National police safety survey

Headline findings

Oliver Clark-Darby and Paul Quinton
Introduction

- The national officer and staff safety survey is likely to be the largest ever survey to have been carried out in the police service in England and Wales.

- A total of 40,268 officers, staff and volunteers took part. Overall, 20% of all police officers and over 25% of all police community support officers (PCSOs) submitted responses.

- The slide pack presents findings from the survey around five main topics:
  - Feelings of safety
  - Experiences of being assaulted on duty
  - Experiences of criminal justice processes
  - Views on personal safety training
  - Views on police equipment, including wider Taser deployment

- Each section begins with a summary of the headline findings.
Feelings of safety
Feelings of safety

- **Operational value of findings**
  - To enable initiatives to be targeted towards the officers and staff who are most affected by, or most concerned about, assaults.

- **Headline findings**
  - A large majority of respondents thought that assaults against the police were getting worse.
  - A relatively high proportion of officers and staff (67%) felt that it was ‘fairly’ or ‘very’ likely that they would be assaulted on duty.
  - Staff in custody and detention roles felt most at risk of being assaulted.
  - Police officers were consistently more likely to report higher levels of risk and worry if they regularly dealt with conflict, were younger in service, were regularly single-crewed, or were previously a victim of assault.
Respondents were asked whether they thought the number of assaults against the police had changed in their local area over the past few years.

A large majority, regardless of their roles, thought that assaults had ‘gone up a little’ or ‘gone up a lot’.

This included:
- Officers (93%)
- Specials (88%)
- PCSOs (85%)

Virtually no respondents thought that assaults had gone down (<1% in total).
How likely did respondents think it was that they would be assaulted on duty?

- All respondents were asked how likely they thought it was that they would be assaulted in the next 12 months.
- Responses varied according to roles.
- Overall, 66% of officers, 80% of specials and 56% of PCSOs said it was ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ likely that they would be assaulted.
- The average was much lower for other respondents, though this disguised important differences. For example, 81% of custody and detention officers said an assault was ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ likely.

Base: all respondents. ‘Other’ = other police staff (for example, custody and detention officers, front counter enquiry officers, investigators, scenes of crime officers and other roles), police support volunteers and other.
How likely did police officers think it was that they would be assaulted on duty?

- The perceived risk of being assaulted in the coming year varied among police officers.
- There were marked differences in the perceived likelihood of being assaulted according to officers’ current roles.
- Unsurprisingly, response officers were most likely to think they were at risk, with 93% having said it was ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ likely that they would be assaulted on duty.
- The perceived risk of assault was lowest among those in public protection (29%) and investigation roles (35%).
How worried were respondents about being assaulted on duty?

- All respondents were asked how worried they were about being assaulted on duty.
- Unsurprisingly, those in public-facing roles were most likely to have said they were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ worried.
- The proportion of officers (64%), specials (71%) and PCSOs (64%) who said they were worried was similar.
- A much lower proportion in other roles said they were worried, but there were some notable internal variations:
  - Custody and detention officers (67%)
  - Scenes of crime officers (39%)
How worried were police officers about being assaulted on duty?

- There was some variation in how worried respondents were about being assaulted on duty.
- The variation in worry was less marked than it was for perceived risk.
- Overall, officers in the following roles were most likely to be worried about being assaulted:
  - Response (78%)
  - Roads (73%)
  - Neighbourhoods (72%)
  - Custody (65%)

Base: police officers.
How often had respondents been single-crewed?

- Respondents were asked how often they had been single-crewed or had worked on their own over the past 12 months.
- The analysis focused on officers, specials and PCSOs rather than other roles.
- PCSOs were, on average, the most likely to have said they had worked on their own, with 82% saying they had done so ‘always’ or ‘often’.
What factors were associated with feelings of safety?

