



# Scottish Police Federation

5 Woodside Place Glasgow G3 7QF

## JCC Circular 1 of 2018

Ref: CS/AM/LS

4 January 2018

Attachments: ICC Circ 1-2018

Dear Colleague

### **Inspecting Ranks Update - Working Time - ICC Circular 1-2018 - Information**

I refer to the above and attach herewith correspondence for your information from Andy Malcolm, Chair of the Inspectors' Central Committee.

Yours sincerely

**Calum Steele**  
General Secretary



## ICC Circular 1/2018

3 January 2018

Dear Colleague

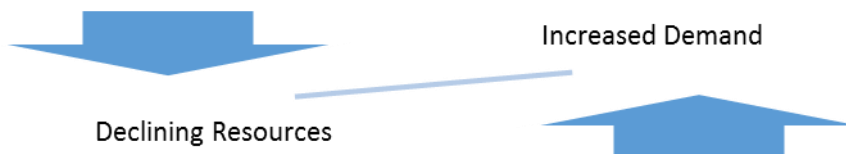
### **PEELing back the Performance of the Police Service: Assessing the Impact of Inspectors' Workload, Working-time and Wellbeing**

Please find attached a copy of the latest report prepared by Victoria Wass and Peter Turnbull in relation to the pressures being faced by officers of the Inspecting ranks throughout Great Britain.

The previous 'Time for Justice' reports highlighted the impact of austerity and expectation of 'more for less' that has developed within the service and society.

The report highlights the need for Working Time to be recorded and managed. We are acutely aware of increasing pressure on many of the Inspecting Ranks which is leading to overworking and extended periods of duty. It is crucial that working time is recorded to ensure that the Service effectively manages workloads and risks otherwise these are primarily hidden or overlooked.

The lack of capacity and resilience assessments in many of the models being developed creates issues; it is vital that concerns, any increased work or pressure are flagged and recorded, particularly where this involves overworking.



Additional work demands upset the work – life balance, there is a legal duty under Working Time Regulations to record and manage working time within legal limits. Research suggests that these limits are regularly being breached which affects the health of staff and their ability to perform effectively.

We will continue to work with various academics and highlight issues being identified to the Service, we need individuals to ensure that they are recording working time and identifying practices that create additional stress and fatigue.

The report is circulated for your information and attention, please record your working time and if there are any particular issues in relation to this report, please do not hesitate to contact myself or the SPF via the enquiry portal ([www.spf.org.uk](http://www.spf.org.uk)).

Yours sincerely

**Andrew Malcolm**  
**Chair**  
**Inspectors Central Committee**



Cardiff Business School  
Ysgol Busnes Caerdydd

## **PEELing back the Performance of the Police Service: Assessing the Impact of Inspectors' Workload, Working-time and Wellbeing**

**Peter Turnbull\* & Victoria Wass\*\***

**December 2017**

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### **Acknowledgements**

This Report is based on our surveys of the Inspecting ranks in England, Scotland and Wales conducted over the previous six years. Throughout this time, the Police Federation of England & Wales (PFEW) and the Scottish Police Federation (SPF) have supported the research and actively encouraged Inspectors to participate in the surveys. We are grateful to all the officers who completed our questionnaire surveys and provided evidence on their working time and wellbeing. We are especially grateful to Inspectors who participated in focus group discussions and those who gave generously of their time to talk to us on a one-to-one basis, in particular all the Federation reps we have worked with in addressing the problems created by excessive working time and 'overworking'. In addition, the Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC) provided financial support under a Knowledge Exchange Opportunity grant (ES/K005618) designed to disseminate the research findings and support the efforts of the PFEW and SPF to better represent the interests of their members.

## **PEELing back the Performance of the Police Service:**

### **Assessing the Impact of Inspectors' Workload, Working-time and Wellbeing**

#### **Summary**

After eight years of austerity, the demands on our police service to provide 'more for less' is approaching a 'tipping point'. Crime is once more on the rise and police Forces up and down the country are struggling to maintain service standards. This is reflected in moves to pare back service provision in some Forces and more critical reports on police performance from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), with several Forces 'requiring improvement'.

The warning signs have been there to see for some years. To be sure, efficiency can be improved through better use of resources, new IT systems and the like. But the 'more' that is required from 'less' officers cannot be sustained indefinitely. Increasing demands are especially notable within the Inspecting ranks, as additional work became a 'free' and 'unrecognised' resource after overtime was bought out of the Inspectors' contract in 1994. The correlation between overworking within the Inspecting ranks and poor Force performance suggest that Inspectors can be likened to a 'canary in the mine' – the workload and working time of Inspectors is a clearly visible 'early warning sign' that their Force is at risk of tipping below the performance standards set by HMIC.

## Introduction

through a series of surveys of the Inspecting ranks, we have uncovered widespread and endemic overworking in the police service in England, Scotland and Wales. This has created adverse outcomes in terms of health and experience of work. Importantly, overworking is largely hidden from senior officers, HR managers and colleagues by a combination of cultural norms (“*keep quiet and carry on*”, “*tough it out*”, “*only the weak complain*”)<sup>1</sup> and by ineffective hours’ recording, both in terms of the *disincentives* for Inspectors<sup>2</sup> to accurately record their working time and duty management systems that are often difficult to use.

This report connects outcomes from our Inspector Surveys with other sources of information including the PFEW Pay and Morale survey<sup>3</sup>, administrative officer absence records<sup>4</sup>, and the HMIC PEEL performance ratings<sup>5</sup>. The Inspector Surveys focus on working time and wellbeing. Combining these findings with those for other surveys allows us to extend the analysis and demonstrate connections across a wider range of variables, including for the first time with Force performance. Combining data collected across different surveys widens and strengthens our conclusions.<sup>6</sup> Our main conclusion is that the Inspecting ranks, in their role as ‘middle managers’, are caught between the pressures of austerity from above and the angst of the ranks below. Positioned as they are between increasing demands on the police service and declining resources they can be likened to ‘canaries in the mine’. Difficulties managing their workload and the need for excessive overtime working is an early signal of distress in the organisation, a foretaste of difficulties for the Force in terms of morale, intention to leave, perceptions of unfairness and service delivery performance. As a signal it benefits from being

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<sup>1</sup> All text in italics is taken from quotes from Inspectors, in most cases based on ‘open questions’ in our surveys but also from focus group discussions and one-to-one interviews.

<sup>2</sup> We use ‘Inspectors’ and ‘Inspecting ranks’ interchangeably throughout the report to refer to both Inspectors and Chief Inspectors.

<sup>3</sup> PFEW (2017) [http://www.polfed.org/fedatwork/Pay\\_and\\_morale\\_survey\\_2016.aspx](http://www.polfed.org/fedatwork/Pay_and_morale_survey_2016.aspx)

<sup>4</sup> Police Oracle Freedom of Information (FoI) Request, Police Oracle (2017) *Almost 10,000 officers have taken time off with mental health issues in last year.*

[https://www.policeoracle.com/news/HR\\_personnel\\_and\\_staff\\_development/2017/Jun/26/almost-10-000-officers-have-taken-time-off-with-mental-health-issues-in-last-year\\_95116.html/news](https://www.policeoracle.com/news/HR_personnel_and_staff_development/2017/Jun/26/almost-10-000-officers-have-taken-time-off-with-mental-health-issues-in-last-year_95116.html/news)

<sup>5</sup> HMIC (2016) *State of Policing in England and Wales 2016*, go to:

<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/national-peel-reports/>

<sup>6</sup> HMIC addresses performance but not working time. Our Inspector surveys address working time but not performance. The Pay and Morale survey addresses experience of work but not working time. This explains our need to combine different data sources. Combining data sources builds confidence in the findings because ‘common factor bias’, in which respondents within a single survey display common answers which can exaggerate observed relationships in a single survey, is not present in results across different data sources.

connected to important outcomes for the force, being objective and being straightforward to measure. As the warning signs are revealed in the findings in this Report, we recommend that Forces commit to measuring, monitoring and managing Inspector working time and that the Home Office, PCCs and the regulator provide the oversight and scrutiny to ensure that this happens.

