



Firefighters' Workforce Survey 2023

Research Report

Conducted November 2023 – February 2024



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Summary

Background

The survey was conducted by the Local Government Association on behalf of the National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Fire and Rescue Services in order to provide up-to-date information about the workforce, the last survey having been conducted in 2018. The results are used to inform national pay negotiations as well as discussions within the NJC-led Inclusive Fire Services Group. The survey was sent to all 48 fire and rescue services in the United Kingdom and 46 responded (98 per cent).

Key findings

- In total the survey counted 28,987 whole and part-time personnel, split between 27,922 in firefighting roles and 1,065 control specific roles, as well as 16,568 retained personnel.
- In firefighting roles, 90 per cent of the workforce was male but in control-specific roles 74 per cent of personnel were female. Among those on the retained duty system 86 per cent were men.
- 99 per cent of personnel in firefighting roles and 90 per cent in control-specific roles worked on a whole-time basis.
- 7 per cent of personnel in firefighting roles and 3 per cent control-specific roles were from an ethnic minority. Among retained personnel, 2 per cent were from an ethnic minority.
- The average age of personnel in both firefighting roles and control specific roles was 41 while for those on the retained duty system it was 40.
- The average basic annual salary for personnel in firefighting roles was £39,539 and their average gross annual pay was £43,867 while those in control specific roles had an average basic annual salary of £33,903 and average gross annual pay of £37,004. For personnel on the retained duty system the overall average annual retainer was £4,822 and the average gross total pay was £9,823.
- On average, the basic salary of men in firefighting roles was 6 per cent higher than that of women and men's gross pay was 9 per cent higher.
- Among personnel in control specific roles, men's basic salary was 5 per cent higher and their gross pay 4 per cent higher than women's. Men in retained roles were paid a retainer that exceeded that paid to women by 2 per cent and their gross pay was 15 per cent higher.

- 47 per cent of those in firefighting roles and 45 per cent of those in control-specific roles were in receipt of Continual Professional Development (CPD) payments and they were paid £842 and £795 respectively on average. CPD was also received by almost a third (31 per cent) of retained personnel who received an average annual payment of £212.
- Additional Responsibility Allowance was paid to 12 per cent of personnel in firefighting roles and 6 per cent of those in control specific roles and they received average payments of £752 and £1,055 respectively. Among those on the retained duty system 5 per cent of personnel were in receipt of the payment and were paid £290 on average.
- Overtime pay, which averaged £2,772, was received by 47 per cent of personnel in firefighting roles, while 31 per cent of those in control specific roles earned £4,392 on average. Overtime was paid to 5 per cent of those on the retained duty system, the average amount £1,592.
- The survey found a total of 4,846 personnel in respondent services with secondary contracts, more than 80 per cent of whom (4,049) had whole-time/retained contracts.
- 7 per cent of respondent services reported difficulties recruiting whole and part-time personnel, and 7 per cent reported retention difficulties. However, 80 per cent reported recruitment issues for retained personnel and 68 per cent reported retention difficulties.

Introduction

The survey was conducted by the Local Government Association on behalf of the National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Fire and Rescue Services in order to provide up-to-date information about the workforce, the last survey having been conducted in 2018. The survey was sent to all 48 fire and rescue services in the United Kingdom and 46 responded (98 per cent).

The survey collected information on whole-time, part-time and retained personnel, including role, sex, gender identity, ethnic origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, working hours, basic pay, and other payments/allowances. There were also questions about alternative duty systems, additional responsibility allowance payments, secondary contracts and recruitment and retention difficulties.

Methodology

The high level of response means that the respondents are likely to be representative of fire and rescue services as a whole. In addition, data relating to whole-time/part-time and retained personnel has been grossed to the equivalent of a 100 per cent response rate (unless otherwise stated). This was done by calculating the proportion of the total workforce represented by the two non-respondents, from the latest Home Office workforce data, and applying that proportion to the numbers observed in this survey. To calculate overall numbers by role, sex, etc, the ratios observed in the survey were applied to the grossed totals previously calculated.

Throughout the report, where tables and figures report the base, the description refers to the group of people who were asked the question. The number provided refers to the unweighted number of respondents who answered each question. Please note that bases can vary throughout the survey as not all respondents answered every question. Percentages may not appear to add up to exactly 100 per cent due to rounding.

Firefighters' Workforce Survey 2023

Whole-time and Part-time personnel (excluding retained)

Number of personnel and workforce characteristics

The survey estimated a total of 28,987 whole-time and part-time personnel in the UK, split between 27,922 in firefighting roles and 1,065 in control-specific roles.

