








National Offender Management Service (NOMS) Workforce Statistics Bulletin, 31 December 2016

Main points

42,927 Full Time Equivalent staff in post		This represents a reduction of 366 staff in post over 2016 and a fall of 133 on the quarter.
5.3% shortfall of band 3-5 prison officers		Across public sector prison establishments, the shortfall to prison officer target staffing levels increased by 1.0 percentage points from September 2016. There was also an increase to the shortfall for band 2 operational support staff, from 11.2% to 12.1%.
Leaving rate of 9.0% amongst band 3-5 prison officers		This is an increase of 1.5 percentage points compared to the year ending March 2016. The overall leaving rate across NOMS over the last year stood at 8.0%, a 0.6 point rise compared to the year ending March 2016.
Fall of 347 prison officers over the year		At 31 December 2016 there were 17,888 FTE band 3 to 5 officers in post, a fall of 347 (1.9%) on the year and 115 (0.6%) over the past three months.
12.0 sick days per person in the National Probation Service		This is higher than the average 10.6 working days lost amongst both NOMS staff overall and staff within prison service establishments.

This publication provides details of staffing levels, staff inflows and outflows and for the first time this quarter sickness absence rates for the directly employed workforce of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). Information covers Public Sector Prisons, the National Probation Service (NPS) and NOMS headquarters, including area services which provide direct operational support to prisons. The annual bulletin, due to be published on 18 May 2017, will provide a more in-depth commentary. Technical details and explanatory notes can be found in the accompanying Guide to NOMS Workforce statistics:

We are changing how our quarterly bulletins look, and would welcome any feedback to commentary.champions@justice.gsi.gov.uk

For other feedback related to the content of this publication, please let us know at PAG_statistics@noms.gsi.gov.uk

1. Total Staff in Post

42,927 Full Time Equivalent staff in post

This represents a reduction of 366 staff in post since 31 December 2015 and a fall of 133 since 30 September 2016.

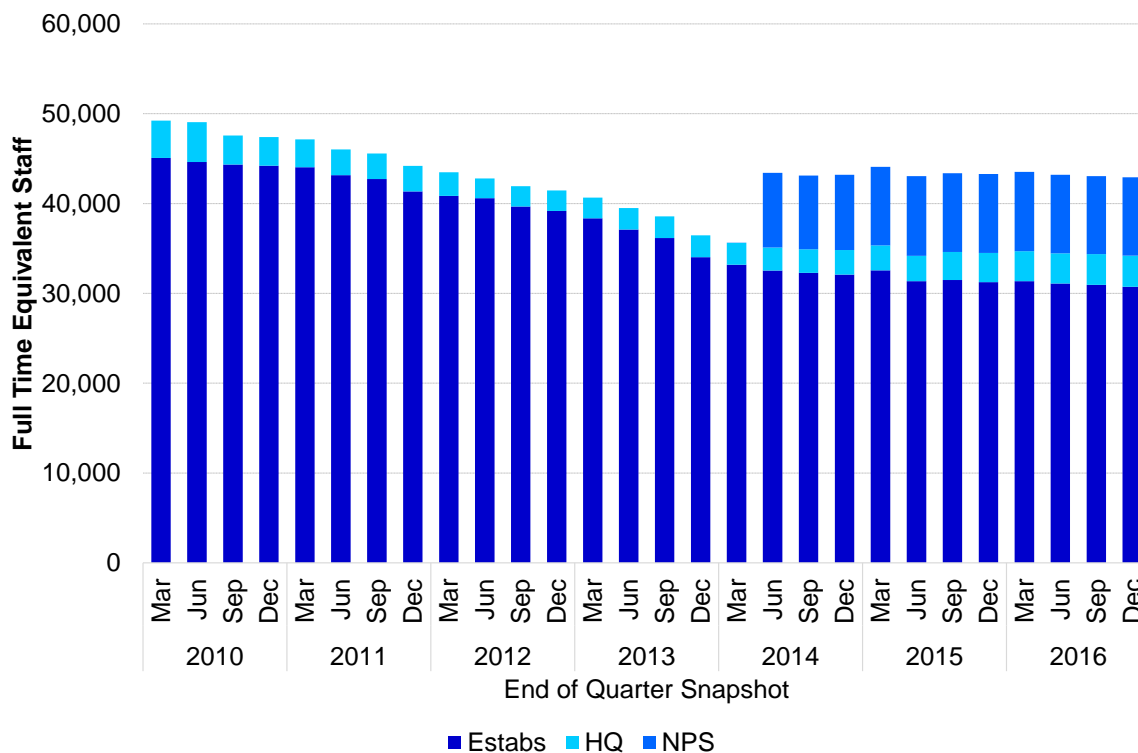
5.3% shortfall of band 3-5 prison officers