### **‘Telling’ Tales**

While surveys generate representative (quantitative) data and correlations that can pin-point the causes and consequences of overworking, these statistics can sometimes appear ‘lifeless’ – we sometimes forget the real people and damaged lives that lie behind the ‘facts and figures’ of long working hours. We therefore begin this Report with the stories of two very public and widely reported<sup>7</sup> resignations in England (Box 1) that echo the experiences of many officers who have responded to open questions in our surveys, participated in our focus group discussion, or talked frankly to us on a one-to-one basis. Of course, it is often easy for senior officers and managers, regulators and government to dismiss these individual stories as ‘isolated events’ or as examples of police officers who ‘cannot cope with the job’. When reported alongside supporting statistics that are representative of the experience of many other officers, these stories cannot be so easily dismissed. The supporting data include our Workload and Wellbeing Surveys of the Inspecting ranks conducted over the past six years,<sup>8</sup> the PFEW Pay and Morale Surveys, and administrative records on officer absence for reasons of psychological ill-health.<sup>9</sup> When combined with representative data from these studies, the pressures that compelled the two officers to resign (Box 1) are seen to be widely shared.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-devon-39138368> and <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-39128725>

<sup>8</sup> [Link to Force Reports on PFEW intranet 43 from 2011 and 9 from 2016](#)

<sup>9</sup> See footnotes 3 and 4.

### **Box 1. A Tale of Two Resignations<sup>10</sup>**

Laura Beal, a PC in Devon and Cornwall Police, resigned in 2017 because:

*“the stress was too much. There is not enough of us out there to police the area that we are supposed to be policing and what they are asking us to do on a day-to-day basis is physically impossible”.*

Laura had followed her father into the police at age 19 and worked for 13 years as a uniform PC. She had been the ‘poster girl’ for Devon and Cornwall Police, quite literally. She published her resignation letter on Facebook after her Sergeant told her it was unlikely to be seen by the Chief Constable. Her story was subsequently covered by the BBC. What was not reported was the fact that Devon and Cornwall Police had made a substantial investment in a wellbeing programme designed to orientate officers towards working harder and longer. Work demands and working time were not part of the programme.

In a second public resignation, Angelina Dawson, a DC in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) who started in her ‘dream job’ 10 years ago, described her current workload as ‘insurmountable’. She decided to leave the job because it was harming her health:

*“There just isn’t enough hours in a day to do everything. No matter how much you try to be organised at work and keep on top of everything, there was just more and more and more and there just wasn’t enough of us to cope with what was coming in. I would often wake up with headaches because I wasn’t having enough sleep. I just ended up thinking I can’t do this anymore”.*

Angelina is not alone. In our latest survey (April 2016) of Inspectors in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) (n=332), 69 per cent of respondents reported that they either ‘often’ or ‘almost all the time’ work under time pressure, 56 per cent report sleep problems at least once a week due to being worried about work, and a third report that they feel exhausted after work either ‘often’ or ‘almost all the time’.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> In a third public resignation, a female sergeant of 24 years’ service described her anguish in the following terms: *“And so I feel let down, I feel abandoned, I feel alone, I feel unvalued, I feel mentally exhausted. I feel anxious, I feel sick, I feel a black cloud descend as my last rest day approaches. I have no capacity to recharge my batteries anymore. I do not sleep properly”.* Extracts from resignation letter to Chief Constable of West Midlands Police, Police Oracle ‘Broken officer pens candid letter to Chief Constable’ 13<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

<sup>11</sup> PFEW link to MPS 2016 report.

## From Stories to Surveys

Our initial Inspector Surveys across all forces in England and Wales (January 2011) and Scotland (September 2011) were prompted by Inspector concerns over a rapid escalation in workload and working time following Force responses to austerity budgets. In the absence of hours recording or overtime payment, excessive working time went unrecognised and appeared to be unlimited. These early reports identified connections between excessive workloads, extended hours and adverse health effects. As a result of inadequate reporting and monitoring of working hours, overworking and the consequences of overworking were hidden from managers and colleagues. In nine follow-up surveys conducted in 2015-16, which form the centrepiece of this current Report, overworking had increased while hours recording remained inadequate. Drawing on data from additional questions in our follow-up (2015-16) surveys, overworking was linked to difficulties coping at work, maintaining a work-life balance that sustained family relationships and outside interests, and sufficient quality sleep to maintain good health and wellbeing.

In a cross-Force comparison of the nine Forces included in the 2015-16 surveys, Inspectors in Bedfordshire Police recorded the highest level of overworking with average weekly hours at 52 (summarised in Box 2). This level of overworking is linked to Bedfordshire's relatively poor performance rating, high absence rates, low force morale and high levels of fatigue (see Table 2 and Appendix 2). Bedfordshire's Deputy Chief Constable Gary Forsyth and Police and Crime Commissioner Kathryn Holloway are in no doubt where the blame lies, namely 'chronic underfunding of the Force'.<sup>12</sup> As the latest HMIC PEEL report pointed out, the Force 'still does not have enough officers and staff within community policing to deal efficiently with demand, including crime and anti-social behaviour prevention'.<sup>13</sup>

While Bedfordshire Police reports the highest number of Inspector hours, it is not qualitatively different from other Forces studied (see Table 1 and Table 2 below), difficulties with work load, worktime, wellbeing and work life conflict were reported across the piece.

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<sup>12</sup> Police Oracle, Bedfordshire Police Deputy Chief hits back at HMICFRS, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017, go to: [https://www.policeoracle.com/news/Bedfordshire-Police-Deputy-Chief-hits-back-at-HMICFRS\\_96243.html](https://www.policeoracle.com/news/Bedfordshire-Police-Deputy-Chief-hits-back-at-HMICFRS_96243.html)

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*



## **Box 2. Bedfordshire: Working Time and Wellbeing<sup>14</sup>**

Survey results for Bedfordshire Police record Inspectors working an average of 52 hours per week (formal working hours are 40) with over 60 per cent of Inspectors working above the Working Time Regulations (WTR) maximum limit of 48 hours. Further, over 70 per cent ‘almost never’ or only ‘occasionally’ take a daily rest break.

*“An average week will be c55 hours, this can be as high as 70 hours and will never be less than 40 hours”.*

*“Usually insufficient time to take a break due to often covering PACE Inspector duties. I tend to have a working lunch at my desk”.*

Individual workloads have been driven up by staff reductions:

*“In order to keep on top of demand and because there is no one else to give it to!”*

*“My staffing levels have been reduced dramatically in recent times but demand placed on me and my remaining resources has not reduced. There is still an expectation that all work will be completed and demand met. Due to a lack of operational cover, annual leave is often refused. Due to a small pool of willing volunteers to cover Response duties substantive Inspectors are often required to work extended 12-hour shifts or have their shifts moved to cover unsociable hours”.*

‘Inspector Shortfall’ is a metric calculated to measure the size of the gap between inspecting resources needed at 40 hours per week and inspecting resources available. It is the number of Inspectors needed to remove the additional working time (measured here as above 40 hours per week). For Bedfordshire Police there is a 35 per cent shortfall, equivalent to 28 Inspectors.

Current recording practices mean that the size of the shortfall is not measured by the Force, the PCC, the Home Office or the regulator because Inspector hours are not recorded. The consequences of the shortfall are further obscured by a macho and punitive culture. Although hours recording is a legal duty (under regulation 9 of the WTR), this is haphazard and incomplete. Over 80 per cent of Inspectors almost never record their actual hours of work because, in the words of one respondent:

*“The variations due to demand are too frequent to bother and I don’t believe it makes any difference as hours worked on GRS are not monitored”.*

Disclosure and monitoring of the adverse effects of long hours are similarly inadequate:

*“I did not want the organisation to know I was suffering stress and anxiety”.*

The immediate purpose of our latest surveys was to provide evidence for the Inspectors’ representative organisations in their local and national negotiations over working conditions. The broader purpose was to inform workplace practice through better understanding of the

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<sup>14</sup> [Link to Bedfordshire report 2016.](#)

mechanisms that drive and sustain overworking and the consequences for individual health and performance. This was achieved by combining our own survey data with three other sources.

The first of these is the PFEW annual individual Pay and Morale Survey with statistics for all ranks published at the Force level.<sup>15</sup> Statistics for 2017, covering all the Federated Ranks in all 43 Forces, indicate that the majority of police officers (60 per cent) experience low morale, with 90 per cent judging the morale of their Force to be ‘low’. The most commonly cited factors in this negative evaluation were how the police in general are treated (85 per cent) and pay and benefits (73 per cent) (not surprising after 7 years of pay restraint and pension reform). Importantly, the next most commonly cited factors were work-life balance (65 per cent), health and wellbeing (62 per cent), and workload and responsibilities (61 per cent).

Surveys often measure unhappiness at work by asking respondents if they intend to leave. In the PFEW’s 2017 survey, 16 per cent of officers on average (ranging from 6 per cent to 22 per cent across different Forces) indicated that they intend to leave within the next 2 years. It is difficult to interpret these data without statistical controls for proximity to retirement age. Nonetheless, the reasons cited for intention to leave are disconcerting, with low morale (79 per cent), how the police are treated (70 per cent) and the impact of the job on health and wellbeing (72 per cent) cited as the three most important factors. Reasons for staying highlighted heavy personal investment, financial necessity and a current lack of alternatives – hardly a positive endorsement of the police service.

