



Published 20 February 2020

# Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) Workforce Statistics Bulletin, as at 31 December 2019

## Main Points

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**49,853 full time equivalent (FTE) staff in post**

This is a slight increase of 260 (0.5%) FTE staff in post since 31 December 2018 and a minimal change of 53 (0.1%) since 30 September 2019. Of the staff in post, there were 33,894 in Public Sector Prisons (PSP), 9,215 staff in the National Probation Service (NPS), 5,069 FTE staff in HQ and Area Services, and 1,675 in the Youth Custody Service (YCS).

**22,154 FTE band 3-5 prison officers in post**

This is a decrease of 568 (2.5%) since 31 December 2018 and a decrease of 382 (1.7%) FTE prison officers compared to 30 September 2019. Taking into account the rise in quarter three due to the transfer of HMP Birmingham back to HMPPS, there was a steady decline in Prison Officer numbers during 2019.

**4,666 FTE band 2 operational support staff in post**

This corresponds to no substantial change of 10 (0.2%) since 31 December 2018 and a slight decrease of 35 (0.7%) FTE operational support staff since 30 September 2019.

**3,445 FTE band 4 probation officers in post**

This figure is an increase of 93 (2.8%) since 31 December 2018 and an increase of 135 (4.1%) FTE probation officers compared to 30 September 2019. A large component of this increase was due to the NPS transfer of 274 (FTE) staff from a privately run CRC to HMPPS, during December 2019. In addition to the band 4 probation officers, there were 2,534 FTE band 3 probation services officers: a slight decrease of 13 (0.5%) since 31 December 2018 and a slight decrease of 20 (0.8%) since 30 September 2019.

**Leaving rate of 12.1% amongst band 3-5 prison officers**

This is a slight increase of 0.6 percentage points compared to the year ending 31 March 2019. The overall leaving rate across HMPPS over the past year stood at 10.4%, which is no substantial change (0.4 percentage points) compared to the year ending 31 March 2019.

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*This publication provides details of staffing levels, staff inflows and outflows, sickness absence rates, and protected characteristics for the directly employed workforce of HMPPS. Information presented covers PSP, the NPS, the YCS, and HMPPS headquarters, which includes Area Services that provide direct operational support to prisons. Technical details and explanatory notes can be found in the accompanying Guide to HMPPS Workforce Statistics.*

## **Points to note**

### **Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service**

On 1 April 2017, Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) replaced the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), an agency of the Ministry of Justice. HMPPS is focussed on supporting operational delivery and the effective running of prison and probation services across the public and private sectors. HMPPS works with a number of partners to carry out the sentences given by the courts, either in custody or the community. This publication covers the reporting period up to 31 December 2019 and therefore considers in detail quarterly staffing levels and staff inflows and outflows, for both NOMS and HMPPS, since April 2013.

For ease, the statistics in this publication will be referred to as those of the HMPPS workforce (i.e. staff working in HMPPS and with a contract of employment with HMPPS, excluding those on career breaks and those on secondment or loan outside of HMPPS but including staff on secondment or loan into HMPPS). In April 2017, the Youth Custody Service (YCS) was launched and forms another distinct arm of HMPPS. In terms of how these particular staffing figures appear in the statistics, central YCS units are categorised within HQ and Area Services whilst the Youth Custody Estate element of this new YCS category is now included separately in the publication tables. This covers staffing figures relating to Cookham Wood, Feltham, Werrington, and Wetherby Youth Offending Institutions (YOIs) as well as Medway Secure Training Centre (STC). Historically these figures would have been included within the wider Public Sector Prisons (PSP) category. Historical and latest figures for the Youth Custody Estate have been separated out to allow comparisons to be made and to establish the trends over time for these YOIs and Medway STC.

Further information on the introduction of the YCS has been set out in the accompanying Guide to Workforce Statistics. Only staff in PSP, YCS, HMPPS HQ and Area Services, as well as the National Probation Service (NPS), are directly employed by HMPPS and therefore staffing in private sector establishments, community rehabilitation companies and other contractors are excluded.

### **New Annex on Probation Officer Vacancies and Trainees**

As of the June 2019 publication, a new experimental statistics annex has been added to this bulletin which presents figures on Probation Officers in post, their required staffing level, in addition to the number of trainee and qualified Probation Officers.

### **Reporting of figure differences**

Full time equivalent figures are rounded to the nearest whole number, while percentages and working days lost are rounded to one decimal place. Due to this rounding, reported differences may appear not to match the apparent difference between the reported figures. For example, if a previous percentage were reported as 46.7% (rounded from 46.74%) and the new percentage 46.9% (rounded from 46.86%), then the difference reported would be 0.1 percentage points (rounded from 0.12).

### **Organisational Changes**

- From 20 August 2018, HMPPS exercised its right to step in and take over the running of HMP Birmingham for an initial period of six months, while the existing G4S management remained in place. This was further extended in February 2019, until HMP Birmingham transferred back into HMPPS on 1 July 2019. HMP Birmingham is therefore included in the figures within this publication as of the July to September 2019 quarter.
- In November 2019, over 1200 NPS staff were moved into the Community and Interventions directorate (part of HMPPS HQ and Area Services). These changes are included in this bulletin as of the Sep-Dec 2019 quarter.
- During December 2019, 274 FTE NPS staff were transferred from the privately-run CRC in Wales to HMPPS, as the new establishment NPS Wales UM Transition. Their figures are included in this bulletin as of the Sep-Dec 2019 quarter.