- Comparisons were made to identify factors associated with police officers saying they were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ likely to be assaulted, or ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ worried about assaults.
- Officers were more likely to report higher levels of risk and worry if they regularly dealt with conflict, were younger in service, were regularly single-crewed or were previously a victim of assault.
- Overall, Taser officers reported relatively high levels of risk and worry, which could reflect the types of incident they attended or suggest that Taser may not have reassured them about their safety.
- In some cases, these associations may be explained by other factors (eg, non-frontline roles).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Length of service</th>
<th>Single-crewed*</th>
<th>Dealt with people in conflict</th>
<th>Previously assaulted</th>
<th>Taser authorised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5 years or less</td>
<td>6 years or more</td>
<td>‘Always’ or ‘often’</td>
<td>‘Sometimes’ or less often</td>
<td>‘Daily’ or ‘weekly’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very’ or ‘fairly’ likely to be assaulted</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very’ or ‘fairly’ worried about being assaulted</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: police officers. *Single-crewed or worked on their own.
Experiences of being assault on duty
Experiences of being assaulted on duty

- **Operational value of findings**
  - To enable the service to identify those roles most at risk of assaults, to better target initiatives.

- **Headline findings**
  - Overall, 35% of police officers said they had been threatened with assault ‘daily’ or ‘weekly’.
  - Almost nine in 10 police officers (88%) had been assaulted at some point during their service.
  - Specials and staff in custody roles were most likely to have said they had been assaulted recently.
  - Repeat victimisation was relatively common. For example, 50% of custody officers and 46% of response officers assaulted in the past year said they had been assaulted at least three times.
  - Around two-thirds of all assaults (67%) were recorded as crimes.
  - Most officers (85%) and PCSOs (87%) took no sick leave as a result of being assaulted.
  - Satisfaction with supervisory support seemed to be associated with the actions of supervisors.
Respondents were asked how often they had dealt with different threats over the past 12 months.

Consistently, police officers dealt more regularly with all types of threat.

Overall, 35% of officers said they had been threatened with assault on a ‘daily’ or ‘weekly’ basis.

This figure was much higher for officers in custody roles (76%) or on response (53%).

Black and Minority Ethnic officers (33%) were much less likely than White officers (62%) to say they had never having subjected to hate crime.
Respondents were asked if they had ever been assaulted on duty.

As might be expected, the highest prevalence rates were for those respondents in public-facing roles:
- Officers (88%)
- Specials (52%)
- PCSOs (43%)

The low overall rate for other roles masked those with relatively high prevalence rates, such as custody and detention officers (71%).
Respondents were asked when they had last been assaulted.

Specials and staff in custody and detention roles were the most likely to have said they had been assaulted in the last two years:

- Custody and detention officers
  - Less than one year ago (55%)
  - One or two years ago (24%)
- Specials
  - Less than one year ago (50%)
  - One or two years ago (24%)

Similar proportions of officers (58%) and PCSOs (61%) said they had been assaulted in the last two years.
What factors were associated with police officers being assaulted?

- Comparisons were made to identify factors that may have been associated with police officers being assaulted.
- The analysis showed that the last time officers were assaulted:
  - One-third had been single-crewed, working alone or separated from colleagues (33%)
  - Almost all were carrying standard personal protective equipment (PPE) (96%)
  - One in seven officers was carrying a Taser (14%)
- It was not possible to estimate the effect of these factors on the risk of being assaulted.
- However, double-crewed, PPE and Taser seemed to provide no guarantee of safety.
Respondents were asked how often they had been assaulted in the past 12 months.

Analysis focused on police officers because of a low response in other categories.

Most officers reported being assaulted one or two times in the past 12 months (59%).

Repeat victimisation was relatively common, particularly among officers in custody roles or on response.

Overall, around half of all custody officers (50%) and response officers (46%) assaulted in the past year said they had been assaulted at least three times.

How often were respondents assaulted on duty?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Response (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2 times</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 times</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 times</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 10 times</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: police officers who had been assaulted on duty in past 12 months. Excludes respondents who answered 'don't know'.
How serious were the assaults against respondents?

- Respondents were asked to describe how serious their last assault was.
- Analysis focused on police officers and PCSOs because of a low response in other categories.
- Assaults against officers were, on average, more serious than assaults against PCSOs.
- ‘Common assault’ was the most frequent type of assault experienced by officers (47%), specials (65%) and PCSOs (73%).
- A higher proportion of officers had been subjected to ‘battery’ and ‘actual bodily harm’ (both 24%) compared with specials (12% and 19%) or PCSOs (4% and 13%).
How often were respondents spat at, bitten or assaulted with weapons?

