to 124,066. This was a larger fall than the previous two years, but not as large as the three years prior to that.

## **Joiners and Leavers**

- 4,735 officers joined the 43 police forces in England and Wales in 2015/16, accounting for 3.8% of all officers. This represented a fall from the previous two years.
- The officer wastage rate (the proportion of officers leaving the police, excluding transfers) in 2015/16 was 5.5%, higher than the previous year and continuing the upward trend seen since 2009/10.
- Dismissals (up by 5%) and voluntary resignations (up by 11%) increased compared with 2014/15, continuing the upward trend seen for both in the last five years.

## **Frontline and Local Policing**

- Frontline and local policing figures have been revised following a change in the framework and model used to collect the data. For further details please see chapter 5.
- The number of officers in frontline roles has fallen, from 110,853 in the year to March 2015 to 106,411 in the year to March 2016.
- However, over this period the proportion of officers in frontline roles has remained stable, at 93.4%.
- The number of officers in local policing roles fell by 6.0% in the year to March 2016 compared with the previous year, to 57,415. The proportion of officers in these roles also fell, from 51.5% to 50.4%.

## **Diversity**

- 5.9% of all officers were Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) as at 31 March 2016, a higher proportion than any of the previous ten years. 12.1% of joiners were BME, compared with 4.4% of leavers.
- 28.6% of all officers were female, again the highest proportion in the last ten years. 31.2% of joiners were female, while 22.8% of leavers were.
- Both BME and female officers were more commonly found at constable rank than higher ranks.

## **Officer Wellbeing**

- As at 31 March 2016, there were 2,429 police officers on long-term sick leave. This was an increase of 11.5% compared with the previous year, and accounted for around 2.0% of all police officers in England and Wales.
- As at 31 March 2016, there were 3,715 police officers on recuperative duties, and 4,933 on adjusted/restricted duties in England and Wales. This accounted for 3.2% and 4.1% of officers respectively.

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## 2 Introduction

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### 2.1 General introduction

This release contains statistics on the numbers of police officers, police staff, police community support officers (PCSOs), designated officers<sup>1</sup>, traffic wardens and special constables in post on 31 March 2016 in the 43 police forces of England and Wales and the British Transport Police.

The workforce figures in this release are all provided on a full-time equivalent (FTE) basis unless indicated otherwise. FTE figures are a count of police workers that takes account of part-time working practices. For example, a full-time employee is counted as 1.0 and a part-time employee who works 70% of 'normal' hours is counted as 0.7. It accounts for contracted hours, rather than actual hours worked, which might include overtime. Some figures on a headcount basis are available in the data tables available alongside this release.

Unless otherwise stated, total workforce figures quoted in the bulletin include those on career breaks or other forms of long term absence, and include those seconded in to police forces from other forces or central services (e.g. the Home Office, the National Crime Agency).

The data in this release can be found in the ['Police Workforce, England and Wales, 31 March 2016'](#) tables.

### 2.2 New content in this release

This release contains several new areas that have not been featured in previous police workforce publications:

- More information about the diversity of the workforce, including trends over time and the diversity of joiners and leavers ([chapter 6](#))
- The routes by which workers joined and left the police ([chapter 4](#))
- The length of service of officers ([chapter 4](#)) – **Official Statistics**
- The number and proportion of officers on long term absence, including certified sick leave ([chapter 7](#))
- The number and proportion of officers on recuperative and adjusted duties ([chapter 7](#))

Some of these datasets have featured in Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) Value for Money profiles in previous years. The profiles can be found here:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/value-for-money-inspections/value-for-money-profiles/>

The datasets behind the profiles can be found here:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/data/value-for-money-data/>

### 2.3 National statistics status

Since the previous publication, these statistics have been assessed by the UK Statistics Authority to ensure that they continue to meet the standards required to be designated as National Statistics. The Home Office has worked closely with the UK Statistics Authority during this process, and as a result has made several changes to the '[User Guide to Police Workforce Statistics](#)', which is published

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<sup>1</sup> Designated officers are police staff (who are not police officers) employed to exercise specific powers that would otherwise only be available to police officers. Designation can be to one or more of four roles: police community support officer (PCSO), investigation officer, detention officer and escort officer. For further information please see the user guide.

alongside this release. This now contains further information on the quality and limitations of the various datasets, and the ways in which the Home Office engages with users of the statistics.

Following this process, the UK Statistics Authority has confirmed the continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics. This means that these statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, impartiality, quality and public value, and are fully compliant with the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#).

Given the known issues around the quality of the data, statistics in the section on 'Length of service' are designated as Official Statistics, and not National Statistics. Further information can be found in the relevant section (4.5).

### 2.4 Open Data Tables

Given the range of new content in this release, and a desire from users to be able to access trend data more easily, a range of [open data tables](#) have been released alongside this bulletin. These cover the following areas:

1. Total workforce strength
2. Joiners and leavers
3. Police officer long term absence
4. Ethnicity of the workforce

## 3 Headline workforce figures

### 3.1 Total police workforce

There were 200,922 workers employed by the 43 police forces in England and Wales on 31 March 2016 (table 3.1), a decrease of 6,807 or 3.3% compared with a year earlier. Of these police workers, 95.6% were available for duty (police workers in post, excluding long-term absentees such as those on career breaks, and maternity and paternity leave).

**Table 3.1: Police workforce, as at 31 March 2016, England and Wales<sup>1</sup>**

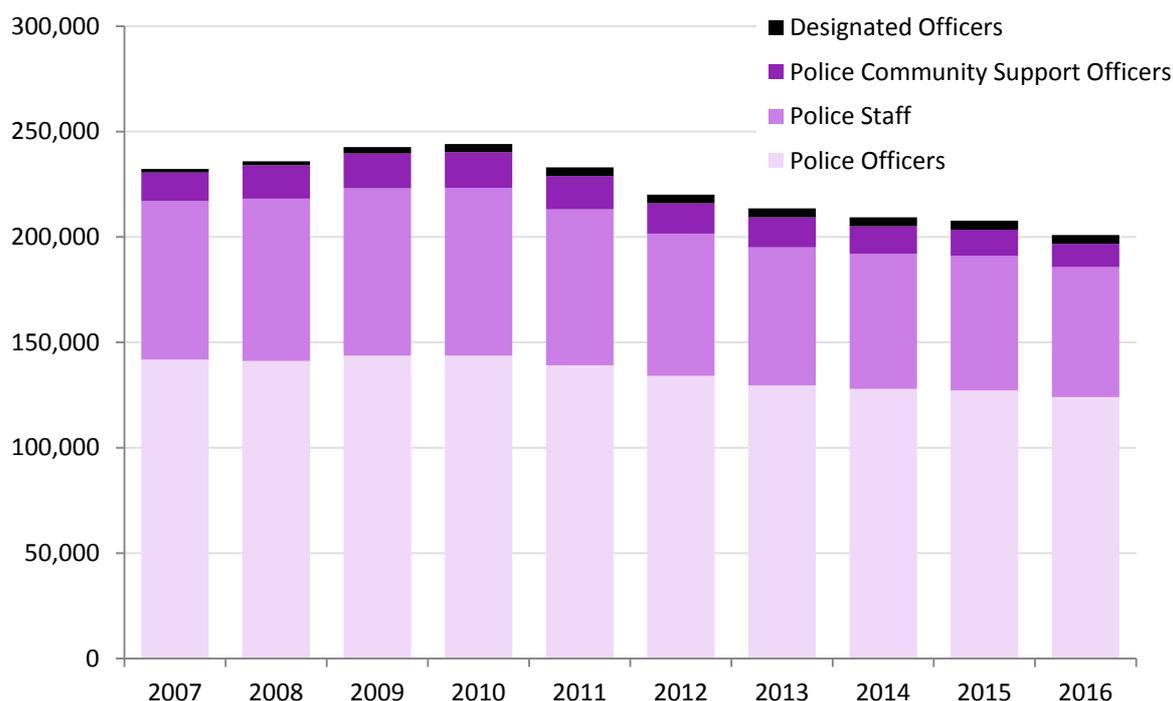
Rank	All staff (FTE)	Staff available for duty (FTE)
Chief officers <sup>1</sup>	196	194
Chief superintendents	321	318
Superintendents	801	794
Chief inspectors	1,581	1,549
Inspectors	5,692	5,567
Sergeants	18,839	18,277
Constables	96,637	92,080
<b>Total police officer ranks</b>	<b>124,066</b>	<b>118,779</b>
Police staff	61,668	58,807
Police community support officers	11,043	10,470
Designated officers	4,130	4,002
Traffic wardens	15	15
<b>Total police workforce</b>	<b>200,922</b>	<b>192,072</b>
<b>Special constabulary<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>15,996</b>	<b>-</b>

**Table notes**

1. Includes Assistant Chief Constables, Deputy Chief Constables and Chief Constables, and their equivalents in the Metropolitan Police and City of London Police. These police officers were previously referred to as Association of Chief Police Officer (ACPO) ranks; however on 1 April 2015 ACPO was replaced by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC).
2. Headcount only.

Figure 3.1 shows the long term trend in the police workforce numbers, broken down by worker type. Workforce numbers increased between 2007 and 2010, but have decreased in each year since. Data for older years can be found in the tables published alongside this release.

**Figure 3.1: Police workforce, by worker type, as at 31 March 2007 to 31 March 2016, England and Wales<sup>1</sup>**



**Chart notes**

1. Excludes traffic wardens due to their very small numbers, which reflect the dominant role of local authorities in parking control.

In addition to the 200,922 police workers, there were 15,996 special constables (headcount) in the 43 police forces in England and Wales on 31 March 2016. Special constables do not have contracted working hours so their numbers are provided on a headcount rather than a FTE basis.

As figure 3.1 shows, police officers made up the largest proportion of paid police workers as at 31 March 2016, at just under two thirds. Since 2010, there have been some changes to the composition of the police workforce, with the proportion of police officers increasing slightly (from 58.9% to 61.8% of the total workforce), while the proportion of staff (from 32.6% to 30.7%) and police community support officers (from 6.9% to 5.5%) has decreased.

### 3.2 Police Officers

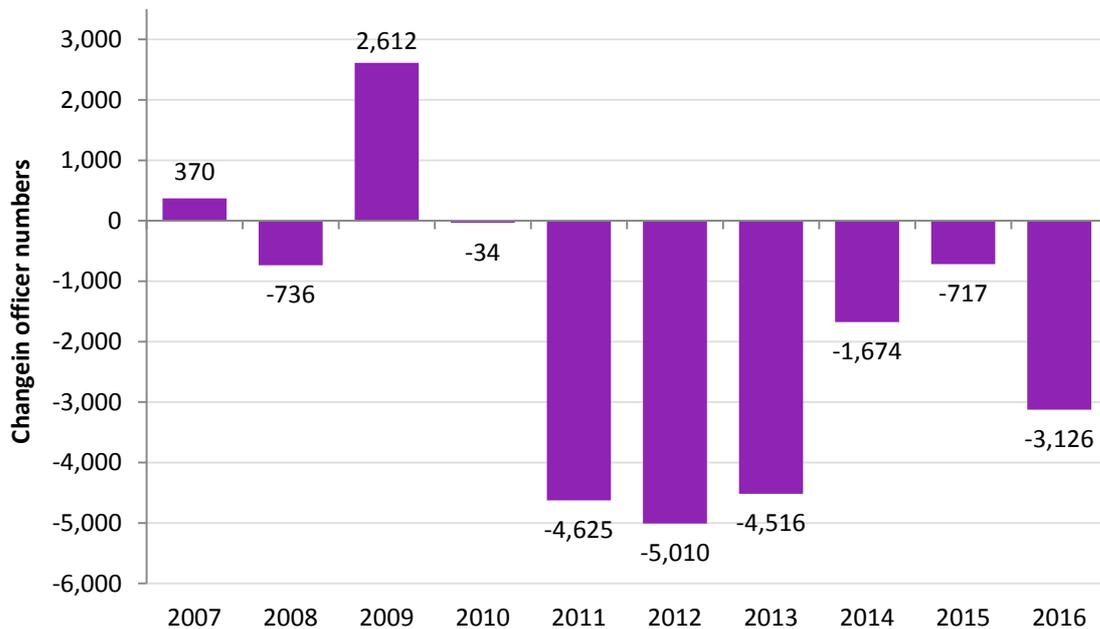
There were 124,066 police officers in the 43 police forces on the 31 March 2016. In addition, the British Transport Police employed 2,968 police officers and 296 police officers were seconded to central services<sup>2</sup>.

The number of police officers in the 43 forces decreased by 3,126 or 2.5% compared with a year earlier, continuing the decreasing trend seen since 2010.

Figure 3.2 shows that police officer numbers fluctuated between 2007 and 2010, and have decreased since. The size of the reductions has varied over time, with the largest falls seen between 2010 and 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Secondments to central services are secondments to central government, e.g. the Home Office, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), or the National Crime Agency (NCA).