## **Future Plans**

For future publications we are considering ways in which we can improve the bulletin, and some of the issues we may look into are as follows:

- The frequency of the bulletin - for example, whether it is better suited as a bi-annual publication.
- How to make the tables and presentation of the figures more user-friendly.
- Whether to and how to expand the range of information provided.
- A review of the Experimental Recruitment Diversity annex to determine whether it is fit for purpose, and if not, how it might be changed, or even whether to cease its production.

If you have any particular comments or views on the above, or any other aspects you would like to be considered about this bulletin, please contact us at the address given at the end of the publication.

## 1. Total HMPPS staff in post

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### 49,853 full time equivalent (FTE) staff in post (as at 31 December 2019)

This is a slight increase of 260 (0.5%) FTE staff in post since 31 December 2018 and a minimal change of 53 (0.1%) since 30 September 2019. Of the staff in post, there were 33,894 in Public Sector Prisons (PSP), 9,215 staff in the National Probation Service (NPS), 5,069 FTE staff in HQ and Area Services, and 1,675 in the Youth Custody Service (YCS).

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As at 31 December 2019, there were **49,853** staff in post in HMPPS on a full time equivalent (FTE) basis (Figure 1). This includes **33,894** FTE staff in PSP (making up 68.0% of all HMPPS staff), **9,215** in the NPS (18.5% of all HMPPS staff), **5,069** in HMPPS HQ and Area Services (10.2% of all HMPPS staff), and **1,675** in the YCS (3.4% of all HMPPS staff).

Compared to 31 December 2018, the overall FTE slightly increased by **260** (0.5%): FTE in PSP slightly decreased by **351** (1.0%), FTE in the NPS decreased by **515** (5.3%), FTE in HQ and Area Services increased by **1,212** (31.4%), and FTE in the YCS decreased by **86** (4.9%). These changes are affected by the organisational changes described on page 2, namely the movement of over 1,200 staff from NPS to HQ and Area Services, and the transfer of 274 (FTE) NPS staff from private CRC in Wales into HMPPS during Q3 of 2019.

Since 31 March 2014, a number of organisational changes have occurred, such as the creation of the NPS, movements to and from the private sector, and transfers into MoJ<sup>1</sup>. Excluding all these changes, the number of staff in post has increased by 6,936 FTE (20.7%) between 31 March 2014 and 31 December 2019.

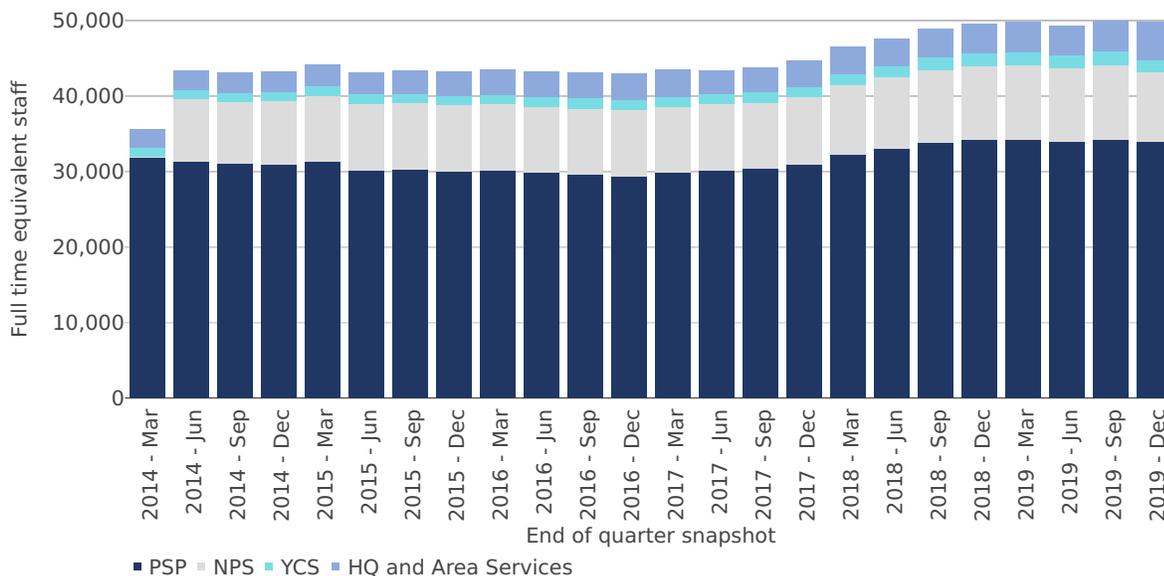
As at 31 December 2019, there were **27,762** FTE (55.7% of HMPPS staff) operational prison service staff (including YCS staff). This is a slight decrease of **549** FTE staff (1.9%) compared to 31 December 2018. Non-operational roles across PSP, YCS, and HMPPS HQ accounted for **11,820** FTE posts (23.7% of HMPPS staff), which is an increase of **418** FTE (3.7%) since 31 December 2018. In the NPS grades there were **10,271** FTE staff<sup>2</sup> (20.6% of all HMPPS staff): an increase of **391** (4.0%) since 31 December 2018.

