



Home Office



# Police Workforce, England and Wales, 30 September 2015

Statistical Bulletin 01/16

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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: Home Office Statistics, 1<sup>st</sup> floor Peel Building, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF

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# 1 Introduction

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This release is a mid-year update of the annual [Police workforce, England and Wales, 31 March 2015](#) publication and contains statistics on the numbers of police officers, police staff, police community support officers (PCSOs), designated officers, traffic wardens and special constables in post on 30 September 2015 in the 43 police forces of England and Wales and the British Transport Police.

The workforce figures in this release are all presented on a full-time equivalent (FTE) basis unless indicated otherwise.

The [User Guide to Police Workforce Statistics](#) contains further information, including a glossary, conventions used and other background information. The data in this release can be found in the ['Police workforce, England and Wales, 30 September 2015: data tables'](#).

## 2 Key findings

Between 30 September 2014 and 30 September 2015 there were reductions across all worker types in the combined 43 police forces in England and Wales (Table 1). There were 125,185 police officers, a decrease of 1.5% since 30 September 2014, and, in addition, there were 3,074 police officers employed by the British Transport Police and 339 police officers seconded to central services.

**Table 1: Police workforce<sup>1,2</sup>, as at 30 September 2015, England and Wales**

	30-Sep-14	31-Mar-15	30-Sep-15	Change in 12 months Sep-14 to Sep-15		Change in 6 months March-15 to Sep-15	
				Volume	Percentage	Volume	Percentage
Police officers	127,077	126,818	125,185	-1,893	-1.5%	-1,633	-1.3%
Police staff	63,639	63,719	62,577	-1,062	-1.7%	-1,142	-1.8%
Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)	12,770	12,331	11,809	-960	-7.5%	-521	-4.2%
Designated officers	4,304	4,254	4,239	-65	-1.5%	-14	-0.3%
<b>Total workforce<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>207,808</b>	<b>207,140</b>	<b>203,828</b>	<b>-3,980</b>	<b>-1.9%</b>	<b>-3,312</b>	<b>-1.6%</b>
Special constables (headcount)	16,772	16,074	16,050	-722	-4.3%	-24	-0.1%