**Figure 3.2: Change in the number of police officers, as at 31 March 2007 to 31 March 2016, compared with the previous 12 months, England and Wales**

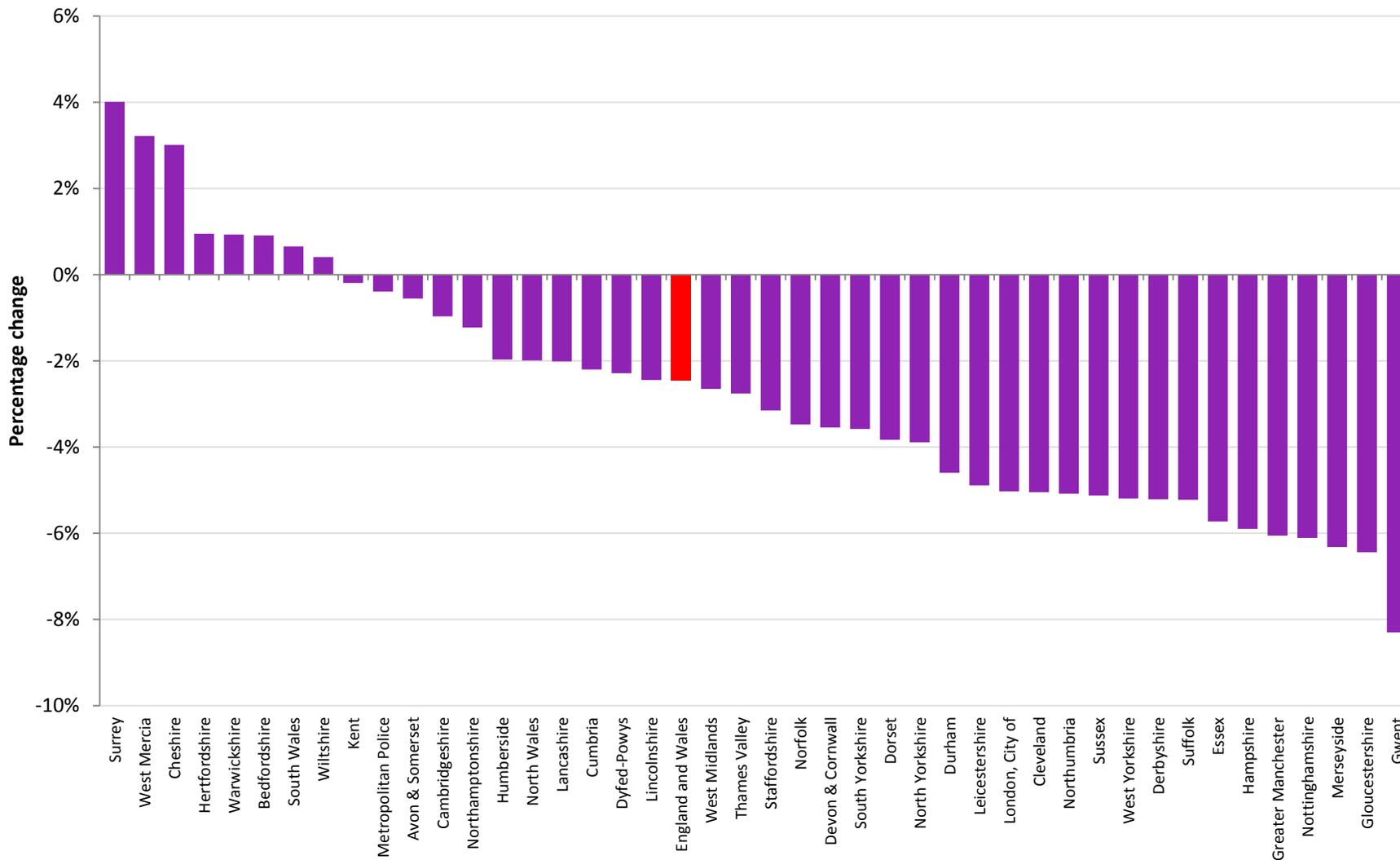


### 3.3 Officer number changes by force

Officer numbers rose in 8 forces (Figure 3.3) over the last twelve months. Of these forces, Surrey (increase of 75 officers or 4.0%) had the largest increase in percentage terms, while Gwent (decrease of 102 officers or 8.3%) had the largest decrease.

The Metropolitan Police had the most officers, accounting for just over a quarter (25.9%) of all officers across the 43 forces on 31 March 2016. The 8 metropolitan forces (City of London, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Metropolitan Police, Northumbria, South Yorkshire, West Midlands and West Yorkshire) comprised almost half (48.3%) of all officers.

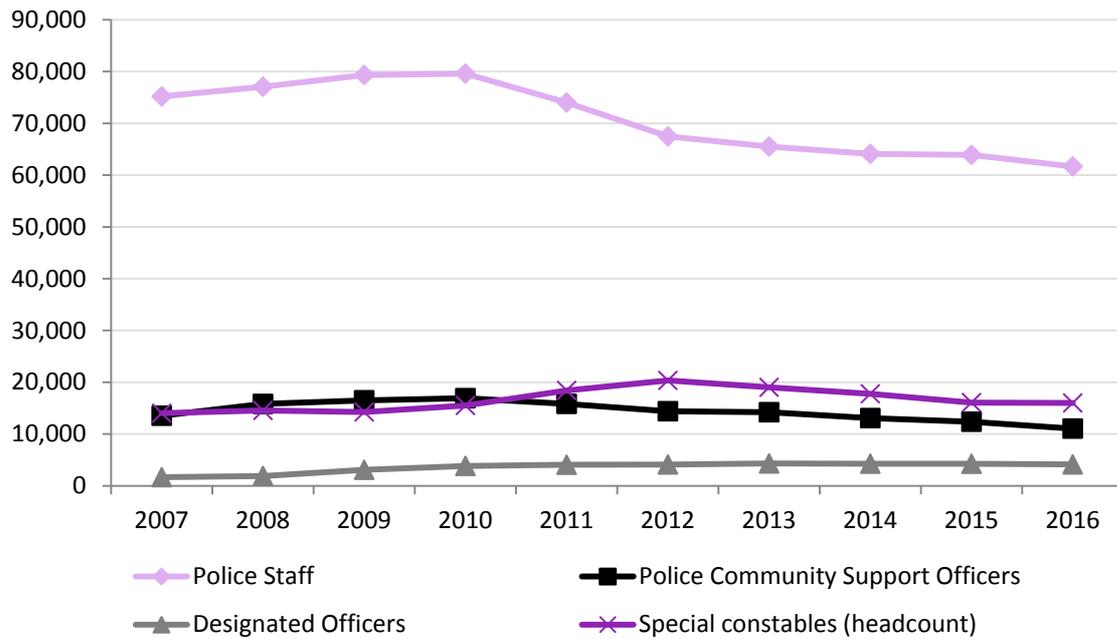
Figure 3.3: Change in police officer numbers, by force, 31 March 2015 to 31 March 2016, England and Wales



### 3.4 Other police workers

Figure 3.4 shows the trend in the number of other police worker types over the last 10 years. Police staff, police community support officer (PCSO) and designated officer numbers increased between 2007 and 2010. However, numbers of police staff (down 22.5%) and PCSOs (down 34.7%) have fallen sharply since then. Designated officer numbers have remained relatively stable in the last five years. Special constable numbers rose between 2007 and 2012, but have fallen since.

**Figure 3.4: Police staff, police community support officers, designated officers, and special constables, as at 31 March 2007 to 31 March 2016, England and Wales**



There were 15 traffic wardens in the 43 police forces on 31 March 2016, a decrease of 3 compared with a year earlier. The very small number of traffic wardens reflects the dominant role of local authorities in parking control.

## 4 Joiners and leavers

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### 4.1 Introduction

This section presents statistics on the number of joiners and leavers in the police, as well as information on the length of service of police officers. Data on joiners and leavers is based on the number of workers who joined and left the force during the financial year.

Joiner rates are calculated by dividing the number of joiners during the financial year by the total number of workers as at the end of the year (i.e. 31<sup>st</sup> March). This indicates how many of those employed by the force at the end of the year joined during the course of the year.

Wastage rates are calculated by dividing the number of leavers during the financial year by the total number of workers at the end of the previous year (i.e. as at 31 March). This indicates how many of those employed at the start of the current year left during the year.

These joiner and wastage rates are good indications of turnover within the police. However, some workers may join and leave the force during the same year, and so would not be included in the rates. This is particularly true for worker types with higher turnover, such as special constables. It is not possible, based on the aggregate data available, to calculate a more precise joiner/leaver rate, as individual workers cannot be tracked.

There are several routes via which officers can join or leave the police:

#### Joiners

- **Standard direct recruit** – individuals joining the police for the first time, including via Direct Entry, Fast Track and Police Now schemes. This also includes Police Community Support Officers and other police staff who are joining as a police officer.
- **Rejoining** – individuals who have previously left the force completely, but have since rejoined.
- **Previously special constable** – individuals who are joining as a police officer having previously been a special constable
- **Transfer** – individuals joining from one of the other 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales, or another non-Home Office force (e.g. the British Transport Police).

#### Leavers

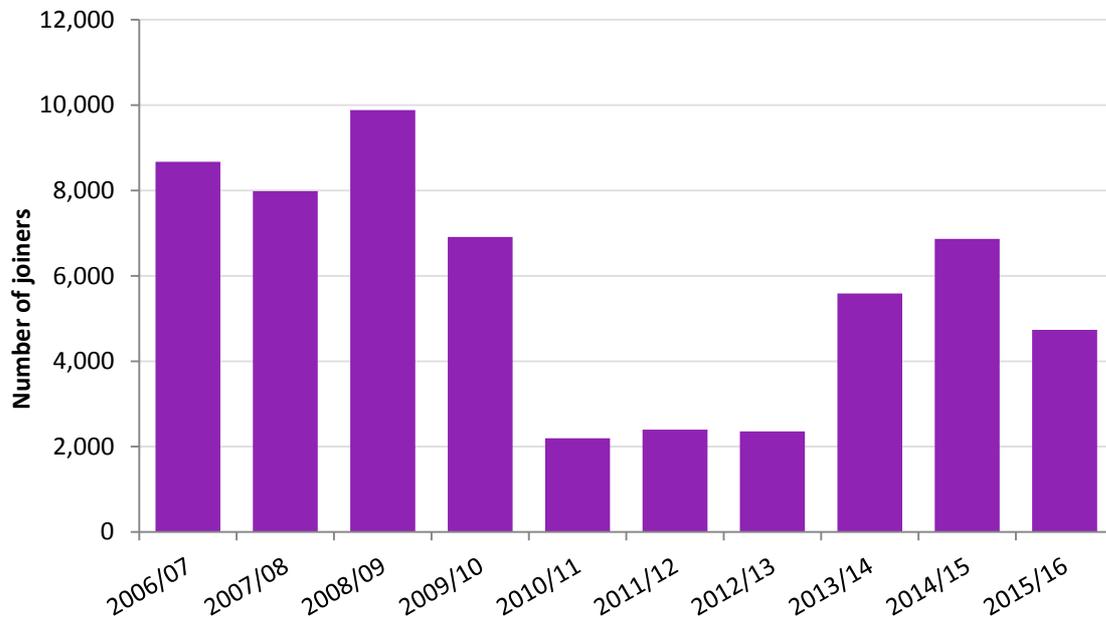
- **Death** – those who have died, either on active duty or otherwise.
- **Dismissal** – individuals who have been required to resign, made compulsorily redundant, or have had their contract terminated.
- **Medical retirement** – individuals who have retired on ill health grounds.
- **Normal retirement** – individuals who have retired, not on ill health grounds.
- **Transfer** – individuals leaving to join one of the other 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales, or a non-Home Office force (e.g. the British Transport Police).
- **Voluntary resignation** – individuals who resign or leave under voluntary exit schemes. Special constables who leave to join the regular constabulary, or have been inactive for more than 12 months, are included here.

More information on the types of police officer joiner and leaver can be found in the [‘User Guide to Police Workforce Statistics’](#).

## 4.2 Officer joiners

In 2015/16, 4,735 police officers joined the 43 police forces in England and Wales, accounting for 3.8% of officers. Excluding those who transferred from other forces, joiners accounted for 3.3% of all officers. This was a fall from the previous two years.

**Figure 4.1: Police officer joiners, 2006/07 to 2015/16, England and Wales**



### Chart notes

1. Includes those transferring in from other police forces.

In 2015/16, Surrey had the most joiners in percentage terms (11.6% of officers in the force, including transfers), followed by Cheshire (9.3%). Nottinghamshire and Merseyside (both 0.0%) had the fewest joiners in percentage terms.

As figure 4.2 shows, in the last ten years the majority (around 60-80%) of officer joiners have been new recruits joining as an officer for the first time. The proportion of joiners who were previously special constables rose sharply from 2011/12, before falling again in the last couple of years.