Across public sector prison establishments, the shortfall to prison officer target staffing levels increased by 1.0 percentage points from September 2016. There was also an increase to the shortfall for band 2 operational support staff, from 11.2% to 12.1%.

As at 31 December 2016, there were **42,927** staff in post in NOMS on a full time equivalent (FTE) basis (Figure 1). This includes **8,725** FTE staff in the National Probation Service (NPS) (making up 20.3% of all NOMS staff), **30,742** (71.6% of NOMS staff) in Public Sector Prisons and **3,461** (8.1% of NOMS staff) in NOMS HQ and Area Services. Compared to 31 December 2015 the overall FTE has fallen by **366** (0.8%), FTE in the NPS fell by 72 (0.8%), FTE in Public Sector Prisons fell by 502 (1.6%) while NOMS HQ and Area Services increased FTE by 209 (6.4%). The increase in NOMS HQ numbers was mainly as the result of the continuing movement of functions performed by psychologists, intelligence officers and HR managers out of establishments.

Excluding changes in staff numbers as a result of organisational changes, the reduction in staff from 31 March 2010 to 31 December 2016 was 10,755 (a 24% decrease). Compared to December 2015, the like-for-like reduction was 517 FTE (a 1.2% fall).

Figure 1: Number of NOMS staff in post on a FTE basis, 31 March 2010 to 31 December 2016 (Source: Table 1)



Note: On 1 June 2014 the National Probation Service was formed and 8,430 FTE staff transferred from Probation Trusts into NOMS.

1.1 Staff in post by grade

At 31 December 2016, there were **23,417** FTE operational prison service staff (54.6% of NOMS staff), a reduction of **542** FTE (2.3%) compared to the previous year.

Non-operational roles across public sector prisons and NOMS HQ accounted for **10,670** FTE posts (24.9% of NOMS staff), an increase of **234** FTE (2.2%) compared to the previous year.

In the NPS there were **8,840** FTE, a fall of **57** since the previous year. This includes **3,615** FTE probation officers in post (8.4% of NOMS staff), representing an increase of **376** compared to 31 December 2015.