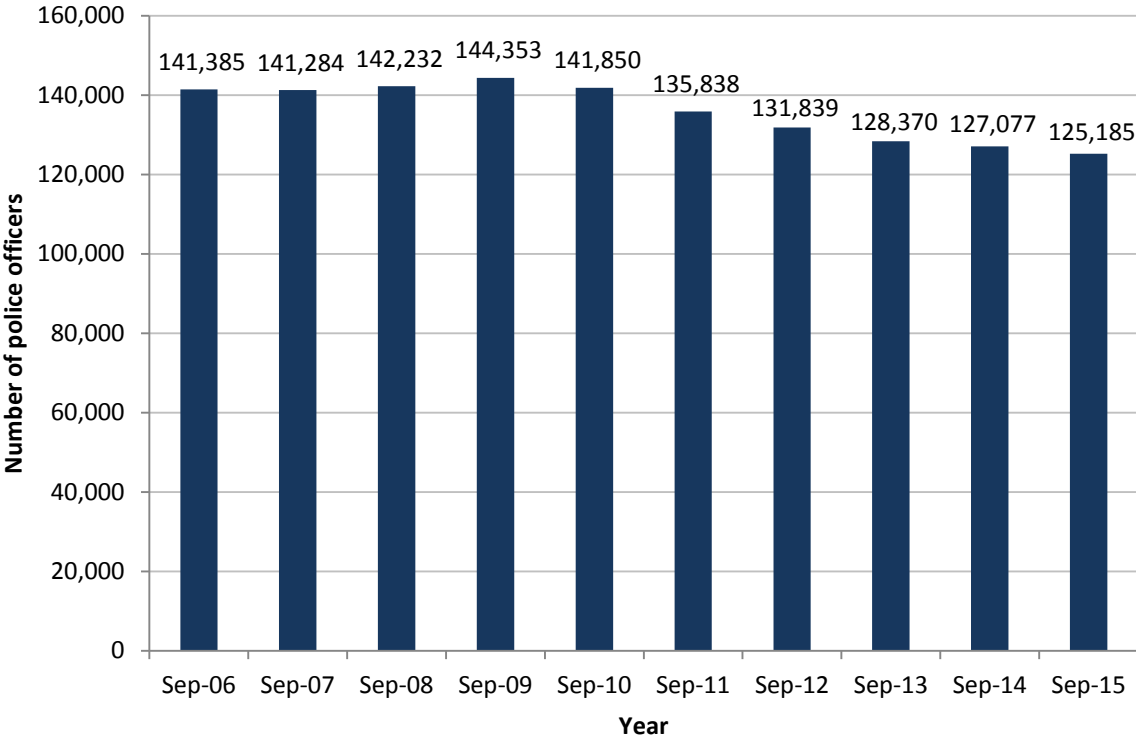
### Table notes

1. Unless otherwise stated, figures are based on full-time equivalent figures for the 43 forces of England and Wales only. British Transport Police are excluded from this table.
2. Total workforce includes a small number of traffic wardens. Figures for numbers of traffic wardens quoted in this release have become very small as police forces transfer these duties to local authorities.

Source: Home Office, ['Police workforce, England and Wales, 30 September 2015: data tables'](#).

Across the 43 police forces in England and Wales, police officer numbers have fallen for each of the last six years (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Number of police officers<sup>1</sup>, as at 30 September 2006 to 2015, England and Wales**

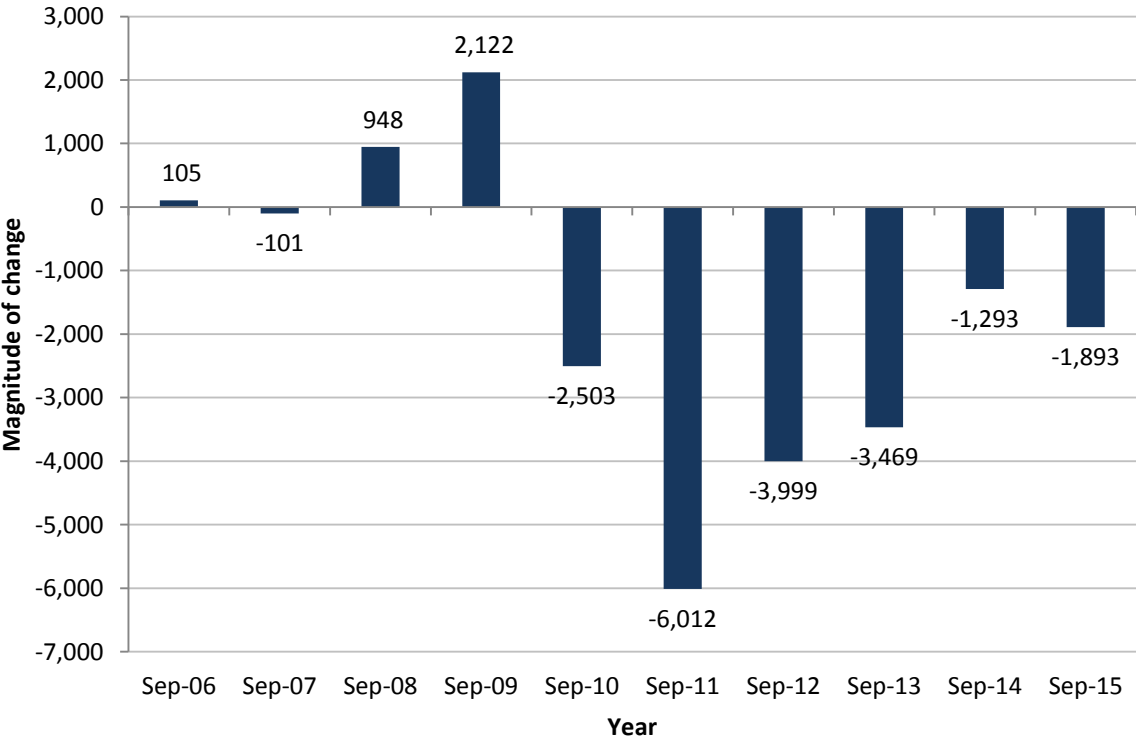


**Chart notes**

- 1. Based on full-time equivalent figures for the 43 forces of England and Wales only.  
Source: Home Office, [‘Police workforce, England and Wales, 30 September 2015: data tables’](#).