The second data source is Force-level administrative records on sickness absence. In April 2017, Police Oracle made a freedom of information (FoI) request to all Forces to ascertain Force records on the number of officers absent for reasons of stress, anxiety, depression and other psychological illness over the course of the previous year.<sup>16</sup> The results are available by rank for 41 Forces and reveal an all-time high of 9,267 (one-in-fifteen) absent officers. This represents an increase of 635 officers over the previous year and a 47 per cent increase since the first FoI request in 2012/3. The largest numbers were, not surprisingly, in the largest Forces, namely the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and Police Scotland. These results are included in our Force-level analysis that follows in a form that standardises for the size of the Force.

The third data source comprises the annual Force performance review of police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy (PEEL) undertaken by HMIC for England and Wales

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<sup>15</sup> See footnote 7.

<sup>16</sup> See footnote 8.

in 2016. Forces are scored from outstanding (1) to inadequate (4) over numerous factors grouped into the three PEEL sections. The overall rating for effectiveness and efficiency are included in our Force-level analysis that correlates Inspector overworking with broader Force-wide wellbeing and performance outcomes.<sup>17</sup>

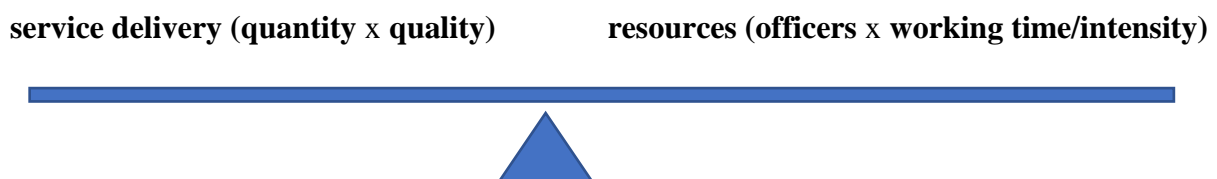
## The Causes and Consequences of Overworking

### *Causes of overworking*

The mantra of the government’s austerity programme has been ‘more for less’. Initially, the police service was hailed as ‘evidence-based proof’ of this proposition – officer numbers declined and so too did recorded crime. The public got ‘more’ (a safer society) despite the police getting ‘less’ budget (real terms reduction of 18 per cent) and an 18 per cent workforce reduction (a reduction of 43,575) (both measured between March 2010 and 2016).<sup>18</sup> However, our evidence suggests ‘less officers’ was compensated by ‘more hours’ (working longer) and ‘more workload’ (working harder) including (and perhaps especially) within the Inspecting ranks.

Figure 1 depicts a seesaw that balances service delivery on the LHS with resources on the RHS. It is evident from Table 1 that as the police service is committed to maintaining if not improving service delivery (i.e. the LHS is ‘fixed’ in Figure 1), an increase in working time and work intensity has compensated for the reduction in officer numbers (i.e. ‘overworking’ on the RHS in Figure 1).

**Figure 1. The Precarious Balance of Service Delivery and Resources**



<sup>17</sup> Legitimacy is not included because it is not correlated with efficiency, effectiveness or any of the other variables included in the analysis.

<sup>18</sup> Police Force Strength 2010 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-service-strength-england-and-wales-31-march-2010>  
Police Workforce 2016 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2016>

Of course, this balance cannot be sustained indefinitely by overworking.<sup>19</sup> By selection and training, police officers are resilient individuals, but senior officers, the regulator and the government must recognise that officer overworking cannot continue to ‘compensate’ for fewer officers. Without some ‘rebalancing’ elsewhere, greater demands on the police service in terms of an increase in crime and an increase in the complexity of crime (e.g. counter-terrorism, cyber-crime, child protection and modern slavery) will push the service towards a ‘tipping point’. Steve Finnigan, who recently retired as Lancashire Constabulary Chief Constable, explained how austerity and the changing nature of demand (not less crime but different crime) is propelling the service in this direction:

*the proposed cuts [arising from the 2015 Comprehensive Spending Review] were a madness ... the scale and pace of the cuts have been too deep and too quick ... cracks are absolutely appearing in policing. I am very clear in my view that we are at a tipping point ... They have taken about £2.3 billion out of policing in the last 7 years and in the grand scheme of things that isn't massive money, but because of the nature of what we do, that approach is a very risky one.*<sup>20</sup>

#### *Extent of overworking*

By 2015-16 Inspectors were routinely working ‘above contract’, even when an overtime allowance of four hours a week was included. Table 1 reports Inspector numbers in March 2016. The ‘Inspector shortfall’ is the number of additional Inspectors needed to remove the additional hours Inspectors are working (through a longer working week and through forgone rest breaks) which is averaged across the workforce and across 17 weeks expressed as a percentage of the number of Inspectors employed. Separate estimates are provided for a normal 40-hour week and for an ‘expected’ 44-hour working week with ‘normal’ overtime.<sup>21</sup> The Inspector shortfall in relation to a 40-hour working week is greater than the budget and workforce reduction of 18 per cent indicating that Inspectors have borne a disproportionate

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<sup>19</sup> The increase in the latest crime statistics might be an indication that that the balance is about to ‘tip’.

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.policeoracle.com/news/I-am-very-clear-that-we-are-at-a-tipping-point'-country's-longest-serving-chief-warns\\_95124.html](https://www.policeoracle.com/news/I-am-very-clear-that-we-are-at-a-tipping-point'-country's-longest-serving-chief-warns_95124.html) Lancashire police has lost £71 million, around 24% of its budget, since 2010, which translates to around 800 police officers and 400 police staff.

<sup>21</sup> A figure of 44 hours, rather than 40 hours, is also used as a benchmark because when overtime was ‘bought-out’ of the Inspectors’ contract in 1994, average overtime was 3.5 hours per week.

impact of austerity. In relation to a 44-hour week, there is a close match between the budget cut and the Inspector shortfall.

For example, Avon and Somerset Police is a mid-size Force where Inspectors work a weekly average of 47.8 hours plus an average of 3.8 hours during daily rest breaks. To remove this overworking and bring the average weekly hours down to 40, an additional 48 Inspectors are needed. This represents just over a quarter of the workforce.

**Table 1. Overworking and the ‘Shortfall’ in the Inspecting Ranks**

<b>Force</b>	<b>Inspector Numbers 2016</b>	<b>Average Weekly hours</b>	<b>Weekly rest break hours worked</b>	<b>% shortfall (40 hours)</b>	<b>% shortfall (44 hours)</b>
Bedfordshire	80	50.9	3.1	35	23
Humberside	113	47.8	3.6	28	17
MPS	1,540	47.8	3.2	28	16
Lancashire	174	47.8	3.8	29	18
Wiltshire	68	47.8	3.6	29	17
Avon & Somerset	181	46.8	3.8	26	15
Lincolnshire	79	46.0	3.6	24	13
Cambridgeshire	85	45.9	3.2	23	11
Scotland	1,198	49.7	3.4	33	21

Sources: see footnote 16 and Inspectors Survey 2015-6 [\(link\)](#)

### *Consequences of overworking*

Figure 2 focuses on the RHS of the seesaw in Figure 1 and presents a theoretical model that can help to identify the active elements driving and facilitating overworking, to understand how these elements operate, their impact and how workplace interventions might be expected to operate. The model has as its focus officer overworking. As overworking balances the reduction in officer numbers necessary to meet service delivery at the Force level (Table 1 and Figure 1), an imbalance is opened-up for individual officers between their working-time and their recovery-time (Figure 2). We call this the working-time recovery-time imbalance (WRI) and it is what defines overworking. From a starting point of Figure 2 maps out the causes of overworking (increase in individual workload), the consequences in terms of behaviours,

experience of work and ill-health effects. Work practices and organisational culture elicit and maintain the behaviours associated with overwork. They are the catalysts which drive and facilitate overwork as a response to an increase in workload. For example, a strong professional culture drives Inspectors to work in their non-work time. Working practices that lead to a failure to record and monitor hours of work allows this transfer of time to continue without explicit recognition on either side.