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<sup>1</sup>Please refer to footnote 1 of tables 6a and 6b for information on recent structural changes.

<sup>2</sup>This includes staff in NPS grades working in other parts of HMPPS.

**Figure 1: Number of HMPPS staff in post on a FTE basis, 31 March 2014 to 31 December 2019 (Source: Table 1)**



Source: HMPPS - Oracle HRMS and Single Operating Platform.

### 1.1 Length of Service

Length of service information has been calculated for HMPPS staff from the most recent hire date. Where staff have transferred in from another government department or have transferred in through HMPPS taking over a function, length of service is calculated from entry to HMPPS.

Across HMPPS overall, **33.0%** of FTE staff in post had less than 3 years' service, which is no substantial change since 31 December 2018 and a slight decrease from 33.5% at 30 September 2019. Meanwhile, **38.6%** of HMPPS FTE staff in post overall had 10 years or more of experience, representing a slight decrease from 39.9% at 31 December 2018 and no substantial change since 30 September 2019.

It should be noted, however, that the NPS was created on 1 June 2014 and the service of NPS staff in Probation Trusts prior to the creation of the NPS is not included. Therefore, the figures relating to the length of service of NPS staff, which are included in the HMPPS overall figures, do not necessarily represent their full experience but rather the length of service from entry to HMPPS.

Excluding the NPS, **34.3%** of FTE staff in post across HMPPS had less than 3 years' service as at 31 December 2019. This is no substantial change compared to 31 December 2018. The non-NPS staff with 10 years' experience or more made up **46.8%** of the workforce, which is a 2.7 percentage points decrease compared to 31 December 2018.

## 2. Band 3-5 prison officers and band 2 operational support staff

### 22,154 FTE band 3-5 prison officers in post (as at 31 December 2019)

This is a decrease of 568 (2.5%) since 31 December 2018 and a decrease of 382 (1.7%) FTE prison officers compared to 30 September 2019. Taking into account the rise in quarter three due to the transfer of HMP Birmingham back to HMPPS, there was a steady decline in Prison Officer numbers during 2019.

### 4,666 FTE band 2 operational support staff in post (as at 31 December 2019)

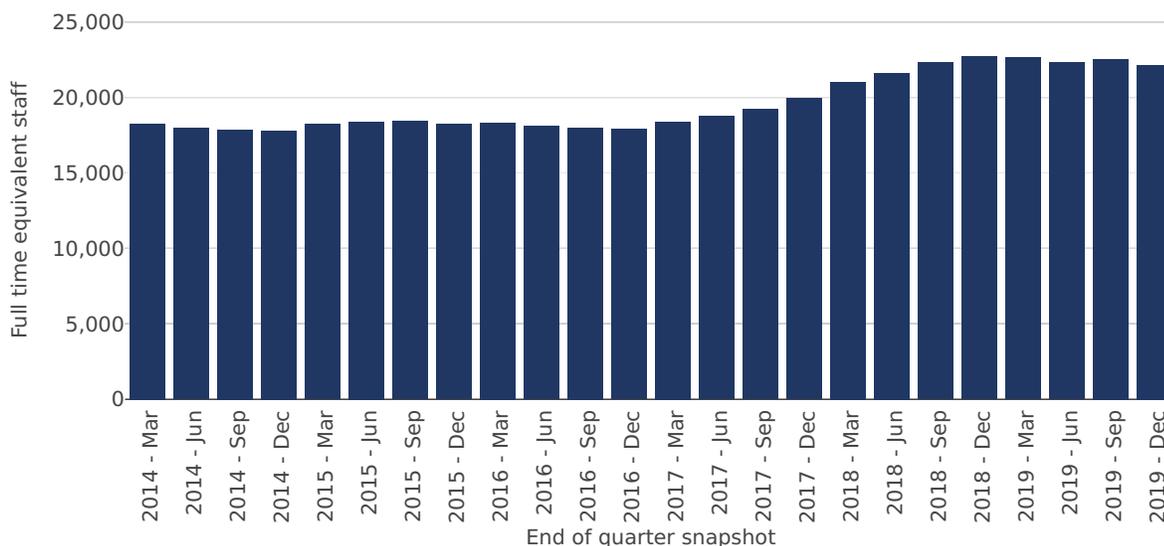
This corresponds to no substantial change of 10 (0.2%) since 31 December 2018 and a slight decrease of 35 (0.7%) FTE operational support staff since 30 September 2019.

The key operational grades in public sector prisons are the band 3 to 5 prison officers. They consist of band 3 prison officers, band 4 officer specialists, band 4 supervising officers, and band 5 custodial managers.

As at 31 December 2019, there were **22,154** FTE band 3 to 5 officers, which is a decrease of **568** (2.5%) compared to 31 December 2018 and a decrease of 382 (1.7%) FTE prison officers since the previous quarter (Figure 2).