For the three years prior to September 2015 the size of the reduction in the number of police officers had been declining, however, for the first time in a number of years the size of the reduction in the number of officers is greater than the previous year (Figure 2). The magnitude of the reduction in the number of police staff was the same as last year, following larger falls in the preceding three years, and there was a slightly larger fall in the number of PCSOs in the last year compared to a year earlier, though this has fluctuated in recent years.

**Figure 2: Change in the number of police officers<sup>1</sup>, as at 30 September 2006 to 2015, compared to a year earlier, England and Wales**

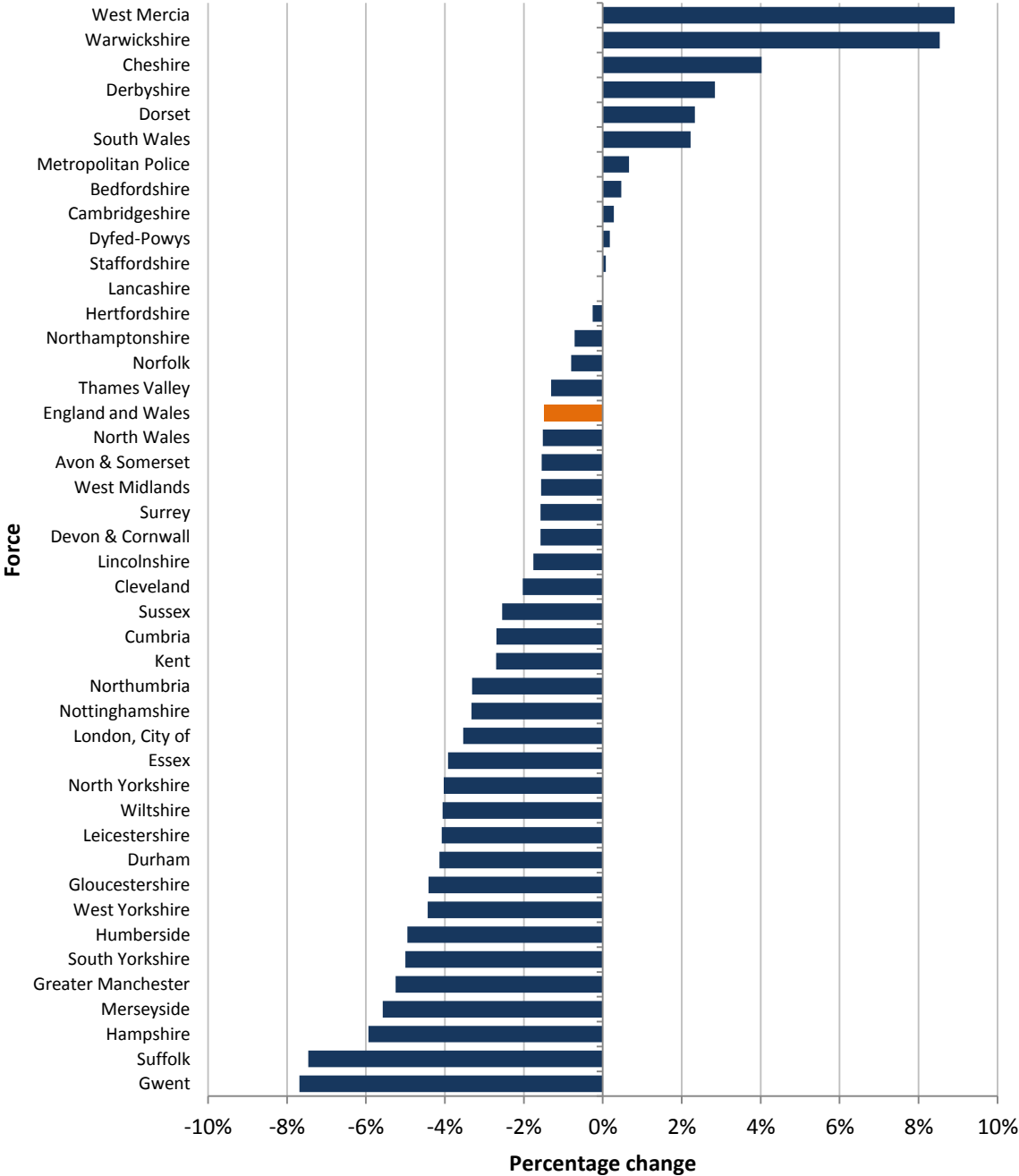


**Chart notes**

1. Based on full-time equivalent figures for the 43 forces of England and Wales only.  
 Source: Home Office, [‘Police workforce, England and Wales, 30 September 2015: data tables’](#).

Of the 43 police forces in England and Wales, 31 recorded falls in police officer numbers compared to a year earlier (Figure 3), and 36 recorded falls compared to 6 months earlier.

**Figure 3: Change in the number of police officers<sup>1,2</sup>, as at 30 September 2015, compared to a year earlier, by police force area**



**Chart notes**

1. Based on full-time equivalent figures for the 43 forces of England and Wales only.
2. Some of the increase for Derbyshire is attributable to the inclusion of police officers and staff in collaborative units who were not previously recorded in their data returns.

Source: Home Office, [‘Police workforce, England and Wales, 30 September 2015: data tables’](#).



## 3 Data quality and revisions

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### Special constables

- Police forces periodically go through a cleansing process, removing Special Constables who have not worked for a period of time from their data. Each force does this at their own discretion, therefore, caution should be taken when comparing differences over time and across forces.

### Wiltshire

- For this release, Wiltshire were unable to supply workforce figures as at 30 September 2015 for police officers, police staff and police community support officers. Data in this release, relating to police officers, police staff and police community support officers in Wiltshire were extracted on 23 November 2015. This is unlikely to have a significant impact on national totals.