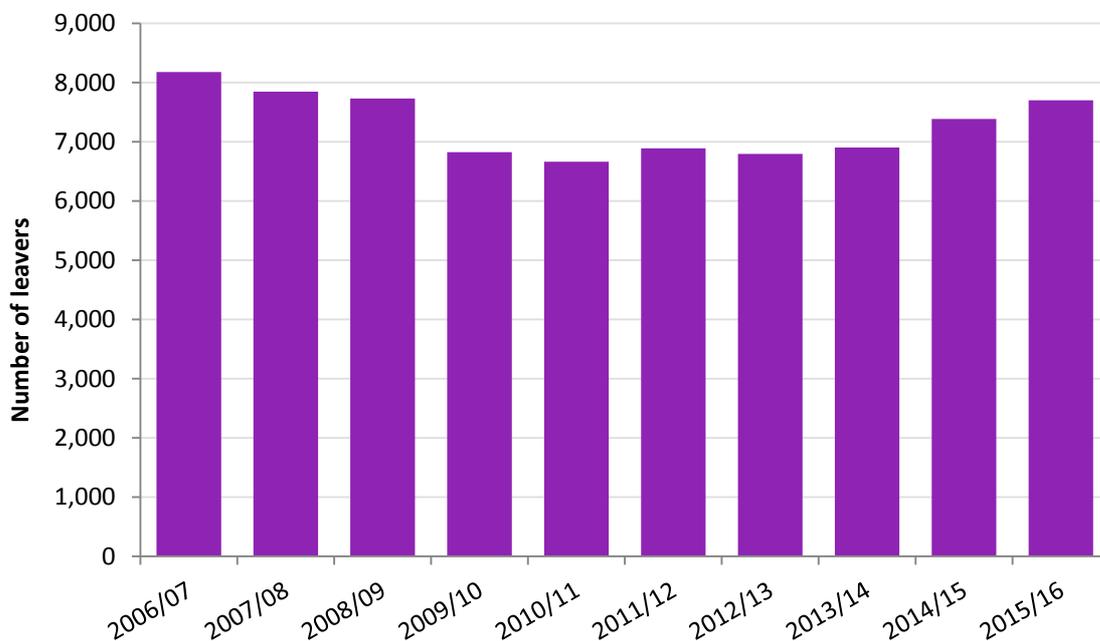
**Figure 4.2: Police officer joiners, by route of entry, 2006/07 to 2015/16, England and Wales**



### 4.3 Officer leavers

The number of officers leaving the police in each of the last ten years is shown in figure 4.3.

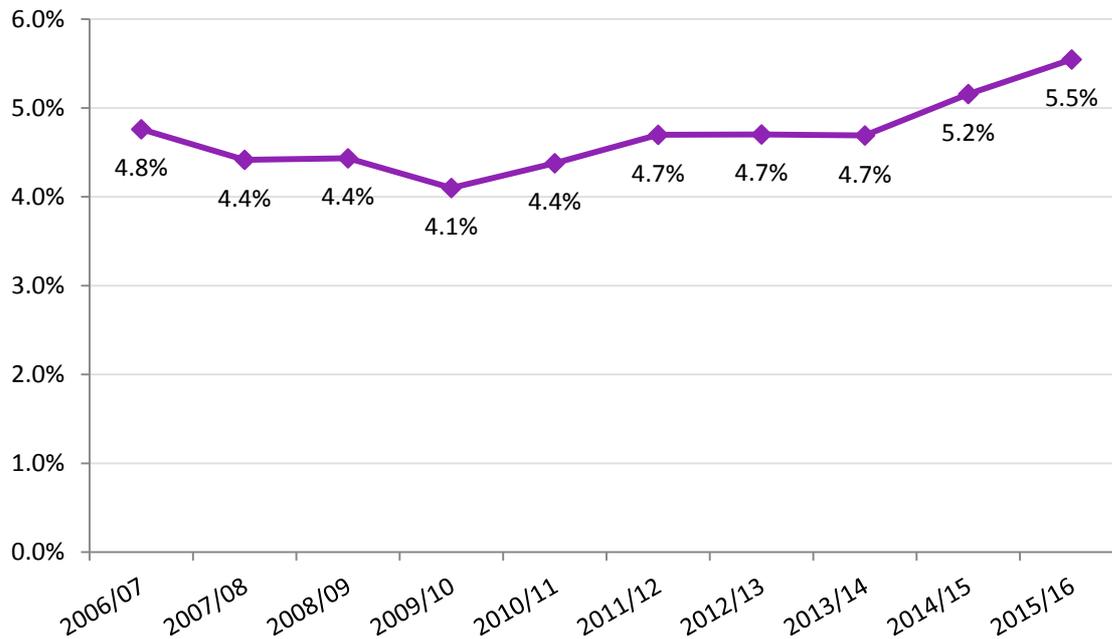
**Figure 4.3: Police officer leavers, 2006/07 to 2015/16, England and Wales**



**Chart notes**

1. Includes those transferring out to other police forces.

In 2015/16, 7,701 police officers left the 43 police forces, accounting for 6.1% of officers employed by the forces at the start of the year. Excluding transfers, this wastage rate was 5.5%. This was an increase from the previous year, continuing the upward trend seen since 2009/10 (figure 4.4).

**Figure 4.4: Police officer wastage rate (excluding transfers), 2006/07 to 2015/16, England and Wales****Chart notes**

1. Wastage rates are calculated by dividing the total number of leavers during the financial year by the total number of workers as at 31 March of the previous year.

In 2015/16, Gwent (11.0% of officers in the force, including transfers) and City of London (10.1%) had the most leavers in percentage terms. South Wales (4.3%) had the fewest.

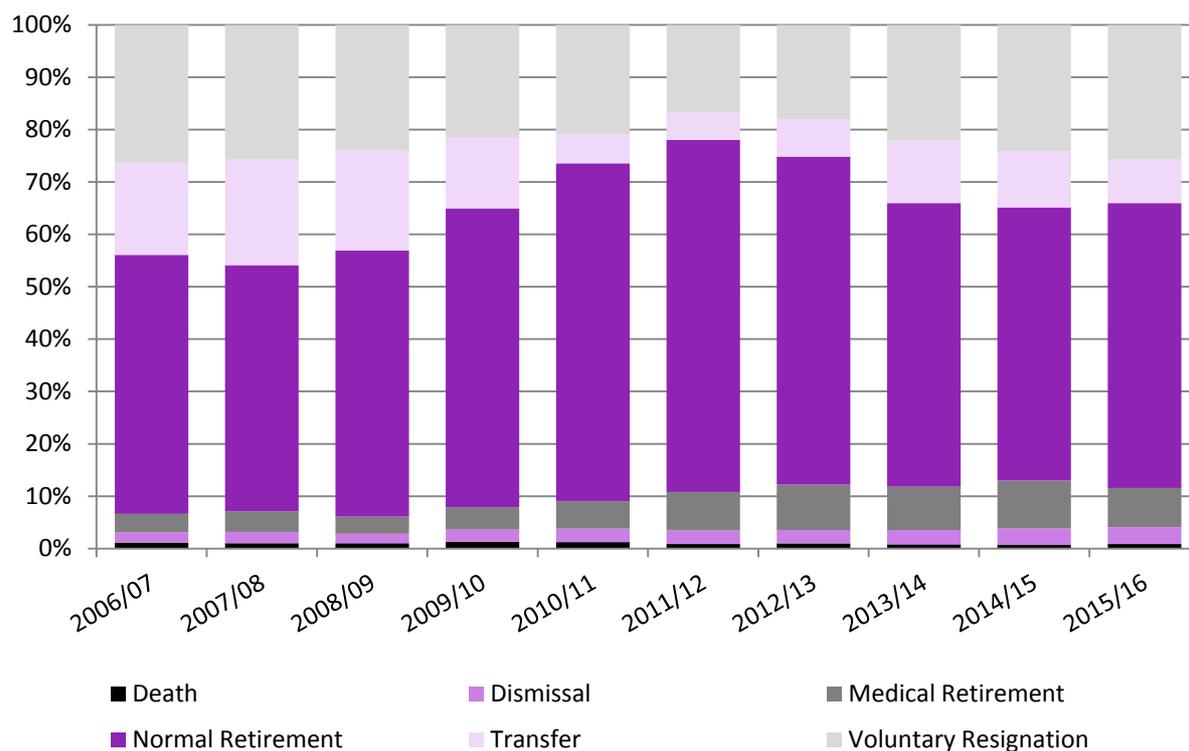
The number of officers leaving the police via each route in each of the last five years is shown in table 4.1. Since 2011/12 there has been an increase in the number of voluntary resignations (up 70%) and dismissals (up 36%). The increase in voluntary resignations is likely to partly reflect an increased number of officers leaving the police via voluntary exit schemes in recent years.

**Table 4.1: Police officer leavers, by route of exit, 2011/12 to 2015/16, England and Wales**

Route of exit	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Death	60	67	57	52	69
Dismissal	179	175	189	233	245
Medical Retirement	505	591	570	676	579
Normal Retirement	4,632	4,254	3,739	3,851	4,188
Transfer	354	489	826	790	647
Voluntary Resignation	1,158	1,219	1,522	1,784	1,974

As figure 4.5 shows, in the last ten years the majority of police leavers have been normal retirements, accounting for around 50 to 70 per cent of leavers. Medical retirements now account for a higher proportion of leavers than they did in the mid 2000s (although they fell slightly in the latest year), while the proportion of voluntary resignations has also increased since 2011/12.

**Figure 4.5: Police officer leavers, by route of exit, 2006/07 to 2015/16, England and Wales**

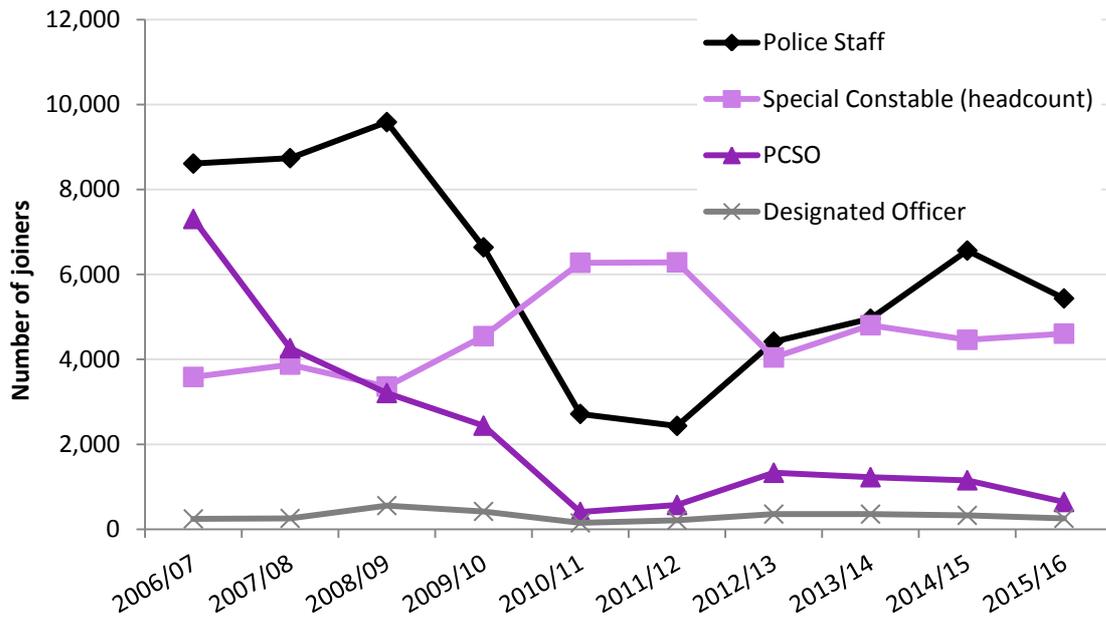


Information on the ethnicity and gender of police joiners and leavers can be found in [chapter 6](#).

#### 4.4 Other police workers

The trend in the number of joiners for other worker types is shown in figure 4.6. The number of police staff joiners has risen following two particularly low years in 2010/11 and 2011/12. These years also saw low numbers of police officers and PCSOs joining, and so are likely to reflect generally low recruitment levels at that time. However, the number of new special constable joiners was relatively high during the same period. The number of PCSO joiners fell sharply between 2006/07 and 2010/11, and has remained at relatively low levels since.