**Figure 2. The Causes and Consequences of Overworking**

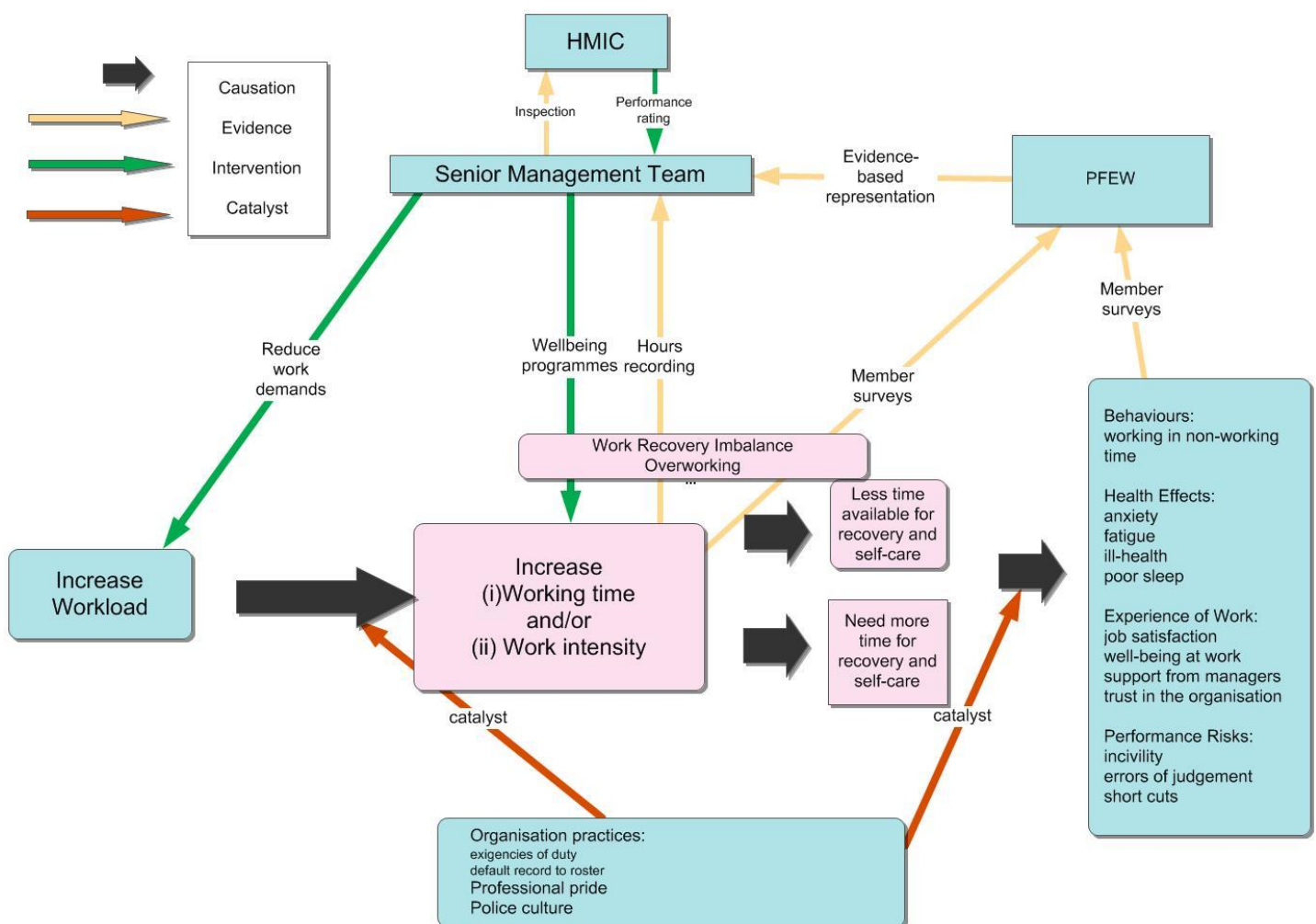


Figure 2 also depicts channels of evidence and routes of intervention. It shows the channels of evidence (yellow arrows) which ought to provide hours' information (indicators of overwork) to senior managers, regulators and government. It also highlights the routes of

intervention (green arrows) with the potential to use evidence to inform intervention and maintain service standards. These channels are described in detail below.

### *Causation*

The causation channel can be read across the centre of the diagram, from left-to-right, following the black arrows. The model begins on the left-hand side with work demands. As the Government presses on with austerity, demanding ever more from ever less, we identify two possible manifestations of overworking by individual officers: (i) additional working time and/or (ii) greater work intensity. These can work as substitutes for each other, working harder to avoid working longer (or *vice versa*), or as complements where the additional burden is accommodated by working both harder and longer. Following the black arrows towards the right, time away from work is needed for rest, refreshment and recuperation. Intensive working requires increased recovery time, but more hours spent in work is a direct loss to time spent in recovery. Either way, additional work demands upset the existing balance between working time and recovery time. The outcomes of the imbalance are depicted in the right-hand side box in Figure 2.

The practice of using recovery time to supplement work time is enabled by several individual behaviours including officers taking annual leave or rest days to cover sick days, working through rest breaks, working while on annual leave or on rest days, working when sick, failure to take back cancelled rest days and working on top of rostered hours. The adverse consequences of a prolonged imbalance between working time and recovery time include anxiety, fatigue, disengagement and ultimately the risk of ill-health and poor-performance. The latter affects individual Inspectors as well as those they supervise and, when aggregated across ranks, the performance of the Force.

The officers most at risk of occupational burnout are those who work unremunerated hours (Inspecting ranks and above) and those for whom additional hours are not voluntarily chosen. As individual imbalances reach their limit, the effects of overwork spill-over into service delivery, to the performance of the police and the quality of service provided to individual citizens and the communities served by the Force in question. This is how an Inspectors' Branch Board Rep. explained the situation at a Regional Workshop funded by the Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Police Federations of England & Wales (PFEW) and Scotland (SPF):

*“Fatigue has its biggest impact on your cognitive capacity, your ability to ‘read’ people*

– *their body language, you know, understanding their intentions. We do this all the time, it's part of the job, but after an extended shift, often without any breaks, your capacity to do this drops off, not gradually but exponentially*".

Fatigue can degrade relationships (e.g. incivility between officers or between officers and the public) and might result in errors in judgement or a failure to attend or investigate incidents. The latter might range from simply ignoring incidents (what some Canadian traffic cops refer to as FIDO – “fuck-it, drive on”) to choosing to ‘leave some stones unturned’ (e.g. the failure to classify violent gangs as ‘organised crime’ or complaints of abuse as ‘modern-day slavery’ because to do so would stretch resources).<sup>22</sup>

### *Drivers and facilitators*

The work practices and organisational culture that elicit and maintain the WRI are the enablers by which additional workload created by the demands of austerity are managed through Inspectors overworking.<sup>23</sup> They are the catalysts (depicted by red arrows) for the causal process running through the centre of Figure 2. Police Officers are servants of the Crown rather than employees. As such, all police officers can be required (commanded) to work as directed (i.e. according to the ‘exigencies of duty’). Those issuing commands work extremely long hours, which in turn create a high level of demand and an expectation of similar levels of ‘commitment’ from those in the ranks immediately below.

The organisation and reward of working time is an important factor. Inspectors are salaried but their work is organised through rostered periods of duty that cover 24-hour service delivery. Under this arrangement, Inspectors are expected to manage their time but are given insufficient flexibility and autonomy to do so. Recall that Inspectors’ entitlements to payment for overtime and working on public holidays and rest days were removed in 1994 in return for a payment of £3,250, awarded as an increase in pensionable pay. Without the financial deterrent of overtime pay for overtime hours, additional work demand falls disproportionately on the Inspecting ranks who are viewed as a ‘free resource’. Inspectors are often required to work unscheduled overtime and ‘on-call’, and many experience difficulties ‘taking back’ time-owed in lieu, cancelled rest days and even rostered rest days and annual holidays. With the removal of overtime, the ‘need’ for hours recording was also removed. In most Forces across the country, there is either no formal record or an inaccurate record of the actual hours worked by

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<sup>22</sup> <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/peel-police-efficiency-2017/>

<sup>23</sup> Turnbull, P. and Wass, V. (2015) ‘From “Exacting” to “Extreme” Jobs in the British Police: Exploiting and Exhausting the Inspecting Ranks’, *Organization*, 22(4): 512-29.



Inspectors. Force Duty Management Systems often make it unnecessarily difficult for Inspectors to record their actual hours of work, instead recording rostered hours as a default. Even where the technology is sufficiently flexible to allow an accurate record, there is a time cost to an Inspector providing a record and no benefit in terms of recognition or reward.

In practice, therefore, overworking is largely unrecorded and, if monitored at all, ineffectively so. Inspectors explained the absence of an accurate record of hours worked in terms of default setting (the roster) and the cumbersome procedures (e.g. line manager approval) required to change their hours (i.e. to record additional working hours). The process simply takes too long, it is not a priority in a busy working day, and in the words of one Inspector: “*isn't worth the effort because nobody takes any notice [if hours are excessive] and we don't get paid for extra hours anyway*”.