The number of band 2 operational support grade (OSG) FTE staff did not change substantially against the previous year and slightly decreased by **35** (0.7%) compared to the previous quarter, to stand at **4,666** for 31 December 2019.

**Figure 2: Number of band 3-5 prison officers in post on a FTE basis, 31 March 2014 to 31 December 2019 (Source: Table 3)**



Source: HMPPS - Oracle HRMS and Single Operating Platform.

The proportion of band 3-5 prison officers with less than 3 years' service at 31 December 2019 was **41.3%**, which was no substantial change since 31 December 2018. The proportion of officers in post with 10 years or more of experience slightly decreased by 1.8 percentage points from 46.0% at 31 December 2018 to **44.2%** at 31 December 2019. This corresponds to 9,795 FTE staff with 10 years or more of experience at 31 December 2019, which is a fall of **661** FTE, or **6.3%** since 31 December 2018.

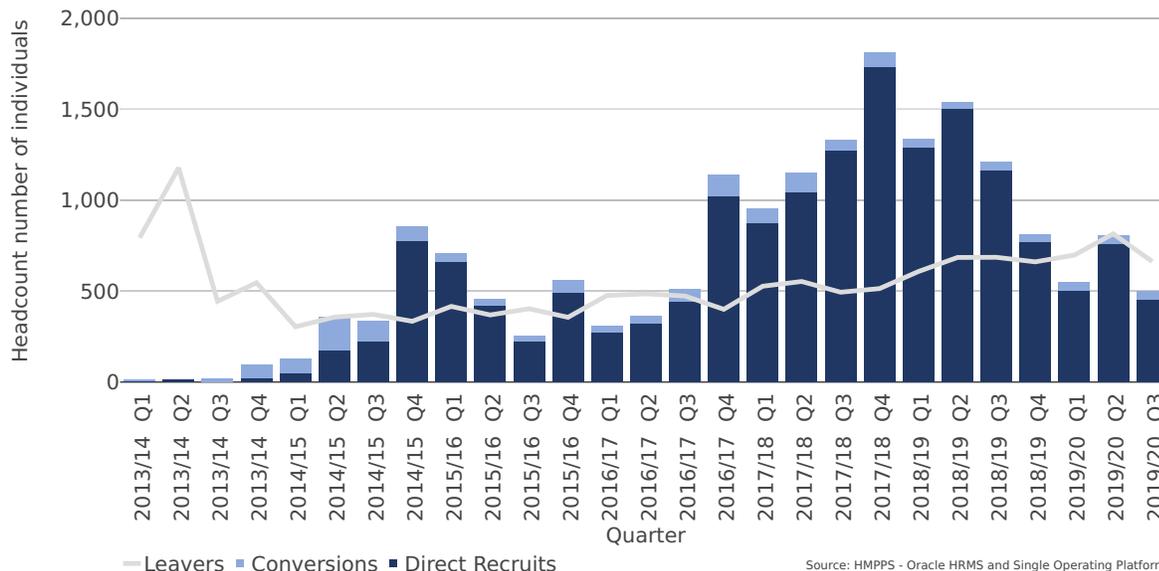
The proportion of band 2 OSG FTE staff with less than 3 years' service slightly increased from 35.1% at 31 December 2018

to **36.1%** at 31 December 2019, and the proportion of those with 10 years or more of experience decreased from 46.6% at 31 December 2018 to **45.6%** at 31 December 2019.

Figure 3 shows a quarterly trend of band 3 to 5 officers joining or leaving since 2013/14. Over the year to 31 December 2019, **2,669** band 3 officers were appointed (consisting of direct new recruits and existing staff who converted to a band 3 officer grade), a decrease of **3,233** (54.8%) compared to 5,902 in the previous year. The headcount of new band 3 officer appointments decreased by 309 (38.3%) from 807 between July and September 2019 to **498** between October and December 2019 (Table 17).

The headcount of band 3 to 5 prison officers who left HMPPS in the year ending 31 December 2019 was **2,837**, which is an increase of **344** (13.8%) compared to the year ending 31 December 2018. Examining reasons for leaving, **64.2%** of prison officers who left in the year ending 31 December 2019 resigned from their roles (up from 61.9% in the year ending 31 December 2018). Of the other prison officers who left HMPPS, **14.8%** were dismissed and **8.0%** retired in the year ending 31 December 2019: no substantial change and down from 9.7%, respectively, compared to the previous year.

**Figure 3: Newly appointed band 3 prison officers and band 3 to 5 prison officer leavers, April 2013 to 31 December 2019 (Source: Table 17)**



The number of band 2 OSG staff who joined HMPPS in the year ending 31 December 2019 was **726**: a decrease of **305** (29.6%) compared to the previous year ending 31 December 2018 and a decrease of **58** (7.4%) since the year ending 30 September 2019. The headcount number of band 2 OSG staff who left HMPPS was **616**, which is an increase of **87** (16.4%) compared to the year ending 31 December 2018 and a decrease of **18** (2.8%) compared to the year ending 30 September 2019.