Figure 4.6: Other police worker joiners, 2006/07 to 2015/16, England and Wales

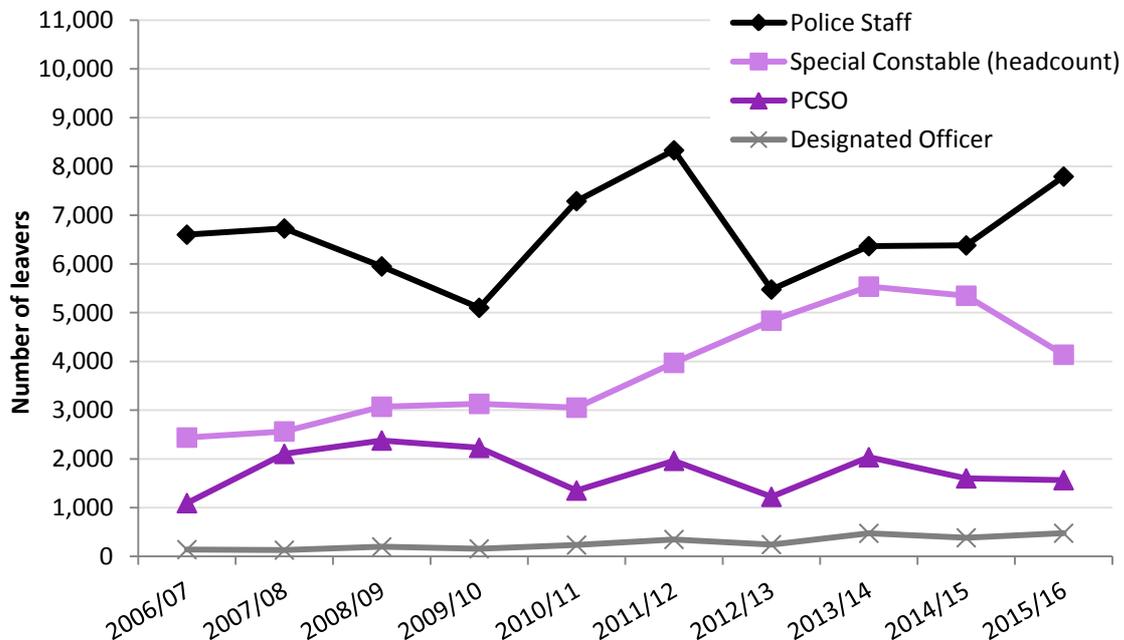


**Chart notes**

1. Includes those transferring in from other police forces.

As figure 4.7 shows, the number of staff and designated officer leavers has increased since 2012/13, while the number of special constable leavers has fallen in the last couple of years following increases between 2010/11 and 2013/14.

Figure 4.7: Other police worker leavers, 2006/07 to 2015/16, England and Wales



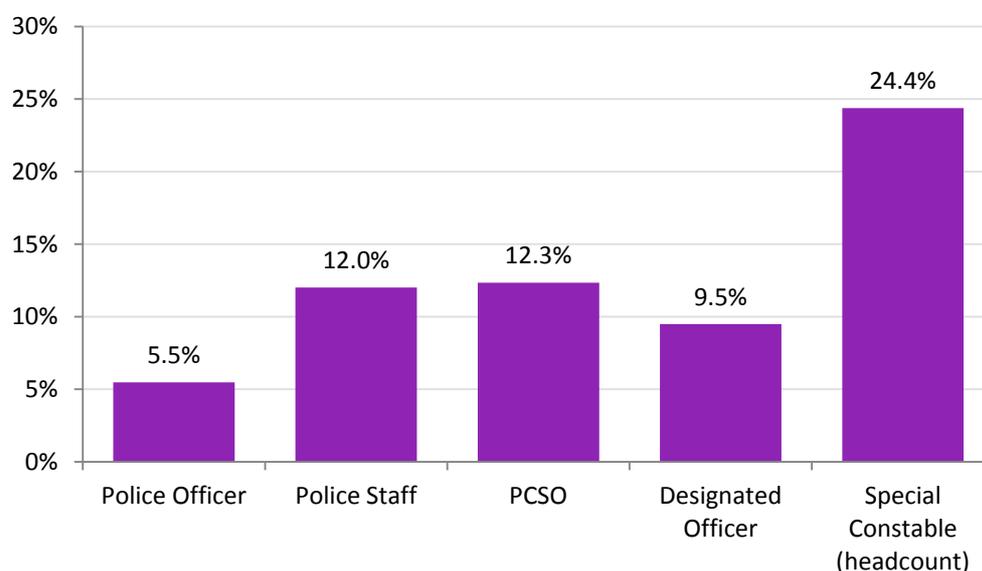
**Chart notes**

1. Includes those transferring out to other police forces.
2. Numbers of special constable leavers should be treated with some caution, as periodic updating of special constable records by forces can cause fluctuations in the data.

In 2015/16, of the paid police worker types, PCSOs and police staff had the highest wastage rate (excluding transfers), at 12.3% and 12.0% respectively. Police officers had the lowest wastage rate, at 5.5% (figure 4.8). The wastage rate for special constables was particularly high, at 24.4%. As well as

indicating a high turnover of special constables, this may reflect the fact that some leave the special constabulary to take paid roles within the force.

**Figure 4.8: Wastage rates by police worker type (excluding transfers), 2015/16, England and Wales**



**Chart notes**

1. Wastage rates are calculated by dividing the total number of leavers during the financial year by the total number of workers as at 31 March of the previous year.

In 2015/16, the majority of PCSOs (87%) and staff (77%) who left their force voluntarily resigned. Some of these are likely to have gone on to become police officers. Most of the remainder either retired or were dismissed.

## 4.5 Length of service

Statistics in this section are designated as ‘**Official Statistics**’ and not ‘National Statistics’. This is due to a number of data quality issues, which are outlined below. While the findings in this section should be considered with caution, they give a reasonable indication of the picture at the national level.

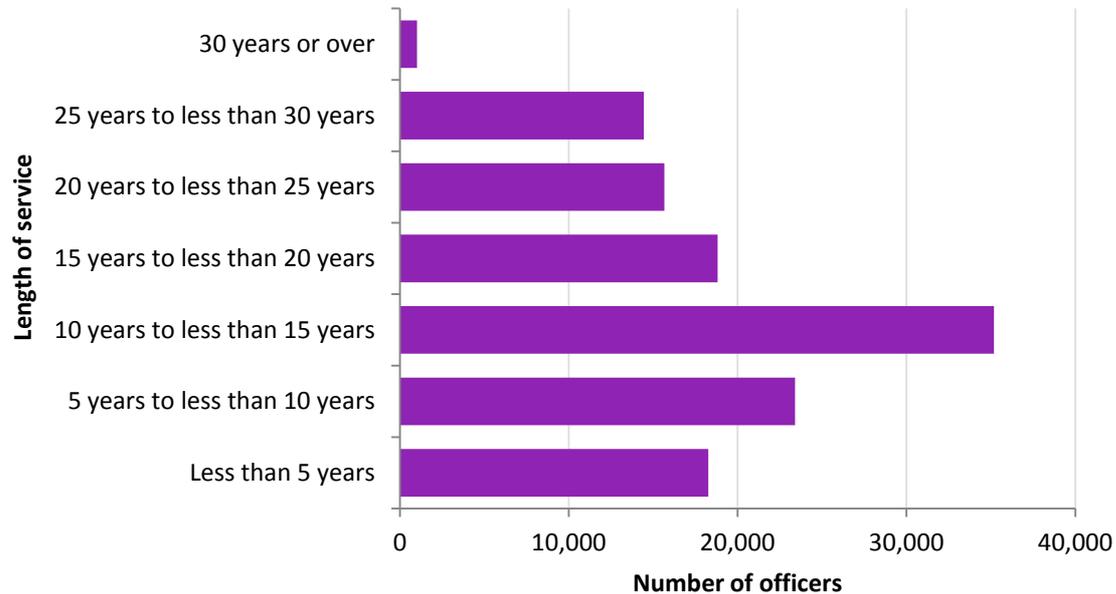
This section includes information on the length of service of police officers in England and Wales. The data cover the length of time in the police service as a whole, excluding time spent on unpaid long-term absence and career breaks. Data in the section refer to the situation as at 31 March 2016, and are on a headcount basis.

In the 43 forces in England and Wales, the number of officers with fewer than 5 years of service was 18,262, which accounted for 14.4% of police officers. Around a quarter of these (4,333 officers) had less than 1 year of service. Patterns in the length of service data tend to reflect recruitment trends over time. Relatively low levels of recruitment between 2010/11 and 2012/13 meant that the number of officers with around 4 or 5 years of service, as at 31 March 2016, was relatively low. Over the last 3 years recruitment levels have increased, and so the number of officers with fewer than 3 years of service has also increased.

The most common length of service was between 10 years and less than 15 years, which accounted for over a quarter (27.8%) of police officers. The spike is likely to be partly a result of a recruitment drive in the early/mid 2000s.

Only 1,012 (or 0.8%) officers had served for more than 30 years. This is likely to be due to the fact that many current police officers are entitled to receive a full pension after 30 years service, leading to many officers retiring at this point.

**Figure 4.9: Length of service of police officers, as at 31 March 2016, England and Wales**



### Data quality issues

Some forces have reported problems extracting length of service data from their systems. Where officers have transferred from another force, or change roles within a force, some forces record the length of service based on the date the officer started their current role (rather than the date the officer joined the police service). This is likely to skew the data towards shorter service periods and under-record longer periods of service where individuals may have moved posts or forces.

While these issues will have some impact on the national picture, they are likely to have more of an effect on further breakdowns of the data, such as by force or rank of officer.

## 5 Frontline and local policing

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### 5.1 Introduction

This section covers frontline and local policing. It provides statistics on the number of police officers employed in frontline policing roles, according to the model set out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC). Further details on the model can be found in Annex 4 of HMIC's [Value for Money Profiles](#) and the [user guide](#) which accompanies this release. This section also presents statistics on police officers employed in local policing functions. Statistics presented here are based on which function a police officer spent the majority of their time doing, as at 31 March of each year.

### 5.2 Changes to the police functions framework

Since 2012, the Home Office has published statistics on police officer, police staff and PCSO functions, based upon a set of 60 function categories that had remained unchanged for several years. Following an extensive consultation with police forces, HMIC and other key stakeholders, the Home Office has replaced this old functions framework with a framework based on the Police Objective Analysis (POA) categories, which are reviewed annually by the Home Office, HMIC and police forces, to ensure that they remain relevant and reflect current policing structures. The change was agreed in order to modernise the data collection, and to align it with the framework used by HMIC to collect data on police income, expenditure and funded posts.

This change came into effect from 31 March 2016 onwards. However, for 31 March 2015, the Home Office ran a parallel data collection, collecting data under both the old and new frameworks. The data collected under the old framework was subsequently published in July 2015, whilst the 2015 data for the POA framework is published within this release, along with the data collected for 31 March 2016.

### 5.3 Comparisons over time

The change of framework means that police functions data based on the POA framework for 2015 and 2016 are not directly comparable to data collected under the old framework. Although some functions may appear to be similar between the two, there are often differences in definitions, and so any attempts to compare across the two frameworks should be done with caution. Very few functions are comparable across both frameworks.

In addition to this, the POA categories are reviewed annually, therefore some categories may be added, removed, or amended from one year to the next. For example, for the 31 March 2016 data collection, the function 'Cyber Crime' was added to the framework.

Further details on the police functions framework, along with a full list of the functions included in the old and new frameworks, can be found in the [user guide](#).

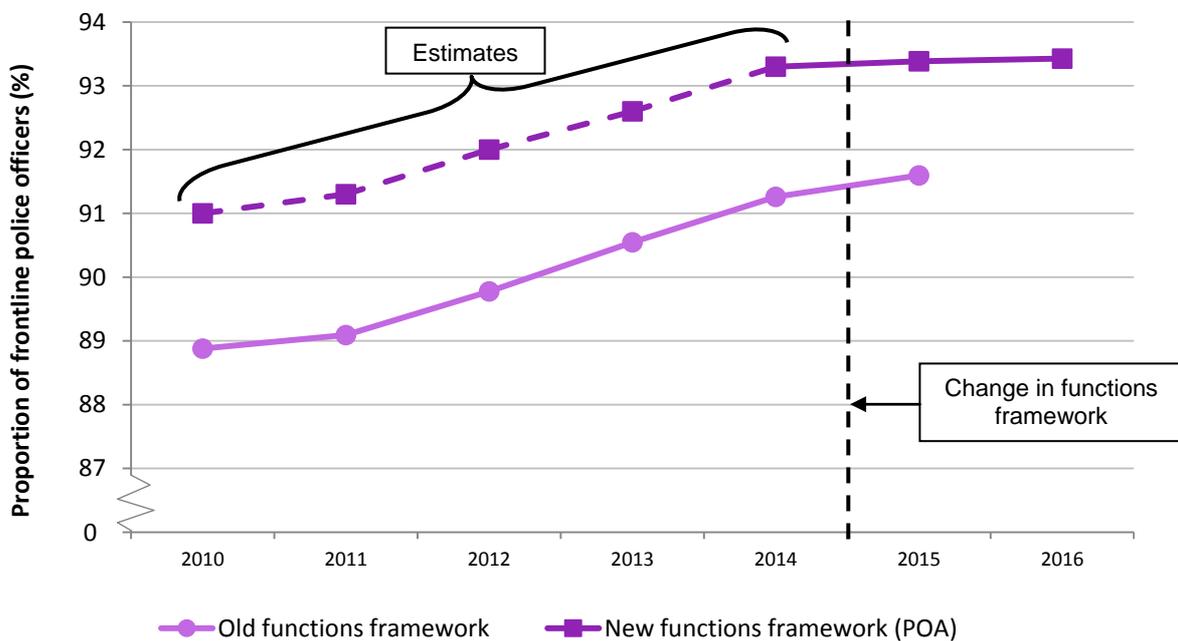
### 5.4 Frontline Policing

As mentioned in section 5.2, the change in police functions framework has resulted in a loss of comparability over time. This is particularly true for the measure of frontline policing, as both the framework and the frontline model that is based on this have changed. This causes difficulties when attempting to make comparisons of frontline policing with previous years. Further details on the model based on the new POA functions framework can be found in Annex 4 of HMIC's [Value for Money Profiles](#). One of the most significant changes is that National Policing functions, including Counter Terrorism/Special Branch roles, are now excluded from the model entirely. Many of these were previously classed as frontline roles.