Strong cultural drivers for long hours lie in professional identity and police culture. Personal commitment and professional pride is consistent with previous research that refers to the exaggerated sense of ‘mission’ that police officers typically display towards their role<sup>24</sup> and the pressure to live up to the idealized image of a ‘good cop’ (i.e. the fearless, heroic crime-fighter who is physically fit, emotionally strong, assertive, tenacious, resilient and ‘ever available’). When asked whether ‘the job has to be done *regardless of hours worked*’, almost 85 per cent of respondents in England and Wales, and almost 87 per cent in Scotland, either ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ with this statement.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, it was not uncommon for Inspectors to express guilt if they are seen to be, or see themselves to be ‘not pulling their weight’. When asked why they accepted excessive hours, many Inspectors commented on not wanting this to be “*seen as a weakness*”.

In the Police Service, selves and roles are tied to the organization through professional training and progression through the ranks. Professional discipline has allowed police Forces to meet their targets and deliver ‘more for less’, with the deficit between growing demand and shrinking resources within the Inspecting ranks made-up by overworking. The insidious combination of ineffective hours’ recording technology and effective connective technology (mobile devices that mean Inspectors are always just a phone call or email away from work)

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<sup>24</sup> Loftus, B. (2010) ‘Police Occupational Culture: Classic Themes, Altered Times’, *Policing & Society* 20(1):1-20; and Waddington, P.A.J. (1999) ‘Police (Canteen) Culture: An Appreciation’, *British Journal of Criminology* 39(2): 287-309.

<sup>25</sup> Turnbull, P. and Wass, V. (2012) *Time for Justice: Long Working Hours and the Well-Being of Police Inspectors*. Leatherhead: Police Federation of England and Wales.

together with a ‘can do’ (macho) culture ensures that the extent of both overworking and its consequences remains undisclosed and unacknowledged.

### *Evidence*

The channels depicted by yellow arrows represent the flow of evidence in relation to working time itself, the behaviours which enable overworking, officer health and wellbeing and Force-level performance indicators collected from a range of sources including the Inspector Surveys, the PFEW Pay and Morale Surveys, the HMIC PEEL Inspection, and administrative records on sickness absence. Information that flows from officers to the PFEW, and from individual Forces to HMIC, are well-established. Evidence channels to Senior Management Teams directly from officers and indirectly through the PFEW need to be strengthened.

Recording and monitoring the working hours of Inspectors would inform senior managers of the scale and distribution of overworking. This is not only a legal requirement but an early indicator of ‘organisational distress’ and a clear warning of risk to resilience (both for the individual and the Force). However, we know from our FoI request to all 43 Forces in England & Wales, which coincided with our original survey week of January 2011 when a national survey was undertaken, that the Force data is inaccurate and incomplete.<sup>26</sup> Improvements to the recording and monitoring of hours of work has been a central recommendation of all our Inspector Survey Reports.<sup>27</sup> It is precisely because Forces fail to comply with hours recording that our efforts have been directed towards the more effective presentation of evidence on working time and wellbeing via the PFEW and SPF – what we call ‘evidence-based representation’.<sup>28</sup>

### *Intervention*

Intervention channels are depicted in green and include strategic initiatives to contain demand, operational restructuring to more efficiently manage demand, and officer wellbeing programmes. To date, Force responses have focused on operational restructuring and officer

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<sup>26</sup> Of the 43 Forces, 17 were able to (and did) produce individual hours’ data for Inspectors during the reference week. Often there was incomplete capture of overtime hours and some Forces supplied rostered hours. No Force was confident that all overtime hours had been recorded and thus were compliant with the legal requirements of Regulations 4 and 9 of the Working Time Regulations.

<sup>27</sup> It was expected that the Unsocial Payment Regulation (2015) would resolve the issue of under-reporting hours of work but Inspector surveys in 2015 and 2016 indicate that it has not.

<sup>28</sup> This involves a combination of established social science research evidence on the topics in question (the ‘big E’), data from police Forces across the country adapted to their particular circumstances, such as different duty management systems, roles and responsibilities, geographic organisation and the like (the ‘little e’), the interests of all the relevant stakeholders, and the expertise and judgement of practitioners.

wellbeing programmes. The former are found to be a particular risk factor for Inspector workload (see Table 2). Wellbeing programmes are well-intentioned but rarely effective. They tend to focus on enhancing the effectiveness of recovery time with advice on healthy eating, exercise and sleep hygiene to build greater individual resilience in work time. Police officers are resilient individuals, especially those who have progressed up the ranks. Those that need the support offered (i.e. officers who are struggling to manage excessive work demands) are those least likely to have sufficient time and energy to participate in and benefit from a wellbeing programme. More importantly, the root of the problem is a lack of resilience at the *Force* level, not at the individual level. To impose an unmanageable workload on Inspectors and then promote a wellbeing programme to help them cope with the ill-effects of that workload is either a mis-understanding or a mis-representation of the of the causal processes and consequences. Either way, it ignores the underlying cause (the gap between demand and resources), the catalysts (culture and practices that promote overworking) and the consequences (distress, low morale, ill-health and poor performance).

In recent years, several Forces have considered ways to reduce demand on the service – they ‘don’t bother’ with certain forms of (low level) crime and even neglect more serious offences (e.g. modern-day slavery). They have highlighted how, as the ‘first and last call’ emergency service, they have taken on some of the responsibilities of other hard-pressed social services (e.g. ambulance and mental health services). Some Forces have asked the public/community they serve ‘what do you want us to do, because we can’t do everything’? Reducing workload via service demand is the key strategic intervention. It is the only intervention channel that feeds directly into the original source, the expansion of individual workloads. Strategic action is, of course, beyond the scope of Inspectors, lying with chief officers, HMIC, PCCs and Government.

### **From Surveys to Force Statistics**

Survey data are typically reported in tabular form as a set of (statistical) correlations between different variables, which gives us the confidence to ‘*know that* x is associated with y.’ For example, we *know that* long hours are associated with ill-health because there is a statistically significant (non-random) correlation between these two variables. Notwithstanding the ‘confidence of correlation’, we have a much clearer understanding of ‘cause-and-effect’ – we

‘*know why*’ – when these relationships are examined in the context of a (causal) model.<sup>29</sup> Figure 2 is a visual representation of a causal model which maps out how Inspectors have responded to additional work demands and the consequences of this response. It links work demand to working time and working time to adverse consequences.

Many of the linkages have previously been investigated and published as a Force Report that compared the Force in question with another (benchmark) Force.<sup>30</sup> In contrast, our current Report presents a national overview and the purpose is rather different. Since each Force is autonomous in its response to the effects of austerity and the changing nature of police demand, this provides an opportunity to test these relationships at the inter-Force level and to connect the Inspector Survey results to other sources of data. Using our nine Inspector Survey findings together with survey information from the PFEW annual survey on Pay and Morale for 2017, the HMIC PEEL Force-level Inspections (2016), and the Police Oracle FoI request (2016) on officer absence for reasons of mental ill-health, we seek to identify patterns at the level of Forces in terms of performance ratings, Inspectors’ workload and wellbeing, and reports of sickness absence, low morale and intention to leave across the ranks.

Table 2 reports Force-level outcomes for nine forces across the full range of variables including HMIC PEEL Inspection Force performance ratings (2016), officer morale and intention to leave collected in the PFEW Pay and Morale Survey (2017), officer absence for reasons of psychological ill-health, and Inspectors’ reports of hours of work, work intensity and wellbeing from nine Inspector Surveys (2015-16). Given the different ways in which the variables are measured, the different methods of data collection and the different samples covered, interpretation requires careful note of the variable definitions and measures. The measures are explained in Appendix 1 in the order in which they appear in Table 2. All measures have been constructed so that higher values (e.g. hours of work) represent a more adverse outcome.<sup>31</sup> The consistent patterns of difference reported in the Tables that follow constitute both a ‘case to answer’ (overworking signals poor outcomes) and ‘cases to learn from’ (shifting the fulcrum to re-balance demand to the level of resources).

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<sup>29</sup> We process and understand images more readily than tables of data, which is why we start with our theoretical model before presenting systematic statistical evidence.

<sup>30</sup> [Individual Force Reports Need to include Link.](#)

<sup>31</sup> The statistics in Table 1 are converted into a rank order in Appendix 2 so that Forces are ranked from first to ninth.