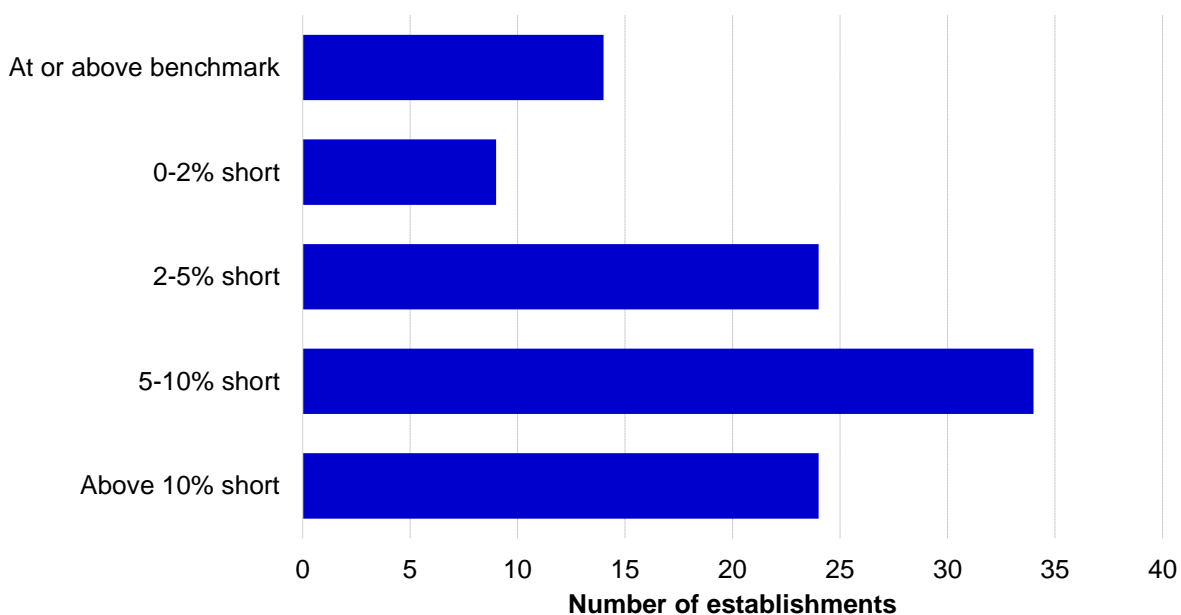
1.2 Benchmarks (Public Sector Prisons)

Benchmarks are target staffing levels agreed with the Governor and Deputy Director of Custody. Each establishment's benchmark has been carefully designed to provide a staffing level sufficient to deliver safety, decency and security. Benchmarks are subject to change in order to maintain a safe, decent and secure operating level in every establishment.

Across all grades the shortfall to benchmark levels at 31 December 2016 in public sector prisons was **2,290** FTEs (7.0%) against a target of 32,806. This target has reduced by 114 since September 2016.

Within the largest staff group, band 3-5 prison officers, the shortfall to target staffing levels at 31 December 2016 was **983** FTE (5.3%), an increase of 1.0 percentage points from 4.3% in September 2016. Over half of prison establishments had a deficit of 5% or more (Figure 2). Band 2 operational support staff made up the second largest staff group and had an overall shortfall of **627** FTE (12.1%) against target level, up from 11.2% on the quarter.

Figure 2: Distribution of Shortfalls of Band 3 to 5 Officers to Benchmark by Establishment, 31 December 2016 (Source: Table 14)



2. Joiners and leavers

Leaving rate of 9.0% amongst band 3-5 prison officers

This is an increase of 1.5 percentage points compared to the year ending March 2016. The overall leaving rate across NOMS over the last year stood at 8.0%, a 0.6 point rise compared to the year ending March 2016.

In the last year, **3,445** staff were recruited to NOMS, a fall of 1,873 compared to the previous year. These joiners consist of **2,670** across public sector prisons, **613** in the NPS and **162** in NOMS HQ and area services. There were **3,910** leavers in the last year, an increase of 149 compared to the previous year. This includes **3,029** leavers from public sector prisons, **664** from the NPS and **217** from NOMS HQ and area services.