- Respondents were asked whether they had been spat at, bitten or assaulted with a weapon the last time they were assaulted.
- Analysis focused on police officers, specials and PCSOs because of a low response in other categories.
- Some differences were identified, such as:
  - Police officers
    - Spat at (28%)
    - Bitten (11%)
    - Assaulted with weapon (9%)
  - PCSOs
    - Spat at (18%)
    - Bitten (6%)
    - Assaulted with weapon (12%)

Base: police officers, specials and PCSOs who had ever been assaulted on duty. Excludes respondents who answered ‘don’t know’. ‘n’ = mean number of responses across questions. A proportion of respondents were both ‘spat at’ and ‘bitten’ the last time they were assaulted.
How did being assaulted affect respondents’ ability to work?

Respondents were asked how much sick leave they took after their last assault.

Most officers (85%) and PCSOs (87%) took no sick leave, but those who did mostly took one week or less (officers 8%, PCSOs 7%).

The severity of assault was associated with how much sick leave was taken.

For example, 21% of officers who said their assaults were ‘grievous bodily harm’ took no sick leave, compared with 95% of officers who experienced ‘common assault’.

Few respondents were placed on restricted duties on returning to work (8% for officers).
What supervisory support did respondents say they received?

- Respondents were asked if their supervisors completed injury at work or safety incident forms, and discussed or developed welfare plans, the last time they were assaulted.
- These actions were not reported as routine, despite often being included in seven-stage investigative plans for assaults.
- Around half of officers (50%) and PCSOs (46%) said their supervisors had completed injury or safety forms.
- Only 17% of officers and 22% of PCSOs said their supervisors had discussed or developed welfare plans.
How satisfied were respondents with the supervisory support they received?

- Respondents were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the support they received from their supervisor the last time they were assaulted.

- In total, 54% of officers and PCSOs said that they were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ satisfied.

- However, a relatively high proportion were neutral in their assessment, with just over one-third having said they were ‘neither satisfied nor dissatisfied’.

- A notable minority of officers (11%) and PCSOs (14%) were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ dissatisfied.

Base: police officers and PCSOs who had ever been assaulted on duty.
What factors were associated with satisfaction with supervisory support?

- Comparisons were made to identify factors associated with satisfaction with the support received from supervisors after assaults.
- Satisfaction and supervisory actions appeared to be linked.
- Officers and PCSOs whose supervisors completed injury forms were twice as likely to be ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ satisfied (72%) than those whose supervisors did not (31%).
- Welfare plans were similarly associated with officers and PCSOs being satisfied (91%).
- These actions could be proxies for the quality of overall approach that was taken, so may not be important in themselves.

Base: police officers and PCSOs who had ever been assaulted on duty.
How often were assaults reported and recorded as crimes?

- Respondents were asked whether they reported their last assaults as crimes, and whether they were recorded as such.
- Overall, 65% of respondents said they had reported their assaults as crimes.
- A similar proportion (67%) said their assaults had been recorded as crimes.
- Almost all assaults reported by victims, but notably not all of them, were recorded as crimes (15,994 out of 16,476).
- However, a small proportion of assaults that were not reported by victims were recorded as crimes (935 out of 8,816).
Experiences of criminal justice processes
Experiences of criminal justice processes

- **Operational value of findings**
  - To enable the service to improve its response to assaults and influence the wider criminal justice system (CJS).

- **Headline findings**
  - Overall, 44% of all assaults recorded as crimes in the past two years went to court.
  - The accused was found or pleaded guilty in a large majority of cases that went to court, with nearly three-quarters (70%) of these offenders reportedly given non-custodial sentences.
  - A relatively high proportion of respondents (41%) said they were given no reason why, or did not know why, their cases had not progressed further than they did.
  - Respondents were generally more satisfied with the handling of their cases than their outcome.
  - The overall quality of the police response appeared to be correlated with officers’ satisfaction with how their cases were handled.
What evidence did respondents say was gathered during police investigations?

- **Written statements**
  - Almost all respondents assaulted in the past two years said that they provided a written statement about what had happened (97%).
  - Over three-quarters had written these statements themselves (82% of the total).

- **Personal victim statements (PVSs)**
  - Most were not asked to provide a PVS about the impact of their assaults (47%) or were asked but did not provide one (16%).

- **Video footage**
  - About half of respondents said there was video of their assaults (48%), just under three-quarters of whom said it was used.
Respondents were asked how the police investigations or any criminal proceedings into their assaults had concluded.