In order to provide a back series of data on frontline policing, the Home Office used the parallel running year (March 2015), where data were collected on both the old and new categories, to adjust the data for previous years, when only the old categories were collected. Estimates have been made at a police force area level, which in turn has allowed the national England and Wales figure to be estimated. Further information on the method used to estimate the back series can be found in the [user guide](#).

Figure 5.1 shows the difference between the old frontline measure and the estimated back series of the new measure for the proportion of frontline police officers. At a national level, the proportion of police officers in frontline policing roles was 1.8 percentage points higher as at 31 March 2015 under the new POA framework compared to the old framework.

**Figure 5.1: Proportion of frontline police officers, England and Wales<sup>1</sup>, as at 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2016<sup>2</sup>**



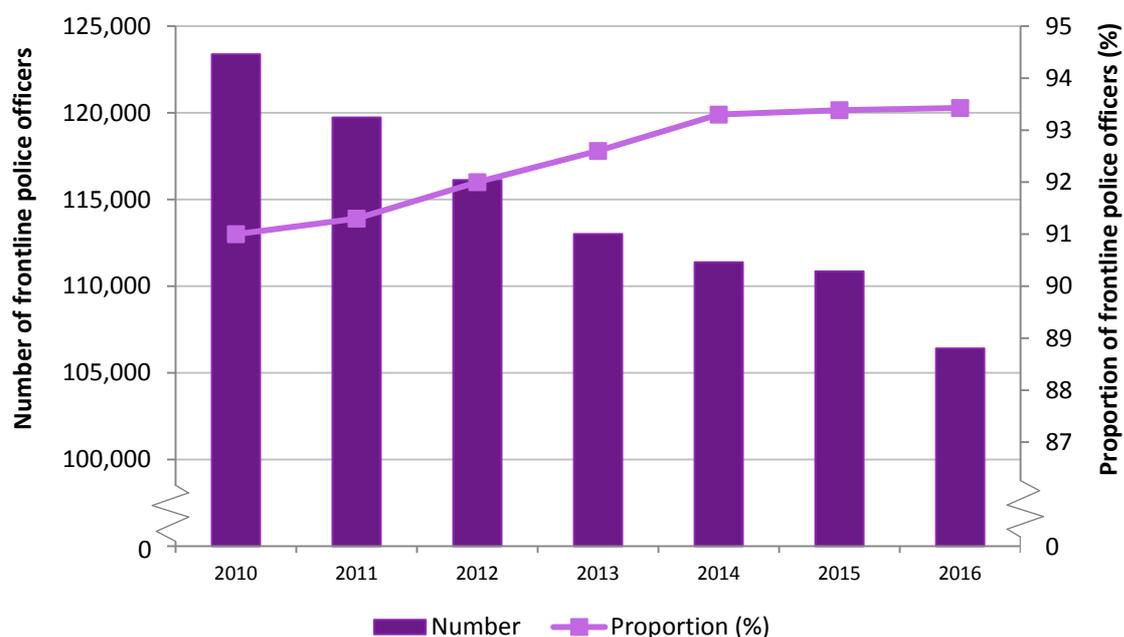
**Chart notes**

1. Relates to the 43 police forces of England and Wales only.
2. Figures for March 2015 have been calculated using Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC's) frontline policing models. Further details on the frontline policing model based on the old functions framework can be found in HMIC's [Policing in Austerity: Meeting the Challenge](#) report. Further details on the model based on the new POA functions framework can be found in Annex 4 of HMIC's [Value for Money Profiles](#). Both models exclude police officers recorded under the 'other' function category. The 'other' function category includes police officers on maternity/paternity leave, career break, full-time education or on suspension; and those on long-term leave (sickness, compassionate special or unpaid).

Figure 5.2 shows the trend in the number and proportion of police officers employed in frontline policing roles as at 31 March in each year from 2010 to 2016. Figures from 31 March 2010 to 2014 have been estimated as described above. The underlying figures are presented in [the main data tables](#), along with the number and proportion of police officers employed in frontline support and business support roles as at 31 March in each year from 2010 to 2016.

On 31 March 2016 there were 106,411 police officers employed in frontline policing roles, a fall of 4,442 officers (or 4.0%) compared with the previous year. Over the same period, the proportion of officers in frontline policing roles remained stable, at 93.4%.

**Figure 5.2: Number and proportion of full-time equivalent frontline<sup>1</sup> police officers, England and Wales<sup>2</sup>, as at 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2016<sup>3</sup>**



**Chart notes**

1. Visible operational frontline and non visible frontline have been added together to give an overall frontline total.
2. Relates to the 43 police forces of England and Wales only.
3. Figures for March 2015 and 2016 have been calculated using Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC's) frontline policing model. Figures for March 2010 to March 2014 have been estimated based on data for a parallel running year (March 2015) where data was collected using both functions frameworks. Further details on these estimates can be found in the [user guide](#).

**Table 5.1: Number of full-time equivalent police officers employed in frontline<sup>1</sup>, frontline support<sup>2</sup> and business support roles, England and Wales<sup>3</sup>, as at 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2016<sup>4</sup>**

	31-Mar-10	31-Mar-11	31-Mar-12	31-Mar-13	31-Mar-14	31-Mar-15	31-Mar-16
Frontline	123,384	119,729	116,122	113,009	111,383	110,853	106,411
Frontline Support	6,499	6,469	5,971	5,215	4,706	4,324	4,087
Business Support	5,670	4,912	4,161	3,762	3,309	3,528	3,401

**Table notes:**

1. Visible operational frontline and non visible frontline have been added together to give an overall frontline total.
2. Frontline support was previously named operational support under the old framework.
3. Relates to the 43 police forces of England and Wales only.
4. Figures for March 2015 and 2016 have been calculated using Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC's) frontline policing model and the police officer functions data in [the main data tables](#). Figures for March 2010 to March 2014 have been estimated based on data for a parallel running year (March 2015) where data was collected using both functions frameworks. Further details on these estimates can be found in the [user guide](#).

**Table 5.2: Proportion of full-time equivalent police officers employed in frontline<sup>1</sup>, frontline support<sup>2</sup> and business support roles, England and Wales<sup>3</sup>, as at 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2016<sup>4</sup>**

	31-Mar-10	31-Mar-11	31-Mar-12	31-Mar-13	31-Mar-14	31-Mar-15	31-Mar-16
Frontline	91.0	91.3	92.0	92.6	93.3	93.4	93.4
Frontline Support	4.8	4.9	4.7	4.3	3.9	3.6	3.6
Business Support	4.2	3.7	3.3	3.1	2.8	3.0	3.0

**Table notes:**

1. Visible operational frontline and non visible frontline have been added together to give an overall frontline total.
2. Frontline support was previously named operational support under the old framework.
3. Relates to the 43 police forces of England and Wales only.
4. Figures for March 2015 and 2016 have been calculated using Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC's) frontline policing model. Figures for March 2010 to March 2014 have been estimated based on data for a parallel running year (March 2015) where data was collected using both functions frameworks. Further details on these estimates can be found in the [user guide](#).

## 5.4 Local Policing

Under the POA functions framework outlined in Section 5.2, each individual police function is grouped into a broader group, one of which is 'local policing'. Local policing is defined as police officers/staff whose primary role involves:

- neighbourhood policing;
- incident (response) management;
- specialist community liaison;
- working within the local policing command team.

Full details on the definitions of each function can be found in the [main data tables](#).

There were 57,415 police officers employed within local policing functions as at 31 March 2016, a decrease of 3,668 officers (or 6.0%) compared with a year earlier. Those working within local policing roles accounted for 50.4% of all officers as at 31 March 2016, a fall from 51.5% as at 31 March 2015 (proportions exclude 'Other' and 'National Policing' functions).

**Table 5.3: Number and proportion of full-time equivalent police officers in local policing roles, England and Wales, as at 31 March 2015 and 31 March 2016**

	31-Mar-15	31-Mar-16
Number	61,083	57,415
<i>Proportion (%)</i>	<i>51.5</i>	<i>50.4</i>

**Table notes:**

1. Relates to the 43 police forces of England and Wales only
2. The proportions have been calculated excluding police officers recorded under the 'Other' function category and 'National Policing' functions. The 'Other' function category includes police officers on maternity/paternity leave, career break, full-time education or on suspension; and those on long-term leave (sickness, compassionate special or unpaid).

## 6 Diversity

This section presents statistics on the diversity of the police workforce, looking specifically at the gender and ethnicity of police officers, police staff, and special constables, as well as the ethnicity and gender of officer joiners and leavers.

### 6.1 Police officers: Ethnicity

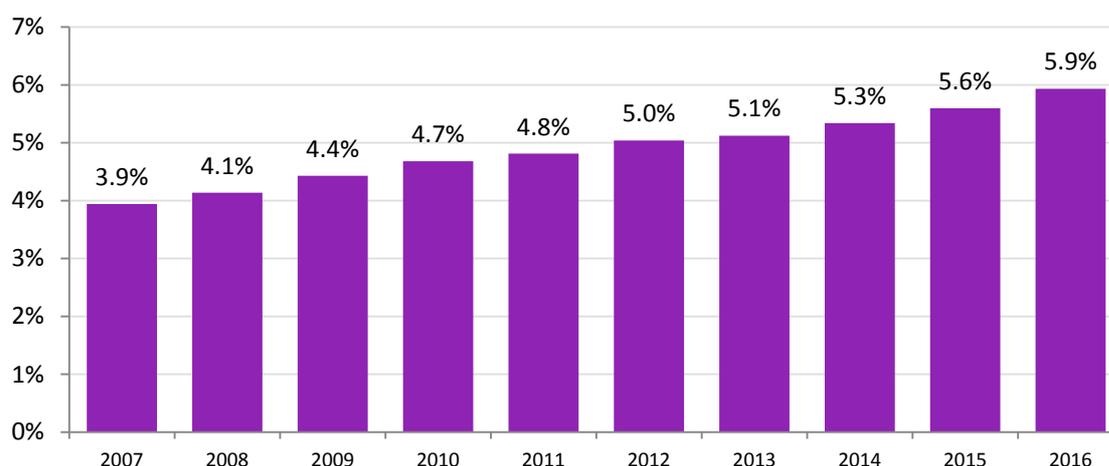
There were 7,218 Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) police officers in the 43 forces as at 31 March 2016, an increase of 236 or 3.4% compared with a year earlier<sup>3</sup>. BME officers represented 5.9% of all officers who stated their ethnicity, an increase from 5.6% in the previous year. However, in both years the proportion of BME officers was considerably lower than the 14.0% of the population in England and Wales that are BME<sup>4</sup>.

Of the 43 forces, the Metropolitan police had the highest proportion of BME police officers, with 12.6% of officers identifying themselves as BME. However, London is also the region with the largest proportion of BME people in England and Wales, with 40.2% of the population identifying themselves as BME.

The second highest proportion of BME officers was in the West Midlands, where 9.0% of officers who stated their ethnicity identified themselves as BME (compared with 29.9% of the population), followed by Leicestershire (7.7% of police officers compared to 21.6% of the population). Cheshire, North Wales and Dyfed-Powys had the smallest proportion of BME officers (all 0.8%), reflecting their relatively small BME populations.

Figure 6.1 shows how the proportion of police officers who are BME has increased year on year, from 3.9% in 2007 to 5.9% in 2016.

**Figure 6.1: Proportion of police officers who are BME, as at 31 March 2007 to 31 March 2016, England and Wales**



**Chart notes**

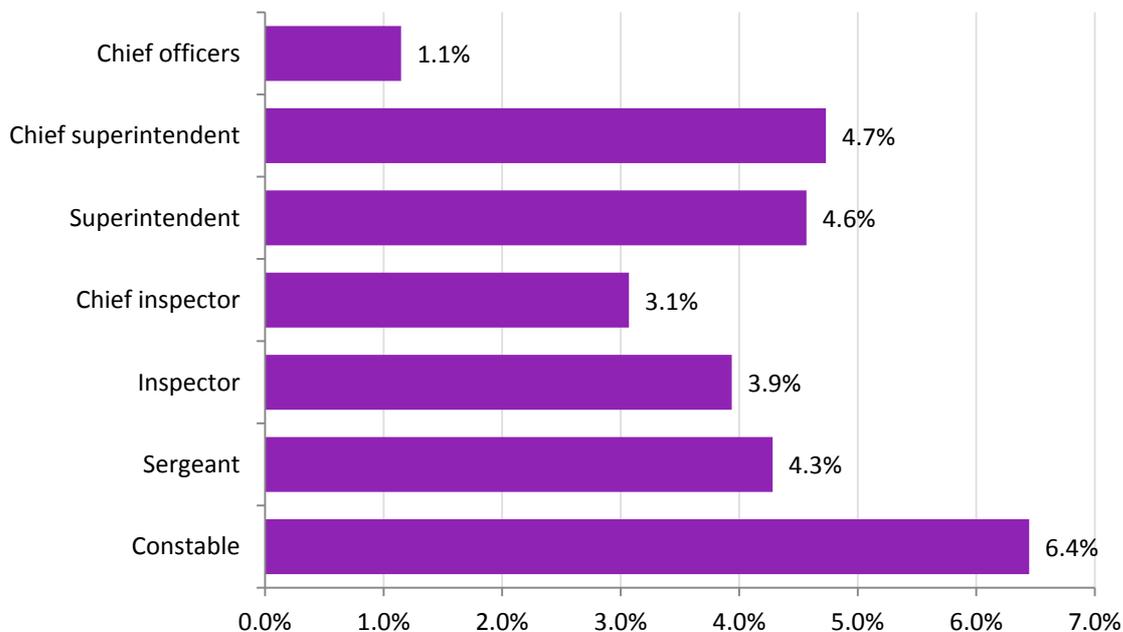
1. Excludes the British Transport Police
2. Officers who did not state their ethnicity are excluded from calculations.