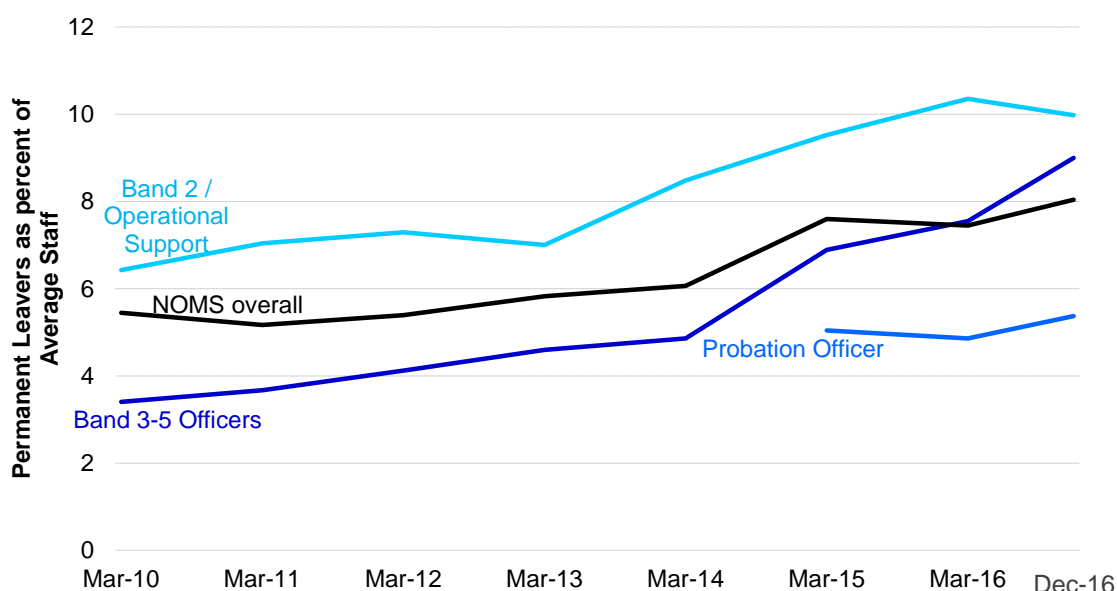
2.1 Leaving rates¹

Leaving rates across NOMS have been increasing since 2011/12. The overall rate across the whole of NOMS for the year to 31 December 2016 was **8.0%** compared to 7.4% for the year to 31 March 2016.

The leaving rate for band 3 to 5 officers has increased at a faster rate than the average to 9.0%, almost double the rate in 2012/13 (4.6%). The highest band 3-5 officer rate is in Kent, Surrey and Essex where the rate has increased from 10.2% to 15.9% between March and December 2016. The rate for prison officers is lower than the 10.0% for band 2 operational support grades, which has fallen from 10.4% compared to 2015/16. Probation officers had a lower than average leaving rate of 5.4% in the year to 31 December 2016.

Almost half of all leavers over the year to 31 December 2016 resigned (49%), compared to 43% in the previous year. The proportion of retirees meanwhile fell from 23% to 19%.

Figure 3: Annual leaving rates of permanent staff in key operational grades (excluding VEDSR), year to March 2010 to year to December 2016 (Source: Table 8d)



¹ Calculated as the percentage of staff with a permanent contract of employment who left NOMS for reasons other than voluntary early departure schemes and redundancy (VEDSR).