The responses varied markedly.

Of those who said their cases had concluded, the result was:

- No further action by the police (11%)
- An out-of-court disposal (8%)
- Case discontinued before court (30%)
- Case went to court (44%)

The accused was found or pleaded guilty in a large majority of cases that went to court (3,875 out of 4,134).

Base: respondents assaulted on duty in the past two years, whose police investigations and any criminal proceedings had concluded (n=9,482). 'Case discontinued before court' = the police charged the person, the CPS took no further action, the CPS charged the person or the CPS discontinued the case before court.
Respondents were asked what reasons they were given for police investigations, or any criminal proceedings into their assaults, not progressing further.

Overall, 41% said they were given no reason why, or did not know why, pointing to an important gap in communication.

A total of 21% said their cases were not progressed because there was ‘insufficient evidence’ or because it was ‘not in the public interest’.

Over one-third (38%) said they were given ‘other’ reasons.
Respondents were asked what sentences were given to the people who were found or pleaded guilty at court for their assault.

Of the respondents whose cases went to court, nearly three-quarters (70%) said the offender was given a non-custodial sentence.

One in five respondents said the offender received a custodial sentence.

A further 10% said they did not know, which again points to an important gap in communication.
Respondents were asked what happened to the people who assaulted them in respect of any other offences they had committed.

For the respondents who said that other offences had been committed, and whose police investigations and any criminal proceedings had concluded, the result was:
- Out-of-court disposal (7%)
- Case discontinued before court (14%)
- Case went to court (52%)

Of the respondents who said that the people who assaulted them went to court and were found or pleaded guilty, over two-thirds said they were given a non-custodial sentence (2,680 out of 3,809).

### What outcomes did respondents say were given for other offences?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The police issued an out-of-court disposal</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case discontinued before court</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case went to court - not guilty</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case went to court - found or pleaded guilty</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: respondents assaulted on duty in the past two years, whose police investigations and any criminal proceedings had concluded, and where any other offences had been committed (n= 7,833).
What did respondents think of police investigations and criminal proceedings?

- Respondents were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about the police investigations and any criminal proceedings.
- Relatively high proportions of respondents did not believe they had been kept informed (32%) or treated like victims of crime (47%).
- Fewer respondents agreed that the CPS (42%) and courts (36%) took the matter seriously compared with the police (75%).
- Most respondents agreed that the police had carried out a thorough investigation (76%) and had been treated fairly and with respect (61%).
Respondents were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the handling and outcome of their cases.

Respondents were generally more satisfied with the way their cases were handled than with the outcome.

Overall, 58% were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ satisfied and 18% were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ dissatisfied with how their cases had been handled.

This compared with 45% who were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ satisfied and 32% who were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ dissatisfied with the outcome.

How satisfied were respondents with investigations and criminal proceedings?

Respondents assaulted on duty in the past two years, whose police investigations and any criminal proceedings had concluded, n= xxx
Comparisons were made to identify factors associated with respondents being satisfied with how their cases had been handled.

The overall quality of the police response appeared to be linked with satisfaction.

Respondents who agreed with the following statements tended to be ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ satisfied:

- The police carried out a thorough investigation (95%)
- The police took the matter seriously (95%)
- I was treated fairly and with respect (82%)
- I was kept informed of progress (70%)

On balance, being treated like a victim (and more transactional aspects of case handling such as PVSs) seemed less important.
What factors were associated with satisfaction with the outcome of cases?

- Comparisons were made to identify factors associated with respondents being satisfied with the outcome of their cases.
- Overall, respondents were more likely to be ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ satisfied if their cases went to court and the person who assaulted them was found or pleaded guilty (61%).
- Satisfaction dropped to 22% when cases went to court but the person was found not guilty.
- Respondents tended to be more satisfied when sentences were custodial (80%) than when they were non-custodial (55%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of progression</th>
<th>Very or fairly satisfied (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The police took no further action</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The police issued an out-of-court disposal</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case discontinued before court</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case went to court - not guilty</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case went to court - found or pleaded guilty</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custodial</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-custodial</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: respondents assaulted on duty in the past two years, whose police investigations and any criminal proceedings had concluded.
Views on personal safety training
Views on personal safety training

- **Operational value of findings**
  - To enable the service to improve the scope and delivery of personal safety training.