**Table 2. Force-Level Outcomes on Performance, Working-Time, Workload, Wellbeing and Absence**

	Cambridgeshire	Lincolnshire	Lancashire	Wiltshire	Avon & Somerset	MPS	Humberside	Scotland	Bedfordshire
HMIC effectiveness rating <sup>+</sup>	2	2	2	2	2	3	3		4
HMIC efficiency rating <sup>+</sup>	3	2	2	2	2	2	3		3
IS Hours of work	45.9	46.0	47.8	47.8	46.8	47.8	47.8	49.7	50.9
IS Workload	3.04	2.98	3.21	3.16	3.23	3.61	3.77	3.33	3.68
IS WBW	2.52	2.52	2.36	2.54	2.82	3.21	2.27	2.53	2.96
IS Fatigue	2.30	2.70	1.96	2.31	2.51	2.92	2.22	2.64	2.93
IS Job satisfaction	2.54	2.94	2.45	2.63	2.73	3.04	2.89	2.65	2.97
IS Difficulties with org. change	2.88	2.79	3.10	3.16	3.62	3.64	3.39	3.12	3.28
IS Org. commitment to me	3.08	3.26	3.23	3.53	3.62	3.97	3.82	3.65	3.48
IS My commitment to org.	1.83	2.01	1.93	2.04	2.05	2.54	2.17	2.36	1.98
IS Supervisor support	3.32	3.48	3.24	3.66	3.69	3.64	3.58	2.30	3.37
PFEW Low morale (individual) <sup>+</sup>	56.0	57.8	56.6	44.6	64.1	64.3	61.2		60.5
PFEW Low morale (force) <sup>+</sup>	84.5	85.0	58.9	71.5	88.9	94.4	98.3		98.0
PFEW Intention to leave <sup>+</sup>	6.9	6.5	9.2	8.5	12.1	18.1	10.8		16.1
PFEW Not recommend <sup>+</sup>	58.1	71.0	63.4	47.9	74.7	75.7	70.6		74.5
PFEW Unfair treatment <sup>+</sup>	24.4	32.9	26.7	21.9	29.5	36.0	39.4		33.5
PFEW workload too high <sup>+</sup>	70.2	56.9	62.4	57.8	64.9	54.7	73.5		69.2
Officer absence %	7.4	8.5	7.9	8.1	10.9	3.7	8.2	3.7	12.6
Inspector absence %	1.9	2.1	3.4	15.0	2.4	2.3	3.7	0.8	12.3

<sup>+</sup> statistics for Scotland not available.

<sup>^</sup> HMIC legitimacy rating is excluded from the analysis because it is not correlated with any of the include variables

A cursory review of Force outcomes in Table 2 and Appendix 2 suggests some ‘common sense’ relationships. For example, when and where Inspectors are working longer and harder, officer morale is also lower (both for individuals and across the Force) and the Force has performed less well in the HMIC PEEL inspection. While there is evidently a consistent ranking between long hours and several variables (e.g. the HMIC PEEL effectiveness rating and the tendency of Inspectors to report poor wellbeing at work outcomes), the relationship with other variables appears less consistent. Further statistical analysis is required to make sense of these relationships.

Table 3 formally addresses the extent to which these factors vary together using a statistical measure. The measure is the correlation coefficient, which has a maximum range from minus one (-1) to plus one (+1) indicating a perfect correlation where the expected relationship is either negative (e.g. long hours and morale) or positive (e.g. job satisfaction and performance). Scores in-between represent an imperfect relationship. Since the indicators have been constructed so that the value increases with adversity, positive relationships are expected. Given the small sample of Forces (nine), the indicators need to vary together quite closely to conclude that there is an association between the two. A coefficient less than 0.67 indicates a large enough discrepancy in the variation between them to have some doubts about an association. This is the critical or threshold value above which an association between the two indicators is ‘statistically significant’ (i.e. we are confident that the relationship is ‘non-random’). This threshold increases to 0.71 where the observations fall to eight because data were not collected/available for Scotland. Where the correlation coefficient is statistically significant it is ‘starred’ (with an asterisk \*) and shaded.

From Table 3 column 1, it is evident from the size of the positive correlation coefficients that the HMIC performance rating for effectiveness is lower (4=inadequate) where Inspector hours of work and Inspector work intensity are higher and where Inspector wellbeing at work and Inspector job satisfaction are lower. Across the ranks, Force-wide morale is lower and intention to leave the police service is higher where PEEL effectiveness is lower. These coefficients are all positive and greater than 0.67. Relationships are harder to establish for HMIC’s performance rating for efficiency, with the only statistically significant association being that between a low efficiency rating and a relatively high proportion of officers reporting that their workload is too high in the PFEW survey.

**Table 2. Correlating Performance in Nine Forces**

	1 <sup>+</sup>	2 <sup>+</sup>	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12 <sup>+</sup>	13 <sup>+</sup>	14 <sup>+</sup>	15 <sup>+</sup>	16 <sup>+</sup>	17 <sup>+</sup>	18	19
HMIC Effectiveness rating <sup>+</sup>	1																		
HMIC efficiency rating <sup>+</sup>	0.548	1																	
IS Hours of work	0.845*	0.318	1																
IS Work intensity	0.866*	0.438	0.677*	1															
IS WBW	0.474	-0.173	0.268	0.317	1														
IS Fatigue	0.585	0.005	0.6377	0.304	0.803*	1													
IS Job satisfaction	0.672*	0.100	0.210	0.572	0.579	0.781*	1												
IS Difficulties with org change	0.398	-0.130	0.265	0.672*	0.577	0.261	0.394	1											
IS Org. commitment to staff	0.470	-0.105	0.355	0.736*	0.432	0.392	0.579	0.822*	1										
IS Inspectors' commitment to org	0.349	-0.292	0.293	0.505	0.458	0.492	0.496	0.567	0.863*	1									
IS Supervisor support	-0.033	-0.359	-0.440	0.080	0.243	-0.040	0.342	0.347	0.112	-0.199	1								
PFEW Low morale (individual) <sup>+</sup>	0.418	0.144	0.087	0.483	0.446	0.428	0.528	0.543	0.412	0.426	0.074	1							
PFEW Low morale (force) <sup>+</sup>	0.759*	0.496	0.441	0.786*	0.314	0.398	0.609	0.470	0.452	0.373	-0.076	0.860*	1						
PFEW Intention to leave <sup>+</sup>	0.763*	0.048	0.674*	0.774*	0.822*	0.646	0.618	0.800*	0.728*	0.699	0.282	0.584	0.646	1					
PFEW Not recommend <sup>+</sup>	0.763*	0.487	0.061	0.593	-0.456	-0.276	0.244	0.223	0.443	0.209	0.199	0.236	0.491	0.006	1				
PFEW Unfair treatment <sup>+</sup>	0.670*	0.262	0.269	0.738*	0.223	0.446	0.813*	0.428	0.629	0.595	0.218	0.744*	0.865*	0.533	0.629	1			
PFEW workload too high <sup>+</sup>	0.323	0.872*	0.208	0.355	-0.375	-0.297	-0.153	0.000	-0.135	-0.444	-0.315	0.213	0.462	-0.076	0.573	0.182	1		
Force absence rate	0.255	0.326	0.093	0.034	-0.002	-0.017	0.093	0.016	-0.316	-0.686*	0.455	0.015	0.131	-0.050	-0.018	-0.059	0.497	1	
Inspector absence rate	0.331	0.094	0.433	0.160	0.119	0.058	0.058	0.029	-0.004	-0.259	0.316	-0.628	-0.321	0.126	-0.153	-0.323	-0.034	0.487	1

Source: PFEW/SPF inspector surveys; HMIC State of Policing 2017; PFEW Pay and Morale Survey 2017.

Notes: \* significant at 5% on a two-tailed test, n=9

Forces: Avon & Somerset, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Humberside, Lancashire, Lincolnshire, MPS, Wiltshire, Scotland

<sup>+</sup> Statistics for Scotland not available

Threshold values 0.667 (nine Forces) and 0.707 (eight Forces)

Long Inspector hours of work (column 3) are associated with a poor HMIC effectiveness rating and a high intention to leave policing across the ranks. The fact that all three indicators here are collected from different surveys (Inspector Surveys, HMIC and PFEW) gives additional weight to the significant correlation coefficients as it does not arise because the same respondents in the same survey report similar feelings about their experience of work (known as ‘common factor bias’). Importantly for the conclusion and recommendation of this report, it is *Inspector* working time and work intensity rather than workload measured across the ranks (in the PFEW survey) that signals a drop in performance.