Joiners and leavers are not the only movements into and out of the band 3 to 5 officer grouping. There are also typically differences in the proportion of new joiners and older officers who work part time as well as movements between grades. For these reasons, the change in FTE does not directly reflect the difference between the number of joiners and leavers. Changes such as staff switching from full time to part time have the effect of reducing the FTE of officers available as they progress through their career.

### 3. Probation practitioners and senior probation officers

#### 3,445 FTE band 4 probation officers in post (as at 31 December 2019)

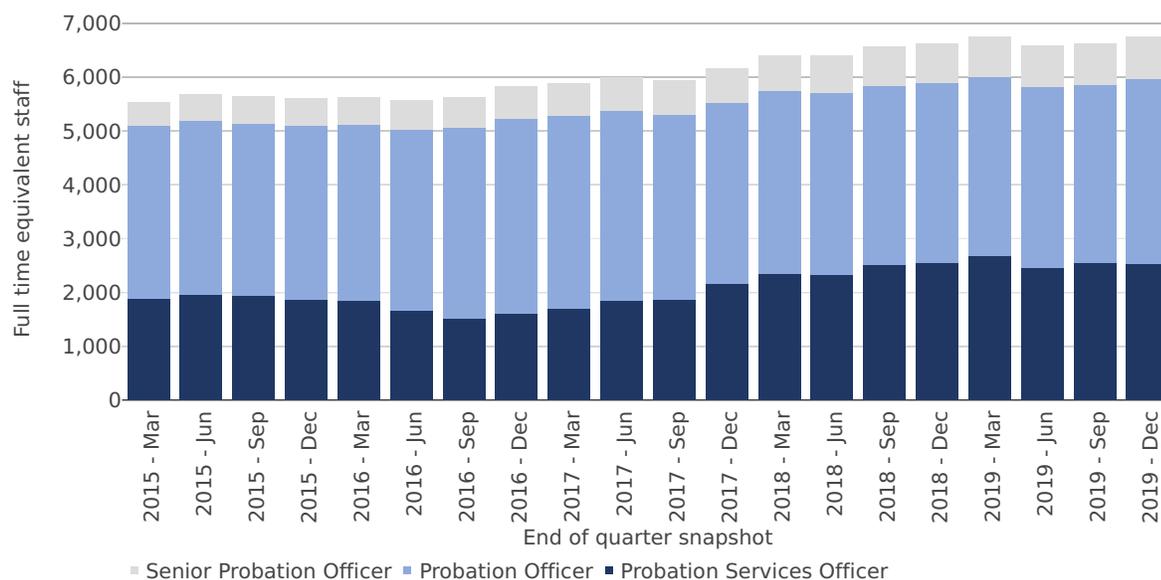
This figure is an increase of 93 (2.8%) since 31 December 2018 and an increase of 135 (4.1%) FTE probation officers compared to 30 September 2019. A large component of this increase was due to the NPS transfer of 274 (FTE) staff from a privately run CRC to HMPPS, during December 2019. In addition to the band 4 probation officers, there were 2,534 FTE band 3 probation services officers: a slight decrease of 13 (0.5%) since 31 December 2018 and a slight decrease of 20 (0.8%) since 30 September 2019.

Key grades in the NPS include band 3 probation services officers, band 4 probation officers (collectively known as probation practitioners), as well as band 5 senior probation officers. Staff who are training to be a probation officer work as a probation services officer during their training, so a proportion of the probation services officers in post will be working towards the professional probation officer qualification.

As of the June 2019 publication, a new experimental statistics annex has been added to this bulletin which presents figures on Probation Officers in post, their required staffing level, in addition to the number of trainee and qualified Probation Officers.

As at 31 December 2019 there were **2,534** FTE band 3 probation services officers in post, a slight decrease of **13** (0.5%) over the past year and a slight decrease of **20** (0.8%) over the quarter; **3,445** FTE band 4 probation officers, representing an increase of **93** (2.8%) over the past year and an increase of **135** (4.1%) compared to the previous quarter; and **781** FTE band 5 senior probation officers, showing an increase of **44** (5.9%) over the previous year and a slight increase of **11** (1.5%) since the last quarter (Figure 4). A large component of these increases was due to the NPS transfer of staff from a privately run CRC to HMPPS, during December 2019.

**Figure 4: Number of probation officers, probation services officers and senior probation officers in post on a FTE basis, 31 March 2015 to 31 December 2019 (Source: Table 3)**



Source: HMPPS - Oracle HRMS and Single Operating Platform.

In the past year, **395** probation services officers were appointed, some of whom will be training to become qualified probation officers. This is a decrease of **311** (44.1%) compared to the year ending 31 December 2018 and a decrease of **138** (25.9%)

compared to the number appointed in the year ending 30 September 2019. In the past year, **227** probation services officers left the service. This is an increase of **14** (6.6%) compared to the year ending 31 December 2018 and a decrease of **20** (8.1%) compared to the number who left in the year ending 30 September 2019.