3. Band 3 to 5 Prison Officers

Fall of 347 prison officers over the year

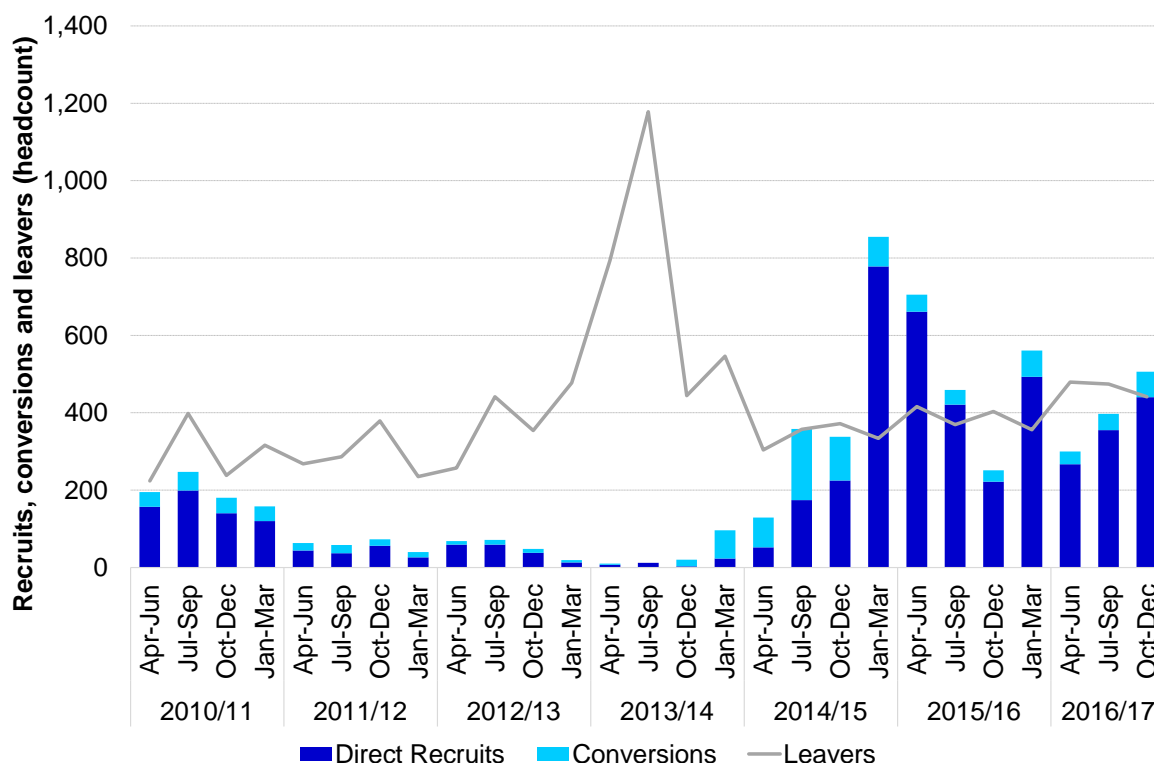
At 31 December 2016 there were 17,888 FTE band 3 to 5 officers in post, a fall of 347 (1.9%) on the year and 115 (0.6%) over the past three months

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

On a like-for-like basis i.e. excluding transfers to and from the private sector, there has been a reduction of **6,450** FTE (26.7%) band 3 to 5 officers between 31 March 2010 and 31 December 2016. In the year ending December 2016, band 3 to 5 officer FTE fell by **347** (1.9%) and by **115** (0.6%) over the latest three months to **17,888** FTEs.

Figure 4 provides a quarterly breakdown of the number of band 3 to 5 officers newly recruited and leaving since 2010/11. Over the last year, 1,728 band 3 officers have been appointed, a fall of 542 compared to 2,270 in the previous year. The headcount number of band 3 to 5 officers leaving NOMS in the year to 31 December 2016 was 1,764, an increase of 242 compared to the 1,522 officers leaving in the previous year.

Figure 4: Newly appointed band 3 officers and band 3 to 5 officer leavers, April 2010 to December 2016 (Source: Table 15)