- **Headline findings**
  - Most, but not all, police officers, specials and PCSOs had received personal safety training in the past 12 months.
  - A notable proportion of respondents were not satisfied with the training they had received. One-third (34%) said they were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ dissatisfied, or ‘neither satisfied nor dissatisfied’.
  - Of the tactics they may have been taught, police officers were most commonly reported using a range of non-physical conflict management skills on a regular basis, followed by restraint.
  - Overall, a large majority of officers thought highly of their own abilities to de-escalate conflict.
  - However, only half (52%) said their training had taught them how to do so.
  - Under half (44%) said they had opportunities to practise their de-escalation skills in training.
Respondents were asked how long ago they last received personal safety training.

Most – but notably not all – officers (81%), specials (87%) and PCSOs (82%) had been trained in the past 12 months.

Unsurprisingly, a much lower proportion of respondents in other roles had been trained in the past 12 months (17%).

A majority of respondents in these roles reported having never received any personal safety training (61%), most likely because they were not in public-facing roles.
Respondents were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the personal safety training they had received.

- Satisfaction was broadly similar across roles.
- Overall, two-thirds were satisfied with the personal safety training they had received.
- A notable proportion of respondents, however, were not satisfied with the training they had received (34% in total).
- For example, 18% of officers were ‘neither satisfied nor dissatisfied’ and 16% were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ dissatisfied.
What personal safety tactics did respondents say they used regularly?

- Respondents were asked which of the tactics they may have been taught during personal safety training they used regularly.
- The analysis focused on police officers for ease of reporting.
- Officers most commonly reported using a range of non-physical conflict management skills on a regular basis:
  - Verbal and non-verbal communication (91%)
  - Situational awareness (85%)
  - Active listening (79%)
  - De-escalation skills (73%)
- Restraints (63%) and take downs (44%) were said to be used most commonly of all the physical skills.
What did respondents think about de-escalation skills?

Respondents were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements on de-escalation skills.

Overall, a large majority of officers thought highly of their own abilities to de-escalate conflict.

Views on training were less positive.

Half (52%) said their training had taught them how to defuse confrontation.

Less than half (44%) said they had opportunities to practise their de-escalation skills in training.

Only one-quarter (26%) said enough time was spent on training communication skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree or strongly agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree or strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am good at calming people down who are aggressive</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am confident in my ability to resolve conflict without physical force</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My training has taught me how to defuse confrontation</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ve been given opportunities to practise how to de-escalate conflict during training</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough time is spent in training on the communication skills that could keep me safe</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: police officers (n = ranged from 25,665 to 25,801).
Views on police equipment
Views on police equipment

- **Operational value of findings**
  - To inform the service in its decisions to change deployment of police equipment, including Taser.

- **Headline findings**
  - There was strong agreement among respondents that more frontline police officers should deploy with Taser (85%), and that all frontline officers should have the option to deploy with Taser (87%).
  - Respondents were less strongly of the view that all frontline officers need to deploy with Taser (61%).
  - Three-quarters of police officers (76%) and over four in five specials (85%) said they personally wanted to deploy with Taser.
  - Over two-thirds of PCSOs (69%) did not think the equipment they were provided with was adequate.
How effective did police officers think different pieces of equipment were?

- Respondents were asked how effective they thought different types of equipment were at reducing assaults against the police.
- The view that Taser was ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ effective was strongly held among police officers.
- Almost all identified Taser as the most effective of the pieces of equipment listed, with 75% believing it was ‘very effective’.
- Handcuffs were seen as the next most effective piece of equipment, though only 43% considered them to be ‘very effective’.

Base: police officers (n = ranged from 19,774 to 19,980).
As with police officers, the perception that Taser was ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ effective was strongly held among PCSOs (98%).

In general, PCSOs considered irritant spray to be a more effective piece of equipment than officers did, with 94% of PCSOs saying it was ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ effective, compared with 79% of officers.

There was a similar picture for batons, with 90% of PCSOs saying they were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ effective, compared with 59% of officers.
Police officers and specials were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the following statement:

“I want to be deployed with a Taser every day, assuming appropriate training”

There was widespread agreement with the statement.