## 4. Joiners and Leavers

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### Leaving rate of 12.1% amongst band 3-5 prison officers (for the year ending 31 December 2019)

This is a slight increase of 0.6 percentage points compared to the year ending 31 March 2019. The overall leaving rate across HMPPS over the past year stood at 10.4%, which is no substantial change (0.4 percentage points) compared to the year ending 31 March 2019.

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Over the past year, **5,379** staff joined HMPPS, which is a decrease of **4,283** (44.3%) compared to the year ending 31 December 2018. These joiners consisted of **3,944** across PSP, **169** in the YCS, **969** in the NPS, and **297** in HMPPS HQ and Area Services. Compared to the year ending 31 December 2018 these numbers of joiners represent a decrease of **45.4%** for PSP, a decrease of **69.9%** for YCS, a decrease of **37.4%** for NPS, and a decrease of **9.5%** for HMPPS HQ and Area Services.

There were **5,570** leavers in the year ending 31 December 2019, an increase of **681** (13.9%) compared to the year ending 31 December 2018. This includes **4,167** leavers from PSP (an increase of 14.1%), **214** from YCS (an increase of 46.6%), **892** from the NPS (an increase of 9.6%), and **297** from HMPPS HQ and Area Services (an increase of 7.2%).

### 4.1 Leaving Rates<sup>3</sup>

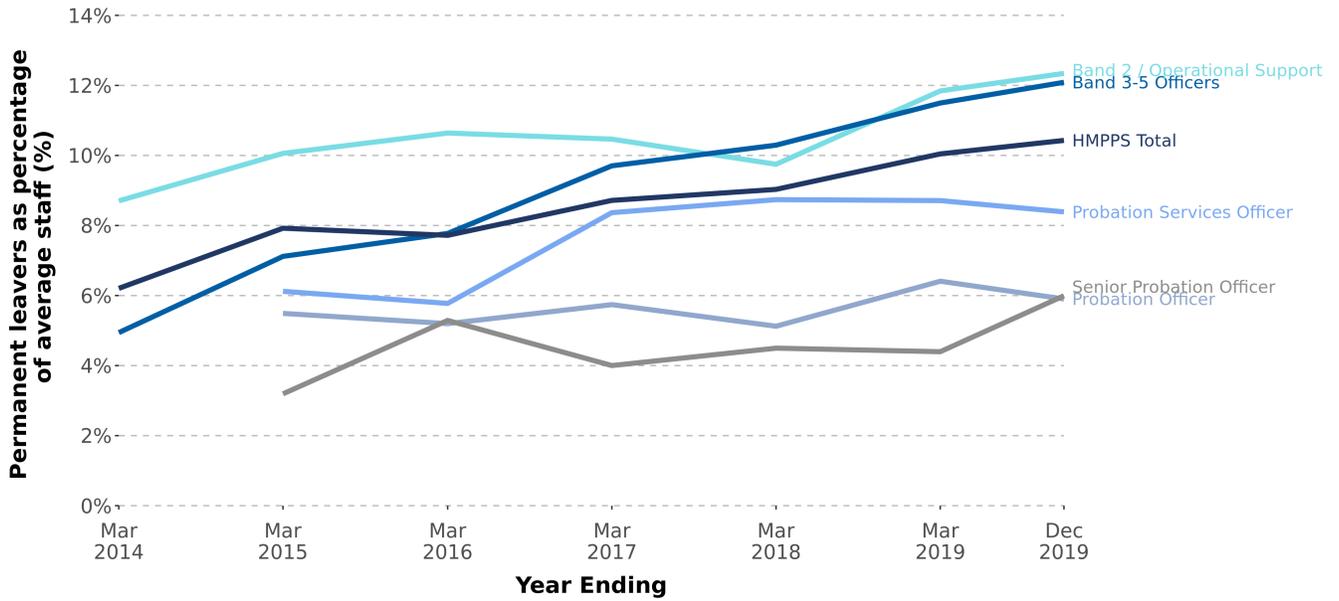
The overall HMPPS leaving rate for the year to 31 December 2019 was **10.4%**, which is broadly the same as for the year to 31 March 2019 (Figure 5). Specifically for band 3 to 5 prison officers, the leaving rate of **12.1%** in the year ending 31 December 2019 represented a slight increase of **0.6 percentage points** since the year ending 31 March 2019. The leaving rate for band 2 OSG staff was **12.3%** in the year ending 31 December 2019, which is a slight increase of **0.5 percentage points** compared to the year ending 31 March 2019.

The leaving rate for staff at the NPS overall in the year ending 31 December 2019 was **8.2%**, which is no substantial change (**0.1 percentage points**) since the year ending 31 March 2019. In the operational grades within the NPS, the leaving rate was highest amongst probation services officers at **8.4%**: no substantial change (**0.3 percentage points**) from the year ending 31 March 2019. Leaving rates for senior probation officers and probation officers stood at **6.0%** (a slight increase of **1.6 percentage points**) and **5.9%** (a slight decrease of **1.6 percentage points**), respectively, compared to the year to 31 March 2019.

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<sup>3</sup>Percentage of staff with a permanent contract of employment who left HMPPS, including individuals who have retired early, but excluding staff who left due to voluntary early departure schemes and redundancy (VEDSR).