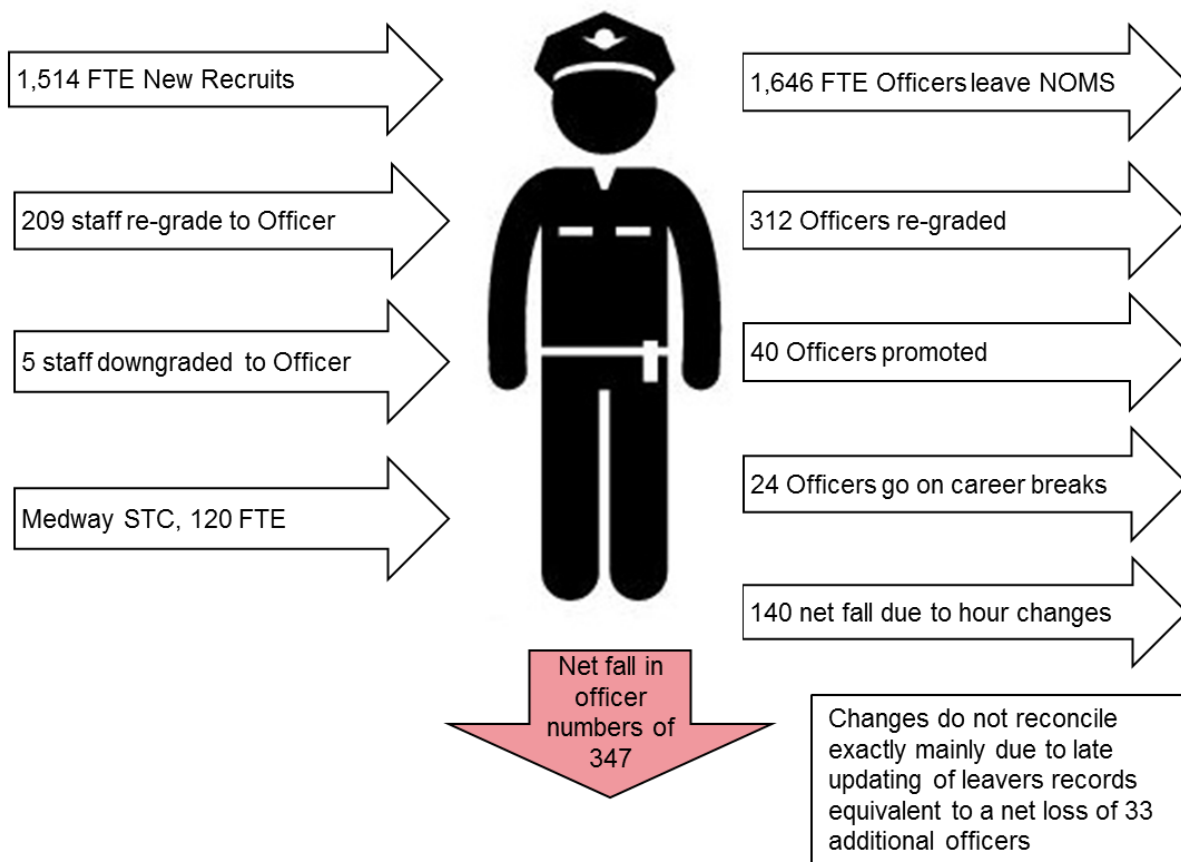


Recruits and leavers are not the only movements in and out of the band 3 to 5 officer grouping. For this reason the change in FTE does not directly reflect the difference between the number of recruits and leavers. There are also typically differences in the proportion of new recruits and older officers who work part time as well as movements between grades.

This change has the effect of reducing the full-time equivalent of officers available as officers progress through their career.

Figure 5 provides a more complete view of officer workforce changes than just the number of appointments and leavers. In total the FTE contribution of officers lost to the workforce in addition to those leaving, due to re-grades, promotions and changes to working hours was the equivalent of 516 officers.

Figure 5: Movements into and out of Band 3 to 5 Officer Grouping (Full Time Equivalent), 31 December 2015 to 31 December 2016 (Source: Table 15)



3.1 Length of Service

The relatively large volume of officers being recruited over the past year has led to an increase in the proportion of officers with less than 5 years' service to 21% of the workforce compared to 15% a year ago. Despite this shift there are 27% of officers with over 20 years' experience, down slightly from 28% in December 2015.