All figures presented are correct at the time of publication and may include revisions submitted by forces for the years covered by, and received since the publication of, the previous year's edition.

Due to significant revisions to three police forces' data, the data tables in the annual 'Police Workforce, England and Wales, 31 March 2015' release have been revised. These revisions include the 2014/15 police officer joiners and leavers data for the Metropolitan Police and Northamptonshire Police, as well as the 31 March 2015 officers available for duty data for Cleveland Police. The tables affected by these revisions are 1, 5a, 5b and 6. Updated tables can be found here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/444536/police-workforce-tabs-mar15.ods](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444536/police-workforce-tabs-mar15.ods)

## 4 Upcoming changes to Police Workforce statistics

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Following extensive discussions with police forces and other stakeholders (including HMIC) via working groups, the decision was taken by the group to collect police functions data based on the Police Objective Analysis (POA) framework from 2015/16 onwards, as opposed to the old functions framework used in previous bulletins. This is to ensure that the POA categories, which are more reflective of the current nature of policing, are reflected in the published data, and to ensure comparability with other data collected by CIPFA, which is based on the POA framework.

As a result, the police functions data published in July 2016 will be based on this new framework. More details on this change and its implications for comparisons over time will be included in the July publication and associated user guide.

In addition to this, it is also intended that the July publication will contain different data on assaults to previous years. Having published these data for the first time since 2009/10 in 2014/15, the Home Office is currently working with forces to improve these data further. The assaults figures for 2015/16 will therefore be drawn from two sources where possible – police health and safety systems and crime recording systems. These data will be developed further in future years.

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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