Overall, 76% of officers and 85% of specials ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ with personally being deployed with Taser.
All respondents were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the following statement:

“There should be more frontline police officers deployed with a Taser in my force every day”

Overall, there was a high level of agreement across roles.

Agreement was particularly strong among officers and specials, of whom 93% and 96%, respectively, ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ with the wider deployment of Taser.

Other police staff roles were less strongly in agreement (70%).
Did respondents agree all frontline officers should have the option to deploy with Taser?

- All respondents were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement:
  “All frontline police officers should have the option of carrying a Taser, assuming appropriate training”

- Again, there was strong agreement that all frontline officers should have the option to carry Taser:
  - Officers (92%)
  - Specials (96%)
  - PCSOs (88%)

- Agreement among other police staff roles was less strong overall (76%).

![Bar chart showing responses]

Base: all respondents. ‘Other’ = other police staff (for example, custody and detention officers, front counter enquiry officers, investigators, scenes of crime officers and other roles), police support volunteers and other.
All respondents were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement: “Not all frontline police officers need to be deployed with a Taser”

A majority of respondents were of the view that all officers need to deploy with Taser.

However, the majority was smaller than the proportions agreeing that more officers should deploy with Taser, and that all frontline officers should have the option.

Around three in five of all respondents thought all frontline police officers need Taser (ie, 61% ‘disagreed’ or ‘strongly disagreed’ with the statement).
What factors did respondents think should be considered with Taser deployment?

- Respondents were given the statement: “When deciding whether police officers can carry a Taser, chief constables should consider…”
- Most police officers (73%) and almost all specials (95%) thought that chiefs should consider ‘the nature of threats to officer safety’.
- Specials (95%) were also more likely than officers (73%) to have said that chiefs should give consideration to ‘the likelihood of officers being assaulted’.
- Around four in 10 felt chiefs should consider ‘the likely impact on the public confidence in the police’ when making decisions on Taser.
Police officers were asked whether they were authorised to carry Taser.

- Overall, 23% said they were authorised.
- Of these, most were deployed with a Taser on a regular basis:
  - Daily (57%)
  - Weekly (14%)
- Around one in 10 officers who were authorised to carry Taser said they were never deployed with it (11%).
How often did police officers use Taser?

- Taser-authorised officers were asked how often they had used Taser in different ways over the past 12 months.
- Drawing and aiming Taser were the most common uses on a daily, weekly or monthly basis:
  - Drawing (29%)
  - Aiming (17%)
- Red-dotting (12%) and discharging (1%) was much less common on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.
- Overall, 81% said they had never discharged their Taser on duty.

Base: police officers (n = ranged from 5,486 to 5,883)
Did PCSOs agree that the equipment provided to them was adequate?

- PCSOs were asked whether, and to what extent, they agreed or disagreed with the statement: “I am provided with adequate equipment that ensures my personal safety”
- Overall, 69% of PCSOs disagreed with this statement.
- Those who disagreed were then asked: “What additional equipment do you think would help ensure your personal safety?”
- Support was strongest for being provided with irritant spray (61%) and handcuffs (46%).
Appendix

Methods and achieved sample
Methods

- **Sampling frame:**
  - All police officers and staff
  - British Transport Police and the 43 forces in England and Wales
  - Registered pnn email addresses on the managed learning environment (MLE)

- **Survey opened on 25 September 2019 and closed on 28 October 2019**
  - Links to online survey were sent to 243,843 valid emails

- **Response rate:**
  - 40,268 responses
  - 17% of valid emails
  - 18% of police workforce, including 20% of all police officers and over 25% of all PCSOs

- The results are inevitably affected by non-response bias to an unknown degree, meaning there are likely to be systematic differences between those who responded and those who did not.
Respondents by role

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<th>Role</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Police officer</td>
<td>25,858</td>
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<td>Special constable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police staff – custody and detention officer</td>
<td>609</td>
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<td>Police staff – front counter enquiry officer</td>
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<td>Police staff – investigator</td>
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<td>Police staff – PCSO</td>
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<td>Police staff – other</td>
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<td>Police support volunteer</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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Base: all respondents (n=40,268)
Respondents per force

Base: all respondents (n=39,142),
## Respondents by demographic characteristics

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Police officer respondents by rank and role

Base: police officers (n=26,631)