For Inspectors, a high work intensity is positively associated with a difficult period of organisational change which gives rise to low perceptions of recognition and commitment on the part of the organisation towards them. A heavy workload for Inspectors is associated with high intention to leave, low morale and perception of unfair treatment measured across the ranks in the PFEW survey. Low Inspector wellbeing at work is associated with high levels of fatigue reported by Inspectors and with high intention to leave across the ranks. For Inspectors, fatigue is associated with job dissatisfaction. In column 7, job dissatisfaction at the Inspector level is associated with perception of unfair treatment across the ranks as well as a poor HMIC rating on effectiveness.

Inspectors’ reports of difficult organisational change is associated with a heavy workload, low perceptions of organisational commitment to them as Inspectors and a high intention to leave across the ranks (the latter might be expected because Inspectors play a critical ‘middle management’ role within the police service).<sup>32</sup> At the Inspector level the commitment of the employer to the Inspector and the Inspectors’ commitment to the organisation are closely linked. Poor commitment on either side is associated with a Force level intention to leave (i.e. across all the federated ranks). At the Force level (across ranks), low individual morale is associated with low Force-level morale and perceptions of unfair treatment. Low Force morale and high unfair treatment are also associated with each other.

Absence results are difficult to interpret. Many of the correlation coefficients are negative, although only one (Force absence and Inspector’s commitment to the organisation) is significantly so. This implies that high levels of Inspector commitment is associated with high levels of Force-wide absence. On further investigation, this appears to be driven by an

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<sup>32</sup> We all need the ‘love of the loved’ (in the words of Paul Weller). If Inspectors are unsupported (overworked and ‘unloved’) by the Force, they can hardly be expected to offer the support (‘love’) to lower ranks that they need and deserve.



underlying relationship between Force size and Inspectors' commitment, job satisfaction and absence rates. Inspectors feel less commitment to a larger organisation (they also gain less job satisfaction). Absence rates are lower in a large Force. It is these size-based relationships that drive the observed association between Inspector commitment (high) and absence rates (high).

Within the complex web of relationships, Force performance is linked to Inspectors' hours of work, work intensity and job satisfaction and more widely to morale, intention to leave, refusal to recommend as a place to work and perceived unfair treatment. In turn, Inspectors hours and work intensity is linked to organisational change and perceived poor levels of commitment of the organisation to its staff.

In Table 4, we expand the number of Forces in the analysis by using those data sources that cover all the Forces in England and Wales, that is the HMIC PEEL inspection ratings, the PFEW Pay and Morale Surveys and the Police Oracle FoI request (some Forces are missing from the latter). We can test fewer relationships but these relationships can be tested over a larger number of observations. Both analyses together – Tables 3 and 4 – provide an opportunity to triangulate findings. As each Force carries less weight in a larger sample (Table 4), the correlation coefficient is less affected by extreme values (for example, the very high Inspector absence rate in Wiltshire reported in Table 2). Given the larger number of observations, the standard for significance in Table 4 is less demanding, with a threshold of 0.33.

The HMIC ratings for effectiveness and efficiency are correlated ( $r=0.48$ ). The HMIC effectiveness ranking is correlated with perceptions of fairness from the PFEW Pay and Morale Survey. Within the PFEW member survey, low levels of individual morale are correlated with a high intention to leave, low levels of perceived fair treatment and it being unlikely that the officer would recommend employment in the Police Service to others. These personal recommendations are positively associated with perceived fair treatment and a low intention to leave. Absence rates are positively associated with a low ranking on the HMIC legitimacy score and absence rates for Inspectors are positively associated with absence rates across the ranks.

Combining these results, we can clarify some of the relationships depicted in Figure 2. For example, we find that working time and work intensity are complements rather than substitutes for the Inspecting ranks (i.e. the only way to cope with the demands of 'more for less' is to work both harder and longer). Also for Inspectors, we find that both working time and work intensity are associated with adverse impacts on the experience of work.

**Table 4. Correlating<sup>^</sup> Performance for all Forces in England and Wales**

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Individual morale	1									
2	Recommend joining to others	0.849*	1								
3	Perceived fairness	0.582*	0.665*	1							
4	Workload	0.321	0.131	0.165	1						
5	Intention to leave	0.625*	0.789*	0.391*	0.144	1					
6	HMIC effectiveness	0.046	0.205	0.348*	-0.080	0.258	1				
7	HMIC efficiency	-0.037	0.020	0.155	0.067	0.040	0.475*	1			
8	HMIC legitimacy	-0.154	-0.136	0.046	-0.361*	-0.278	0.170	-0.040	1		
9	Force absence rate	-0.028	0.075	0.175	0.021	-0.067	0.302	-0.014	0.339*	1	
10	Inspector absence rate	-0.150	-0.088	0.117	0.065	0.071	0.126	-0.040	0.113	0.512*	1

Source: HMIC State of Policing 2017; PFEW Pay and Morale Survey 2017, Police Oracle FoI request.

Notes: \* significant at 5% on a two-tailed test, n=33

<sup>^</sup> spearman rank

Threshold value 0.33

Organisational change is a risk factor for Inspector work intensity, low perceptions of the organisation's commitment to staff and high intention to leave.

Inspector overworking (working time and work intensity) is associated with poor commitment and recognition from the organisation towards Inspectors and, across the ranks, low morale and intention to leave. Inspectors are most overworked in the context of organisational change and it is at this point that they feel let down by the organisation in terms of its commitment to and recognition of them (and their teams). Inspector overworking is also associated with performance risk in relation to effectiveness. This makes sense. If you bear down on 'middle management', the adverse effects will extend to lower levels within the organisation and spill outside the organisation to those who depend on its service delivery.

## Summary

Overworking within the Inspecting ranks is part of the workforce response that allows the police service in England, Scotland and Wales to balance the seesaw of service delivery and resources depicted in Figure 1. Balance is achieved at the expense of Inspectors' wellbeing and work-life balance. Overworking – defined as a combination of longer and more intensive working time – is both widespread and significant, equivalent at least to the Inspector shortfall in Table 1.<sup>33</sup> What the government portrays as a 'positive balance' (more-for-less) is clearly an *imbalance* for Inspectors. We have systematically demonstrated this point in numerous reports on Inspectors' working time and wellbeing over the past 5 years. Inspectors respond to the shortfall through overwork. This is the only option for the majority to 'stay on top of the job', preserve their professional pride, support the lower ranks, and meet the expectations of citizens and the communities they serve. Forces continue to rely on processes and practices that fail to record, monitor and manage Inspector hours of work and so have no data upon which to recognise and manage overworking.

By combining our latest survey data with other sources in this Report, we have been able to establish that overworking within the Inspecting ranks is an 'early indicator' – a distress signal akin to the health of canary in a coalmine – that Forces are struggling to maintain performance standards. Some within the service predict proximity to a tipping point. The association between overworking and PEEL performance (effectiveness) is with Inspectors hours and workload and not workload generally across the ranks (as measured in the PFEW

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<sup>33</sup> The Inspector shortfall is based only on working time and does not include any increase in work intensity.

morale survey and reported in Table 2). It is precisely because Inspectors' hours are not properly recorded or remunerated – a cheap resource that is often first and easiest to call upon – that they provide this 'early warning' (canary-effect) for the police service. When Inspectors are overworked (working longer *and* harder) and 'burnt-out' (they are fatigued and dissatisfied) then the Force can expect spillover effects down the ranks and a lower effectiveness rating when the time comes for a PEEL Inspection.

When Forces are reorganised – a process that is inevitable and seems unending in times of austerity – then the 'free resource' of Inspector overtime hours are fully exploited, in all too many cases beyond the legal limits. This is reflected in Inspectors' perceptions of the organisation's commitment to them and in their commitment to the organisation. When Inspectors are tired (fatigued) and disillusioned (low job satisfaction), this spills over to other ranks, who are then more likely to report low morale, unfair treatment and intention to leave. Ultimately the Force achieves a lower (PEEL) effectiveness rating. The canary in the coalmine died before levels of methane or carbon monoxide reached levels deemed hazardous to humans. In the police service, Inspector hours measure the health of the canary. The organisation needs to record and monitor the health of its canaries and take action when these signal distress.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

One of the catalysts for overworking is the 'can do' ('must do') culture. This culture is difficult to change, certainly in the short-run. There are elements of this culture that the police service would not want to change – it is part of what attracts the 'right' people into policing. At the same time, however, even resilient officers need protection from their response to a professional culture which damages their wellbeing and undermines their work-life balance.

The second catalyst is the working practices which fail to provide a check on overworking. Often all that is needed to restore some balance is what might appear to be a minor change, a 'nudge' in the right direction, that acts to dampen rather than catalyse the drivers to overworking. We propose that the systematic recording and monitoring of Inspectors' hours of work, in full compliance with the legal requirements of the Working Time Regulations, provides this nudge.