**Figure 5: Annual leaving rates of permanent staff in key operational grades (excluding VEDSR), from the 12 months to 31 March 2014 to the 12 months to 31 December 2019 (Source: Table 11)**



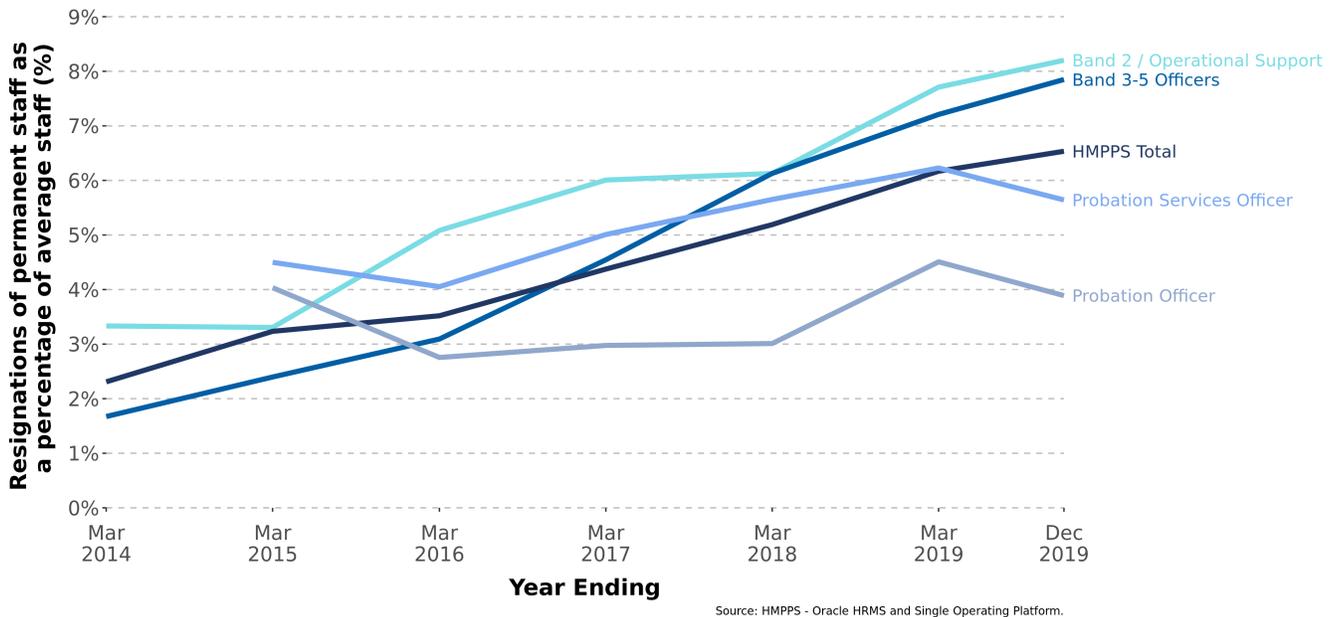
Source: HMPPS - Oracle HRMS and Single Operating Platform.

## 4.2 Resignation Rates<sup>4</sup>

The overall HMPPS resignation rate for the year to 31 December 2019 was **6.5%**, which is broadly the same (6.2%) as for the year to 31 March 2019 (Figure 6). Specifically for band 3-5 officers, the resignation rate was **7.8%** in the year ending 31 December 2019, which is a slight increase of **0.6 percentage points** since the year ending 31 March 2019. The resignation rate for OSG staff was **8.2%** for the year ending 31 December 2019, which is no substantial change since the year ending 31 March 2019.

For NPS overall, the resignation rate was **5.3%** for the year ending 31 December 2019. This represents no substantial change (**0.1 percentage points**) compared to the year ending 31 March 2019. Amongst the operational grades within the NPS, probation services officers had the highest resignation rate at **5.6%**, a slight decrease of **0.6 percentage points** since the year ending 31 March 2019. Resignation rates for probation officers stood at **3.9%** (a slight decrease of **0.6 percentage points** since the year ending 31 March 2019).

**Figure 6: Annual resignation rates of permanent staff in key operational grades, from the 12 months to 31 March 2014 to the 12 months to 31 December 2019 (Source: Table 12)**



<sup>4</sup>Percentage of staff with a permanent contract of employment who resigned from HMPPS.