<sup>3</sup> Comparisons of absolute numbers with 2014/15 should be undertaken with caution, since 2014/15 ethnicity data from the Metropolitan Police excluded officers on career breaks and included those seconded out from the force. Data for the force for this year are therefore not directly comparable with other years. However, the relatively small numbers involved mean this should not have a large effect on the overall trend. For more information see the revisions analysis (chapter 8).

<sup>4</sup> Population data from the 2011 Census, based on whole population. Data available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census/2011censusdata>

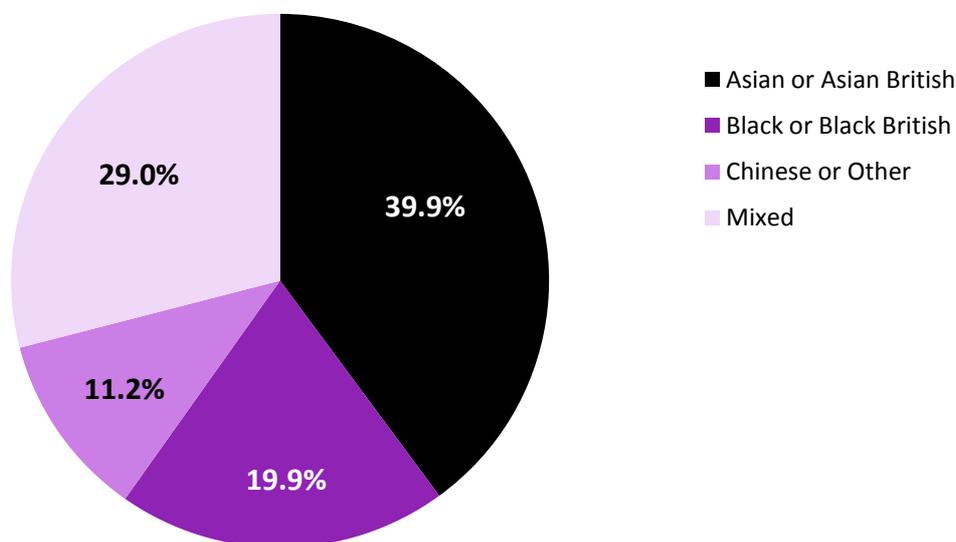
Figure 6.2 shows that senior ranks (i.e. chief inspector or above) had a lower proportion of BME officers compared to constables and other ranks across the 43 police forces. For example, 3.6% of officers of rank chief inspector or above were BME, compared with 6.4% of constables. This is likely to partly reflect the increasing number of BME joiners in recent years, many of whom will have joined at constable level.

**Figure 6.2: Proportion of police officers who are BME, by rank, as at 31 March 2016, England and Wales**



As shown in Figure 6.3, of those BME officers in the 43 police forces in England and Wales, 39.9% classified themselves as Asian or Asian British, 29.0% as Mixed, 19.9% as Black or Black British, and 11.2% as Chinese or Other ethnic group. These proportions have remained stable over recent years.

**Figure 6.3: BME officers, by ethnic group, as at 31 March 2016, England and Wales**



### 6.3 Police officer joiners: Ethnicity

Of the 4,304 police officers that joined the 43 police forces in 2015/16, and indicated their ethnicity, 521, or 12.1% identified themselves as BME (compared to 14.0% of the population). This is an increase of 2.4 percentage points on 2014/15, and an increase of 6.1 percentage points since 2006/07. The proportion of joiners who are BME is also considerably higher than the proportion of current officers who are BME, indicating a trend towards increasing diversity.

The Metropolitan police had the most BME joiners in percentage terms (24.8% of officer joiners were BME), followed by Hampshire (14.8%) and West Midlands (12.2%).

In 2015/16, the majority of BME joiners were standard direct recruits (84.1% of all BME joiners), followed by joiners who were previously special constables (9.8% of all BME joiners) and transfers (5.9% of BME joiners). Table 6.1 shows how this compares to those officer joiners who identified themselves as White.

**Table 6.1: Officer joiner types, by ethnicity, 2015/16, England and Wales**

Type of joiner	BME joiners	White joiners
Standard Direct Recruit	84.1%	76.0%
Previously Special Constable	9.8%	10.3%
Transfer	5.9%	13.0%
Rejoining	0.2%	0.7%
	100.0%	100.0%

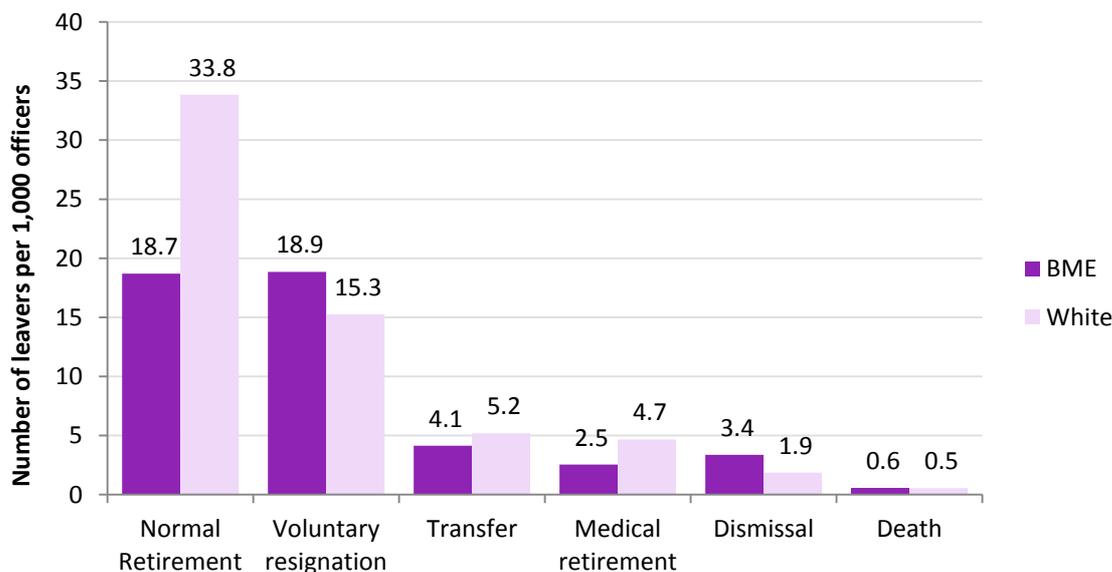
For more information about the different joiners types, please see [chapter 4](#).

### 6.3 Police officer leavers: Ethnicity

In 2015/16, 7,701 officers left the 43 police forces in England and Wales. Of those leavers who stated their ethnicity, 336, or 4.4%, were BME officers, a similar proportion to 2014/15.

Figure 6.4 shows the number of officers who left via each of the exit routes in 2015/16, broken down by ethnicity. There was a higher rate of normal retirements and medical retirements amongst white officers, while the rates of voluntary resignations and dismissals were higher amongst BME officers. The age profile of different ethnic groups within the police may have an impact on the former. For example, if BME officers are generally younger than White officers, then fewer BME officers are likely to be of retirement age.

**Figure 6.4: Number of officers leaving by each exit route per thousand officers, by ethnicity, 2015/16, England and Wales**



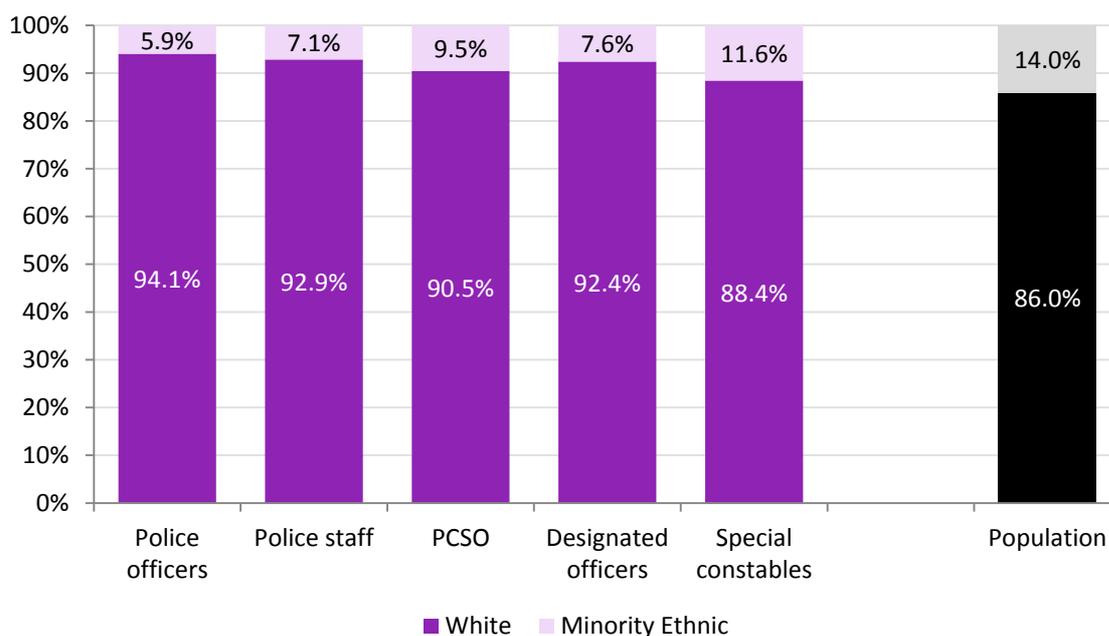
**Chart notes**

1. Leaving rates are calculated as number of officers leaving via that route in 2015/16, as a proportion of officers employed by the force as at 31 March 2015.

**6.5 Police staff, PCSOs, designated officers and special constables: Ethnicity**

Figure 6.5 shows that the proportion of BME workers in other areas of the workforce is higher than for police officers. The most ethnically diverse part of the police workforce is the Special Constabulary, where, as at 31 March 2016, 1,709 of the 14,784 special constables who stated their ethnicity identified as BME (11.6% compared to 14.0% of the population).

**Figure 6.5: Ethnic breakdown of the police workforce, as at 31 March 2016, England and Wales**

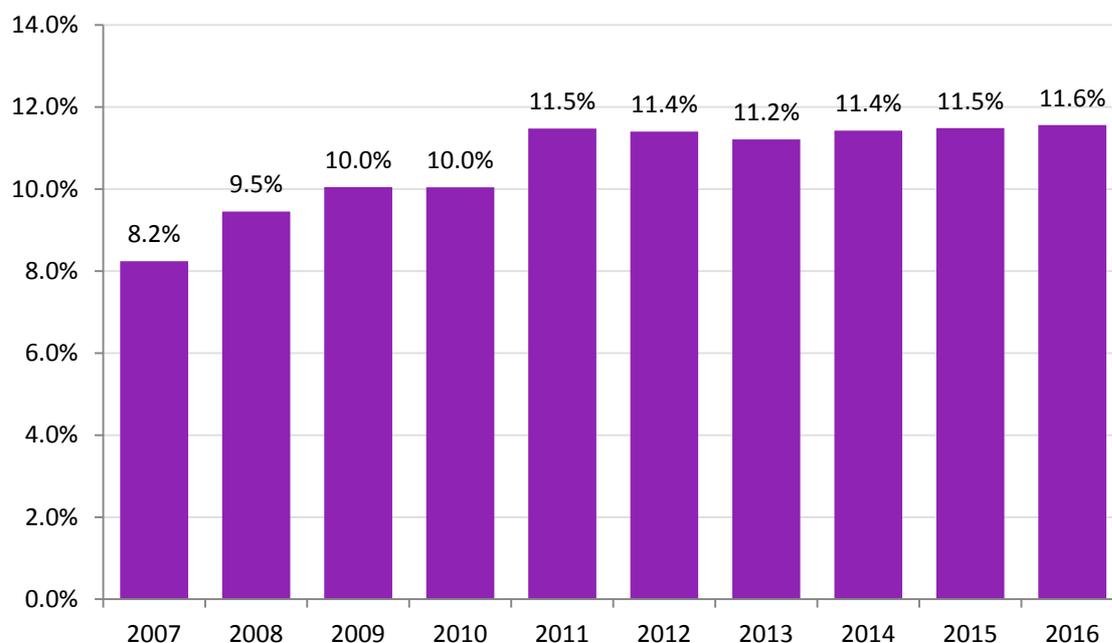


**Chart notes**

1. Population data is based on the whole population (including children).

Figure 6.6 shows how the proportion of special constables who are BME increased between 31 March 2007 and 31 March 2011. Since March 2011 the proportion of special constables who are BME has remained fairly stable. The proportion of police staff who are BME has also increased since the year ending March 2007 (from 6.5% to 7.1%), whereas the proportion of PCSOs who are BME has decreased from 11.8% in the year ending 2007, to 9.5% in the year ending March 2016.