We have seen that the working time of the Inspecting ranks matters – it matters rather a lot. We therefore recommend that every Force facilitate the recording of working time and monitor the data collected to manage Inspectors' working time, to assess the balance between service demand and available resources and to assess the impact of further organisational change. The benefits will extend beyond the wellbeing of the Inspecting ranks to include the

wellbeing of other ranks, an organisational climate of openness, fair treatment and duty of care, and the performance of police service.

### **Next Steps**

**1. Commit to the collection of data on Inspectors' hours of work and monitor progress towards agreed (legally compliant) targets.**

**2. Invest in 'user-friendly' duty recording systems** in order to facilitate recording of hours.

As with all important organisational change programmes, support must come from ...

**3. Chief Officers who promote hours recording** and demonstrate commitment to more effectively managing the working time of the Inspecting ranks by formally recognizing overworking as 'risky behaviour' (to individuals and Force effectiveness) and reflect on their own working time and the example they set.

**4. Undertake an Inspector role review** to evaluate workloads and job descriptions in the context of changing demands on the police and the resources available to deliver an efficient and effective service.

**5. Support and scrutiny** from the Home Office, HMIC, PCCs and the College of Policing. The recommendation of this report is that the collection and analysis of Inspector working time as standard Force-level administrative data will provide a short-term signal of excess service demand. Combining this with other forms of administrative data, for example Force-level sickness data, the PFEW data on officer morale and the HMIC performance data on an annual basis will provide ongoing assurance that Inspector hours remains an effective short-term signal. An accurate record of Inspectors' working time should be an indicator in a basket of indicators used by the Senior Management Team to assess the short-term balance between service demand and resources. This balance should be part of the HMIC inspection.

## Appendix 1. Variable Definitions (numbers from Table 2)

<b>HMIC rating (1 and 2)</b>	HMIC PEEL inspection ratings 2017 is used as a Force-wide performance measure. Forces are scored from outstanding (1) to inadequate (4) over numerous factors grouped into three sections: effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy. The overall rating for each of effectiveness and efficiency are used here (column heading – ‘HMIC Effect’, ‘HMIC Effic’ and ‘HMIC legit’).
<b>(IS) Hours of work (3)</b>	Average weekly hours when measured over a 3-month period reported by Inspectors in the Force Inspectors surveys 2015-2016. Individual reports are averaged at the level of the Force (column heading – ‘hours of work’).
<b>(IS) Work intensity (4)</b>	Work intensity is an aggregate measure comprised of six items. Each item captures an aspect of intense working (e.g. too much work to do, work at high speed, worried about work, difficult to unwind, exhausted, burned out) and the measure captures how frequently these are experienced. The scale is 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost all the time). The data are collected in the Inspectors surveys 2015-2016 and averaged at the Force level (column heading – ‘work intensity’).
<b>(IS) Wellbeing at work (5)</b>	Wellbeing at work is an aggregate measure across six items. Each item captures an adverse impact of work in relation to sleep, exhaustion and ability to cope, with the aggregate measure capturing how frequently these are experienced. The scale is 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost all the time). The data are collected in the Inspectors Surveys 2015-2016 and averaged at the Force level (column heading – ‘WBW’).
<b>(IS) Fatigue (6)</b>	This measures responses to the question during the last month how often have you felt fatigued while at work? Responses are on a frequency scale from almost never (1) to almost all the time (5). The data are collected the Inspectors’ surveys 2015-2016 and averaged at the Force level (column heading – ‘fatigue’).
<b>(IS) Job satisfaction (7)</b>	Job satisfaction is an aggregate measure across fifteen items that capture satisfaction with different aspects of the job including pay, hours of work, variety of work, etc. Responses are measured on a five-point scale from very satisfied (1) to very dissatisfied (5). The data are collected in the Inspectors’ surveys 2015-2016 and averaged at the Force level (column heading – ‘job satisfaction’).
<b>(IS) Difficulties with organisational change (8)</b>	This is an aggregate measure across seven items that capture concerns over the impact of organisational change on workload, ability to manage workload, and the adequacy of communication and feedback. Responses are on a scale of agreement about adverse effects from strongly disagree to having concerns (1) to strongly agree (5). The data are collected in the Inspectors’ surveys 2015-2016 and averaged at the Force level (column heading – ‘Diff with org ch’).
<b>(IS) Organisation’s commitment to staff (9)</b>	This is an aggregate measure across four items that capture perceptions of being recognised and valued and having trust in the organisation. Responses are on a scale of agreement from strongly agree to feeling valued (1) to strongly disagree (5). The data are collected in the Inspectors’ surveys 2015-2016 and averaged at the Force level (column heading – ‘org’s commit’).
<b>(IS) Inspector’s commitment to organisation (10)</b>	This is an aggregate measure across four items that capture perceptions of being recognised and valued and having trust in the organisation. Responses are on a scale of agreement from strongly agree to feeling valued (1) to strongly disagree (5). The

	data are reported by Inspectors in the Force ICC Inspectors surveys 2015-2016 and averaged at the Force level (column heading – ‘Insp’s commit’).
<b>(IS) Supervisor support (11)</b>	This is an aggregate measure across two items that capture perceptions of availability of support from supervisors. Responses are on a frequency scale from almost all the time (1) to almost never (4). The data are collected the Inspectors’ surveys 2015-2016 and averaged at the Force level (column heading – ‘super support’).
<b>(PFEW) % Low morale (individual) (12)</b>	This is measured as the percentage of officers (all Ranks) who responded to the PFEW Pay and Morale survey (2017) stating that their individual morale was low (column heading – ‘indiv morale’).
<b>(PFEW) % Low morale (Force) (13)</b>	This is measured as the percentage of officers who responded to the PFEW Pay and Morale survey (2017) stating that they believed morale was low generally in their Force (column heading – ‘force morale’).
<b>(PFEW) % Intention to leave (14)</b>	This is the percentage of officers who responded to the PFEW Pay and Morale survey stating that they intended to leave their employment within 2 years (column heading - ‘intention to leave’).
<b>(PFEW) % would not recommend joining the police to others (15)</b>	This is the percentage of officers who responded to the PFEW Pay and Morale survey stating that they would not recommend joining the police to others (column heading - ‘not recommend’).
<b>(PFEW) % not treated fairly at work (16)</b>	This is the percentage of officers who responded to the PFEW Pay and Morale survey stating that they personally were not treated fairly at work (column heading - ‘unfair treatment’).
<b>(PFEW) % workload too high (17)</b>	This is the percentage of officers who responded to the PFEW Pay and Morale survey stating that they considered their workload to be too high (column heading - ‘workload too high’).
<b>(FoI) Inspector (and above) absence rate % (18)</b>	Number of officers at rank of Inspector and above who had time off for psychological ill health 2016-7 (Police Oracle FoI) as a percentage of those employed in the Force at this rank.
<b>(FoI) Force absence rate % (19)</b>	Number of officers at all ranks who had time off for psychological ill health 2016-7 (Police Oracle FoI) as a percentage of those employed in the Force.

## Appendix 2 Force Rankings

	Lincolnshire	Lancashire	Cambridgeshire	Wiltshire	Avon & Somerset	Scotland	Humberside	Bedfordshire	MPS
HMIC Effectiveness rating <sup>+</sup>	1	1	1	1	1		6	8	6
HMIC efficiency rating <sup>+</sup>	1	1	6	1	1		6	6	1
IS Hours of work	2	3	1	3	3	8	3	9	3
IS Workload	1	4	2	3	5	6	9	8	7
IS WBW	3	2	3	6	7	5	1	8	9
IS Fatigue	7	1	3	4	5	6	2	9	8
IS Job satisfaction	7	1	2	3	5	4	6	8	9
IS Difficulties with org change	1	3	2	5	8	4	7	6	9
IS Org. commitment to me	3	2	1	5	6	7	8	4	9
IS My commitment to org	4	2	1	5	6	8	7	3	9
IS Supervisor support	5	2	3	8	9	1	6	4	7
PFEW Low morale (individual) <sup>+</sup>	4	3	2	1	7		6	5	8
PFEW Low morale (force) <sup>+</sup>	4	1	3	2	5		7	8	6
PFEW Intention to leave <sup>+</sup>	1	4	2	3	6		5	7	8
PFEW Not recommend <sup>+</sup>	5	3	2	1	7		4	6	8
PFEW Unfair treatment <sup>+</sup>	5	3	2	1	4		8	6	7
PFEW workload too high <sup>+</sup>	2	4	7	3	5		8	6	1
Inspector absence	3	6	2	9	5	1	7	8	4
Officer absence	6	4	3	5	8	1	7	9	2