## 5. Sickness absence

### HMPPS staff lost an average of 9.9 working days to sickness absence in the year ending 31 December 2019

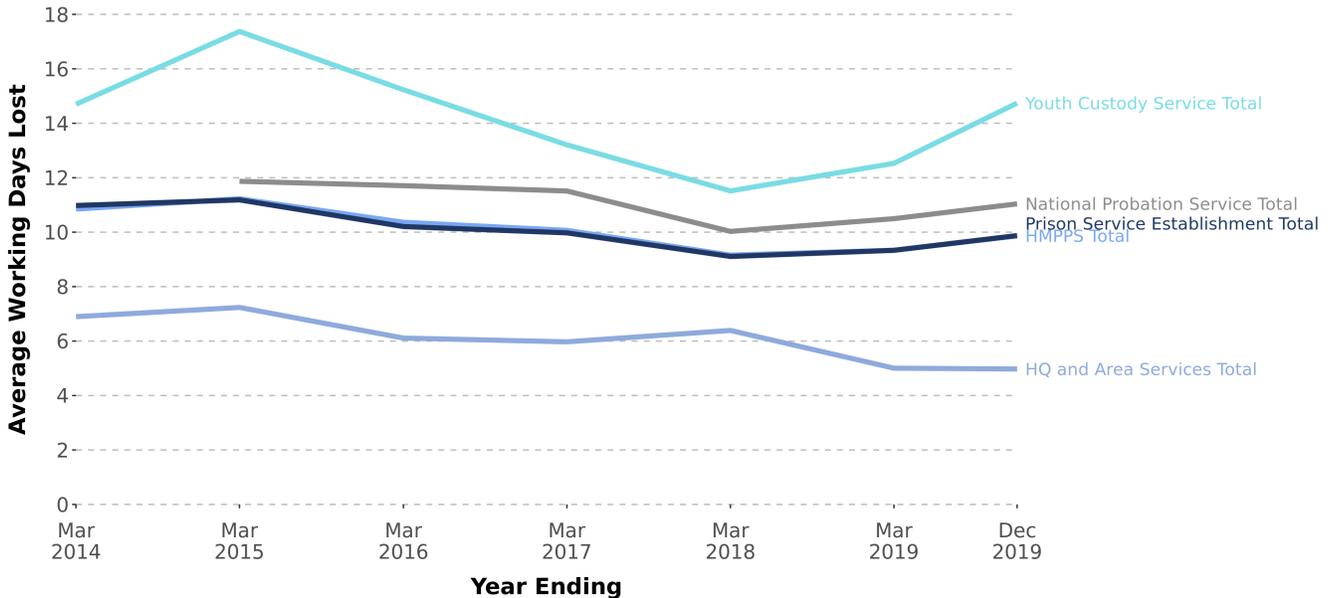
This represents an increase of 0.5 average working days lost (AWDL) compared to the year ending 31 March 2019.

In the year ending 31 December 2019, HMPPS staff lost an average of **9.9 working days** to sickness absence. This is an increase from 9.3 average working days lost for the year ending 31 March 2019.

YCS staff had the highest sickness absence rate at **14.7 AWDL**, followed by NPS (**11.0 AWDL**), PSP (**9.9 AWDL**), and HQ and Area Services (**5.0 AWDL**) (Figure 7). Compared to the year ending 31 March 2019, these represent an increase of **2.2 days** for YCS, an increase of **0.5 days** for NPS, an increase of **0.5 days** for PSP, and no substantial change (**0.0 days**) for HQ and Area Services staff.

The rate for HMPPS overall has varied between 9.2 and 11.2 AWDL in the years since 2013/14.

**Figure 7: Average working days lost to sickness absence, 12 months to 31 March 2014 to 12 months to 31 December 2019**  
(Source: Table 18)



The most common category of sickness absence in terms of days lost is mental and behavioural disorders, corresponding to **35.2%** of absences in the past year. This category was most prevalent for probation officers, where **51.9%** of working days lost were attributed to mental and behavioural disorders.

The category that accounted for the second largest proportion of working days lost was musculoskeletal system (**23.4%**). Together the top two categories accounted for **58.6%** of all working days lost.

## Further Information

### Accompanying files

As well as this bulletin, the following products are published as part of this release:

- A technical guide providing details of the HMPPS workforce structure as well as how the data are collected and processed. Information on the revisions policy and disclosure relevant to HMPPS staffing data is also included.
- A set of summary tables for the latest quarter and year as well as over time.
- A supplementary annex presenting experimental statistics on Probation Officers in post, their required staffing level, and the number of trainee and qualified Probation Officers.
- A set of experimental statistics on the gender, ethnicity and disability status of prison officer and operational support grade (OSG) recruitment campaign applicants for Public Sector Prisons and the Youth Custody Service.

### Official statistics

The statistics in this bulletin are classified as official statistics. The Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 defines 'official statistics' as all those statistical outputs produced by the UK Statistics Authority's executive office (the Office for National Statistics), by central Government departments and agencies, by the devolved administrations in Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, and by other Crown bodies (over 200 bodies in total). The statistics in this bulletin comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The Code encourages and supports producers of statistics to maintain their independence and to ensure adequate resourcing for statistical production. It helps producers and users of statistics by setting out the necessary principles and practices to produce statistics that are trustworthy, high quality and of public value.

### Experimental Statistics

The statistics in both the Prison Officer recruitment diversity annex and the Probation Officer recruitment annex are experimental statistics. Experimental statistics are a subset of newly developed or innovative official statistics undergoing evaluation. They are developed under the guidance of the Head of Profession for Statistics (HoP) and published to involve users and stakeholders in the assessment of their suitability and quality at an early stage. Therefore, we would like to receive feedback as to how useful they are, whether a different analysis would be preferable, or any other comments about them. If you wish to send any views you may have about these experimental statistics, please use the contact details below.

### Contact

Press enquiries should be directed to the Ministry of Justice press office:

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**Next update: 21 May 2020**

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