**Figure 6.6: Proportion of special constables who are BME, as at 31 March 2007 to 31 March 2016, England and Wales**



## 6.6 Police officers: Gender

There were 35,498 female police officers in the 43 police forces on 31 March 2016, making up 28.6% of police officers in England and Wales. The number of female officers fell by 459 (1.3%) compared with a year earlier, but the proportion of police officers who are female increased (up 0.3 percentage points from 28.3% on 31 March 2015).

Of the 43 forces, Cumbria had the highest proportion of female police officers (35.8%), followed by Wiltshire (35.1%), and Surrey (33.0%). The Metropolitan Police, Cleveland, and the City of London had the smallest proportions of female officers at 26.2%, 25.0%, and 23.3% respectively.

Figure 6.7 shows how the proportion of female police officers in the 43 forces has increased in every year since 2006/07. Over the same time period the number of female officers has increased from 33,117 female officers in 2006/07 to 35,498 in 2015/16. However, the latest figure is a decrease of 1,490 officers since the peak on 31 March 2010 (36,988 female officers).

**Figure 6.7: Proportion of female police officers, as at 31 March 2007 to 31 March 2016, England and Wales**

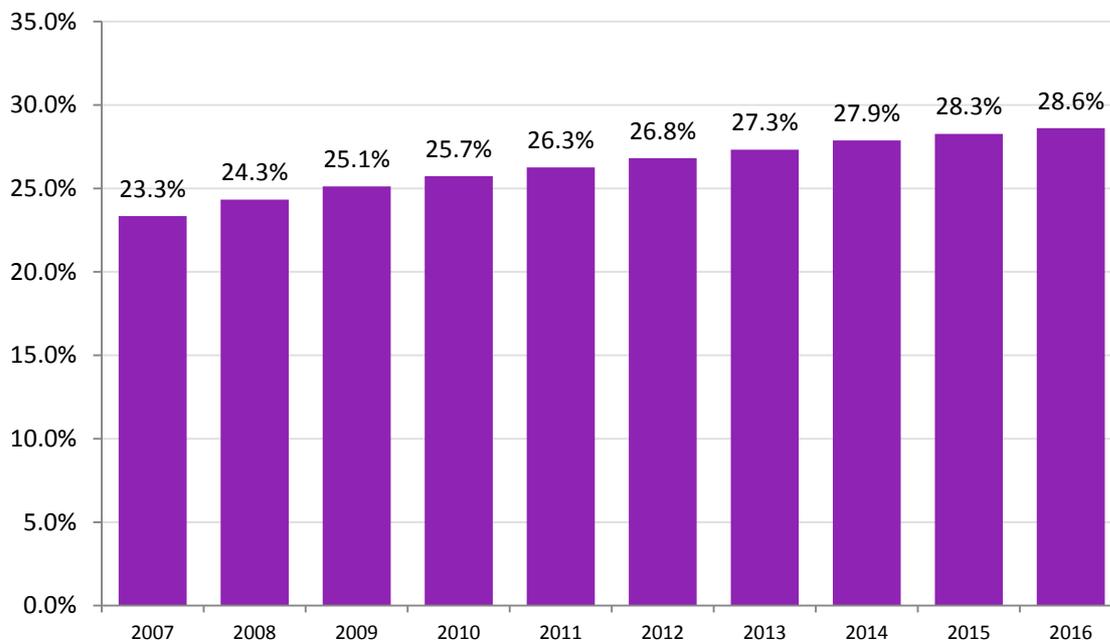
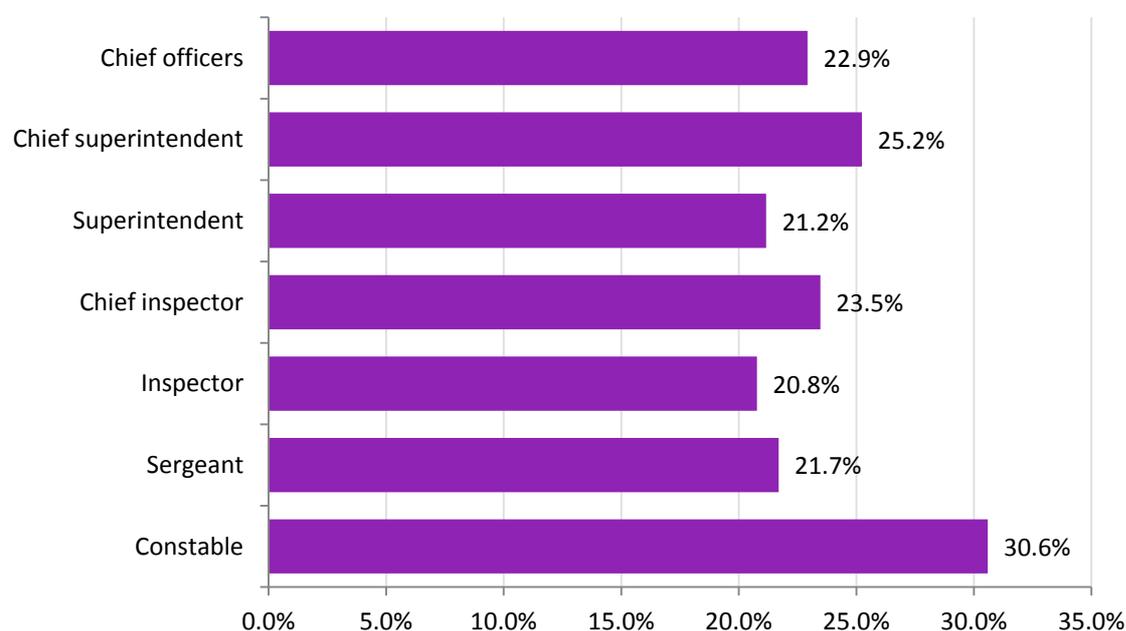


Figure 6.8 shows the proportion of female officers in each officer rank. Female officers are more commonly found in constable ranks, which may reflect the increasing proportion of the workforce that is female, with most new joiners coming in at constable level.

**Figure 6.8: Proportion of female police officers, by rank, as at 31 March 2016, England and Wales**



### 6.7 Police officer joiners and leavers: Gender

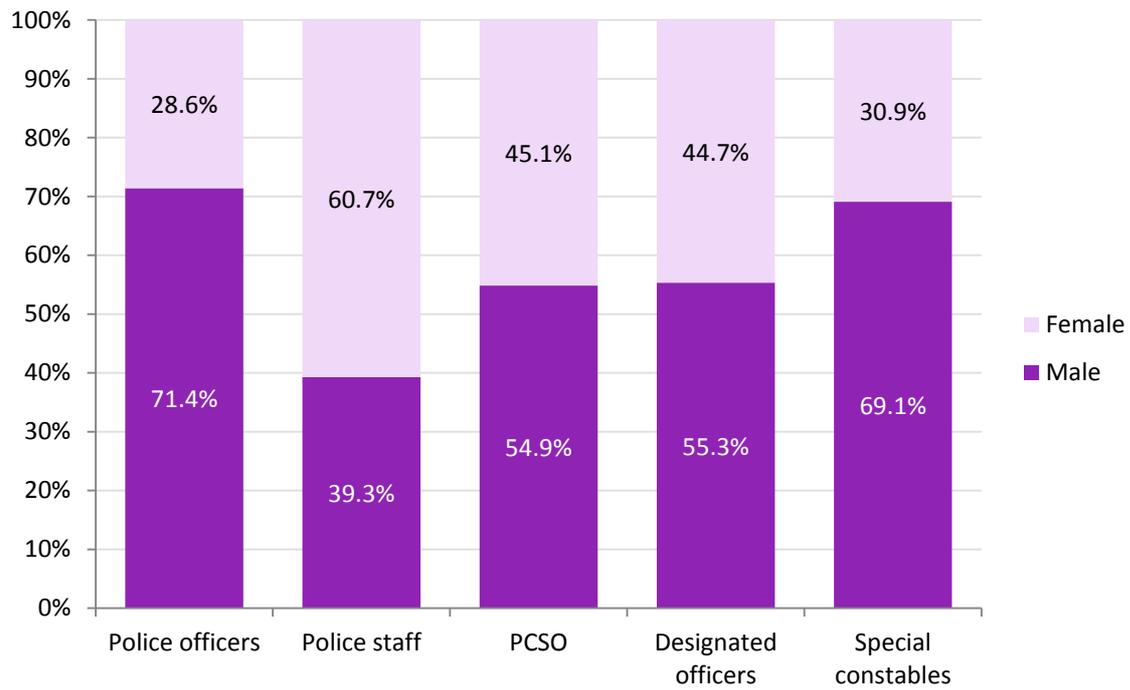
Of the 4,735 police officers that joined the 43 police forces in 2015/16, 1,475 (31.2%) were female. This was a slight increase on the year before, and broadly in line with rest of the last ten years, when the proportion of female joiners was between 28 and 35 per cent. The proportion of female joiners is therefore higher than the proportion of current officers that are female (28.6%). This suggests a trend towards an increasing proportion of female officers. 80.3% of new female joiners in 2015/16 were standard direct recruits, with most of the rest joining from the special constabulary (10.0%) or transferring in from other forces (9.1%).

Of the 7,701 officer leavers during the year to March 2016, 1,757 (22.8%) were female. This is both the highest number and proportion of female leavers in the last ten years, although the proportion of leavers that are female is still lower than the proportion of the current workforce that is female. Most female officers left either via normal retirements or voluntary resignations in 2015/16. As a proportion of officers, fewer females were dismissed or retired (not on medical grounds) than their male counterparts, but more left through medical retirements and voluntary resignations.

### 6.8 Police staff, PCSOs, designated officers and special constables: Gender

As at 31 March 2016 females made up 60.7% of police staff in the 43 forces in England and Wales. The gender split was more even for PCSOs and Designated officers with 45.1% and 44.7% females respectively. The gender split in the Special Constabulary was similar to the gender split for police officers, with around 3 in 10 special constables being female.

**Figure 6.9: Proportion of the police workforce who are female, as at 31 March 2016, England and Wales**



## 7 Officer Wellbeing

### 7.1 Introduction

This section provides information on the number of officers on long-term sick leave, and the number of officers on recuperative and adjusted/restricted duties as at the end of the financial year (31 March). Definitions of recuperative, restricted and adjusted duties, as well as information on long-term sickness, are provided in the relevant sections below.

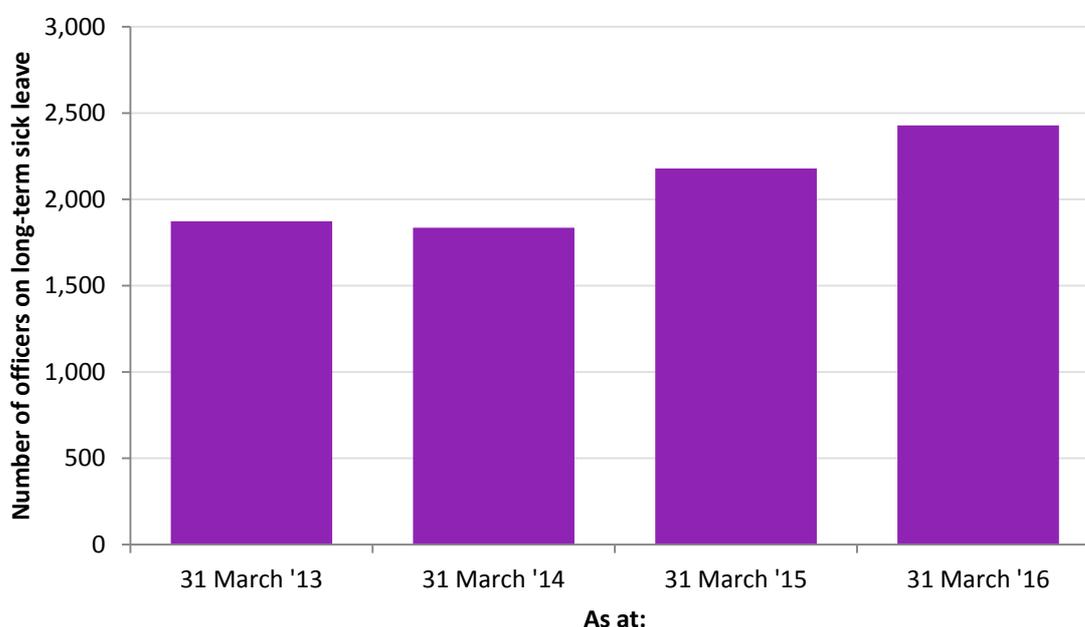
### 7.2 Sickness

This section contains information on the number of police officers (FTE) on long-term sick leave, as at 31 March each year. Long-term sickness includes any recognised medical condition, physical or psychological, as reported by the officer or a medical practitioner, which has lasted for more than 28 calendar days.