4. Sickness Absence

12.0 sick days per person in the National Probation Service

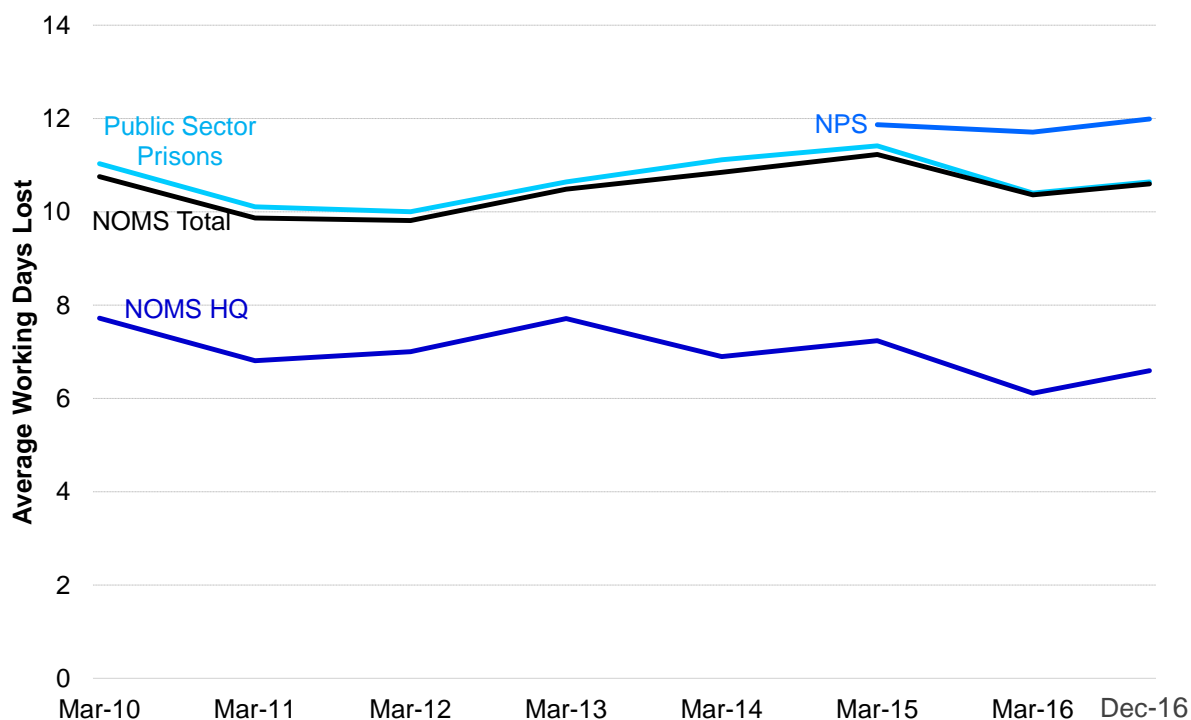
This is higher than the average 10.6 working days lost amongst both NOMS staff overall and staff within prison service establishments.

Over the last year, NOMS staff lost on average **10.6** working days to sickness absence. This was an increase of **2.3%** compared to the year ending 31 March 2016 but a reduction of 5.6% on the year ending March 2015 when the highest sickness rates in the time series were recorded.

NPS staff had the highest average working days lost (AWDL) at 12.0 followed by Prison service establishments (10.6) and NOMS HQ & Area Services (6.6) (Figure 6).

The rate for all of NOMS has varied between 9.8 and 11.2 in the years since 2009/10.

Figure 6: Average working Days Lost to Sickness Absence, Year to 31 March 2010 to Year to 31 December 2016 (Source: Table 16)



The most common category of sickness absence in terms of days lost is mental and behavioural disorders, which includes stress related absences. In the last year, 29.9% of absences were for mental and behavioural disorders. This category was most prevalent for probation officers where 40.2% of working days lost were attributed to mental and behavioural disorders.

Musculoskeletal absences accounted for the second largest proportion of working days lost and together the top two categories contributed 45.0% of all working days lost.

Kent, Sussex and Essex have the highest sick rate across prison regions at 14.7 AWDL. The highest probation division is London Probation Service at 13.5 AWDL.

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 NOMS workforce structure as well as how the data is collected and processed. Information on the revisions policy and disclosure relevant to NOMS staffing data is also included
- A set of summary tables for the latest quarter and year as well as over time

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.

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