As at 31 March 2016, there were 2,429 full-time equivalent police officers on long-term sick leave in the 43 forces in England and Wales. This was an increase of 11.5% compared with the previous year, and accounted for 2.0% of police officers in England and Wales.

Northamptonshire had the lowest sickness rate of the 43 forces in England and Wales, with 0.4% of officers on long-term sick leave as at 31 March 2016. Gwent had the highest rate, with 3.8% of officers on long-term sick leave. British Transport Police had a sickness rate of 6.2%.

**Figure 7.1: Number of officers (FTE) on long-term sick leave, as at 31 March 2013 to 31 March 2016, England and Wales**



### 7.3 Sickness by rank and gender

There was some variation in sickness levels across ranks, with officers at higher ranks generally having lower levels of sickness. 2.1% of constables were on long-term sick leave as at 31 March 2016, compared with 1.0% of officers of Chief Inspector rank or above.

**Table 7.1: Proportion of officers (FTE) on long-term sick leave, by rank, as at 31 March 2016, England and Wales**

Rank	Proportion on long-term sick leave
Constable	2.1%
Sergeant	1.6%
Inspector	1.4%
Chief Inspector or above	1.0%

Over the last four years, sickness rates have been consistently higher among females than males. As at 31 March 2016, 2.5% of female officers were on long-term sick leave, compared with 1.7% of male officers. Sickness levels have increased at a similar rate for both males and females over the last 4 years.

#### 7.4 Recuperative and adjusted/restricted duties

This section contains information on the number of officers on recuperative and adjusted/restricted duties as at the 31 March 2016, broken down by gender. Data in the section are based on officer headcount (rather than full time equivalents).

On 1 May 2015, reforms came into effect that meant forces were required to re-categorise officers who are not fully deployable. This saw the replacement of the previous categories (which were used in different ways by different forces, and included a wide range of scenarios) with the more precise category of 'limited duties'. This includes three sub-categories of 'adjusted', 'recuperative' and 'management restricted' duties' (data on management restricted duties are not collected by the Home Office). The transition to this new framework has taken place on different timescales across forces, and as a result, 2016 data will include officers categorised under a mixture of the old and new definitions (i.e. those officers previously categorised as 'restricted' on medical grounds and those newly categorised as being on 'adjusted' duties). In future years, it is likely that the data will more closely reflect the new categories, as forces complete their transition to these.

Definitions of recuperative, adjusted, and management restricted duties are provided below.

**Adjusted duty** – duties falling short of full deployment, in respect of which workplace adjustments (including reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010) have been made to overcome barriers to working. For an officer to be placed on adjusted duties, he/she must be attending work on a regular basis and be working for the full number of hours for which he/she is paid (in either a full time or part time substantive role)."

**Recuperative duty** – duties falling short of full deployment, undertaken by a police officer following an injury, accident, illness or medical incident, during which the officer adapts to and prepares for a return to full duties and the full hours for which they are paid, and is assessed to determine whether he or she is capable of making such a return.

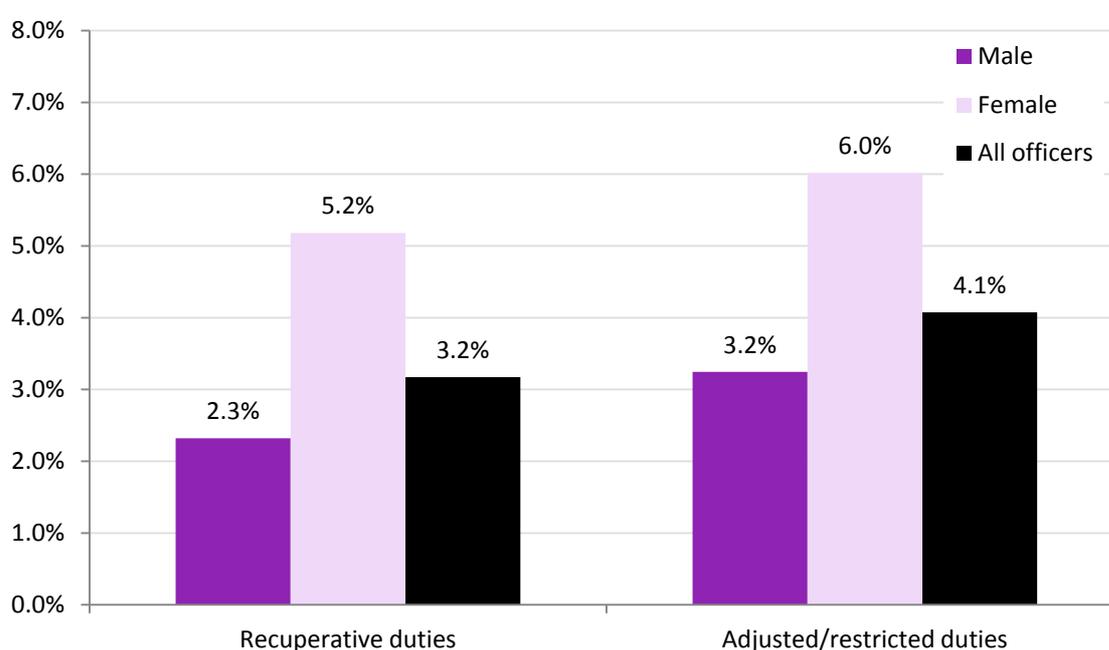
**Management restricted duty** – duties falling short of full deployment to which an officer is allocated in circumstances in which: verifiable confidential or source sensitive information or intelligence has come to the notice of the force that questions the suitability of an officer to continue in his or her current post; and/or serious concerns are raised which require management actions, both for the

protection of individuals and the organisation. In either case also that: criminal or misconduct proceedings are not warranted; and the Chief Constable has lost confidence in the officer continuing in their current role.

As at 31 March 2016, there were 3,715 police officers (headcount) on recuperative duties<sup>5</sup>, and 4,933 on adjusted/restricted duties<sup>6</sup> in England and Wales. This accounted for 3.2% and 4.1% of officers respectively.

Of all female officers in England and Wales, 5.2% were on recuperative duties and 6.0% were on adjusted/restricted duties as at 31 March 2016. This was higher than the proportion of males on recuperative and adjusted/restricted duties, which was at 2.3% and 3.2% respectively.

**Figure 7.2: Proportion of officers (headcount) on recuperative and adjusted/restricted duties, by gender, as at 31 March, England and Wales**



## 7.5 Long-term absence

This section presents data on long-term absence due to career breaks, maternity/paternity leave, sick leave and suspension. More detailed information on absence due to long-term sickness is covered in section 7.2. Long-term absence is any absence that has lasted for more than 28 days, as at the end of the reporting period (31 March 2016).

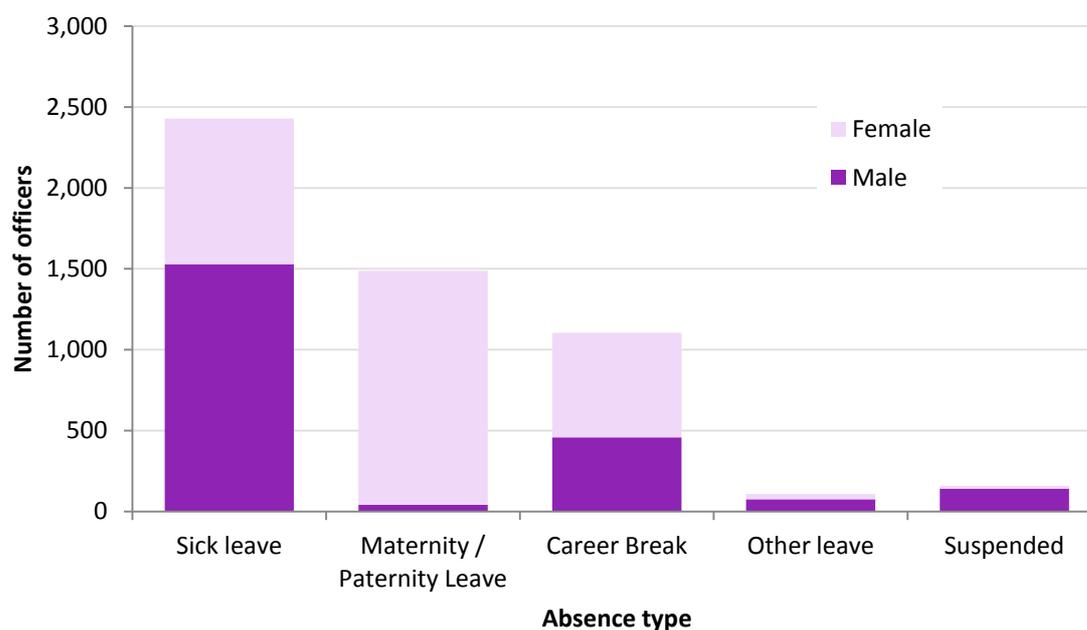
As at 31 March 2016, there were 5,287 officers on long-term absence in the 43 forces in England and Wales. This accounted for 4.3% of all officers.

Of these, 2,429 officers (or 45.9%) were on sick leave, 1,488 (28.1%) were on maternity/paternity leave, and 1,104 (20.9%) were on career breaks. The remaining 5.0% were either suspended, or on 'other leave' (which includes things such as study leave, compassionate leave and special leave).

<sup>5</sup> Excludes 4 forces who were unable to provide complete data on recuperative duties (Hampshire, Sussex, Wiltshire and South Wales)

<sup>6</sup> Excludes 2 forces who were unable to provide data on adjusted/restricted duties (Sussex and South Wales)

**Figure 7.3: Number of officers on long-term absence broken down by absence type and gender, England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016**



Although females account for 28.6% of police officers in England and Wales, they account for 57.5% of all long-term absence as at 31 March 2016. This was primarily due to maternity/paternity leave, with females accounting for 97.2% of absences of this type.

Excluding maternity/paternity leave, females accounted for 42.0% of all absences. Although females accounted for a disproportionate amount of many of the absence types (relative to the gender breakdown of police officers), maternity/paternity leave, and career breaks were the two categories in which females accounted for the majority of absences.

**Table 7.2: Proportion of long-term absence accounted for, by gender, as at 31 March 2016, England and Wales**

Absence type	Proportion (%)	
	Male	Female
Career break	41.5	58.5
Sick leave	62.9	37.1
Maternity / Paternity leave	2.8	97.2
Other leave	69.9	30.1
Suspended	89.6	10.4
<b>All long-term absence (exc. Maternity/paternity)</b>	<b>58.0</b>	<b>42.0</b>
<b>All long-term absence</b>	<b>42.5</b>	<b>57.5</b>
<i>All police officers</i>	<i>71.4</i>	<i>28.6</i>

## 7.6 Additional data

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) publishes a range of data in their annual [value for money profiles](#). This includes data on short and medium-term sickness, as well as recuperative and adjusted/restricted duties.

Data on short and medium-term sickness are considered to be less robust than long-term sickness, and should be interpreted with caution. Short and medium-term sickness is more likely to fluctuate from one year to the next, and can be more prone to variation in the accuracy of recording between forces.

## 8 Revisions analysis

The figures presented in this bulletin are correct at the time of publication and may include revisions submitted by forces for older years covered by previous editions.

The table below shows that revisions to the 31 March 2015 figures first published last year (and updated in this publication) have been relatively small.

The increases in officers, staff and PCSO numbers are due to revisions by the Metropolitan Police, who revised their original estimates to include officers on career breaks, and exclude officers seconded out of the force. The decrease in special constables is due to a revision by Cleveland Police.

**Table 8.1: Police workforce,<sup>1</sup> 31 March 2015, full-time equivalents (except where specified)**

	Published July 15	Published July 16	Revision (%)
Police officers	126,818	127,192	+0.3%
Police staff	63,719	63,894	+0.3%
Police community support officers	12,331	12,370	+0.3%
Designated officers	4,254	4,254	N/A
Traffic wardens	18	18	N/A
Special constables <sup>2</sup>	16,101	16,074	-0.2%

1. Relates to the 43 forces of England and Wales only.

2. Headcount only.

This revisions analysis will be updated in each future publication.

### Note

As mentioned above, the Metropolitan Police revised their March 2015 data to include officers on career breaks and exclude those seconded out of the force, to bring the data in line with data for other forces and years. While the force's total strength figures have been revised, it has not been possible to revise the figures on ethnicity or functions of their workforce. Therefore when analysing the total workforce strength for the force, the data on ethnicity/functions of officers should not be used.

Statistical Bulletins are prepared by staff in Home Office Statistics under the National Statistics Code of Practice and can be downloaded from GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/about/statistics>

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