Almost all personnel in firefighting roles, 99 per cent, were whole-time; 90 per cent of personnel were male and 10 per cent female. Just over half of all firefighting staff were in the firefighter competent role. The proportion of staff who were female was higher for firefighter trainees (17 per cent) and firefighter development (16 per cent). See Table 1.

Table 1: personnel by role and sex (firefighting roles)

| | Female Number | Female Per cent | Male Number | Male Per cent | Total Number |
|---------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Firefighter - Trainee | 70 | 17% | 344 | 83% | 414 |
| Firefighter - Development | 427 | 16% | 2,319 | 84% | 2,746 |
| Firefighter - Competent | 1,467 | 10% | 12,662 | 90% | 14,129 |
| Crew Manager - Development | 88 | 8% | 974 | 92% | 1,062 |
| Crew Mgr - Competent | 182 | 7% | 2,518 | 93% | 2,700 |
| Watch Mgr -Development | 30 | 7% | 383 | 93% | 413 |
| Watch Mgr - Competent A | 76 | 8% | 888 | 92% | 964 |
| Watch Mgr - Competent B | 143 | 6% | 2,257 | 94% | 2,400 |
| Station Mgr -Development | 40 | 9% | 426 | 91% | 466 |
| Station Mgr - Competent A | 18 | 8% | 203 | 92% | 221 |
| Station Mgr - Competent B | 95 | 6% | 1,529 | 94% | 1,624 |
| Group Mgr -Development | 7 | 7% | 96 | 93% | 103 |
| Group Mgr - Competent A | 6 | 6% | 96 | 94% | 102 |
| Group Mgr - Competent B | 30 | 7% | 371 | 93% | 401 |
| Area Mgr -Development | 2 | 5% | 39 | 95% | 41 |
| Area Mgr - Competent A | 1 | 13% | 7 | 88% | 8 |
| Area Mgr - Competent B | 8 | 6% | 120 | 94% | 128 |
| Total firefighting roles | 2,690 | 10% | 25,232 | 90% | 27,922 |

Base: 45 FRSs.

The survey estimated a total of 1,065 personnel in control-specific roles of which 74 per cent were female and 26 per cent male; 90 per cent were whole-time. Just under a third of staff were in firefighting competent roles (315). Males were in a majority only for firefighter trainees. See Table 2.

Table 2: personnel by role and sex (control-specific roles)

| | Female Number | Female Per cent | Male Number | Male Per cent | Total Number |
|---|------------------|--------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Firefighter - Trainee (Control) | 12 | 48% | 13 | 52% | 25 |
| Firefighter - Development (Control) | 128 | 72% | 51 | 28% | 179 |
| Firefighter - Competent (Control) | 249 | 79% | 66 | 21% | 315 |
| Crew Manager - Development (Control) | 29 | 66% | 15 | 34% | 44 |
| Crew Manager - Competent (Control) | 136 | 69% | 61 | 31% | 197 |
| Watch Manager - Development (Control) | 19 | 76% | 6 | 24% | 25 |
| Watch Manager - Competent A (Control) | 35 | 80% | 9 | 20% | 44 |
| Watch Manager - Competent B (Control) | 107 | 77% | 32 | 23% | 139 |
| Station Manager - Development (Control) | 9 | 75% | 3 | 25% | 12 |
| Station Manager - Competent A (Control) | 3 | 75% | 1 | 25% | 4 |
| Station Manager - Competent B (Control) | 34 | 77% | 10 | 23% | 44 |
| Group Manager - Development (Control) | 5 | 100% | 0 | 0% | 5 |
| Group Manager - Competent A (Control) | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 |
| Group Manager - Competent B (Control) | 6 | 60% | 4 | 40% | 10 |
| Fire Control Operator equivalent | 15 | 68% | 7 | 32% | 22 |
| Total control-specific roles | 787 | 74% | 278 | 26% | 1,065 |

Base: 45

Overall, 7 per cent of personnel in firefighting roles and 3 per cent of personnel in control-specific roles were from an ethnic minority. This proportion was slightly higher among males than females (7 per cent compared with 5 per cent, and 7 per cent compared with 1 per cent respectively). See Table 3.

Table 3: personnel by sex and ethnic origin

| | Female White | Female BAME | Male White | Male BAME | Total White | Total BAME |
|-------------------------------|--------------|-------------|------------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Firefighting roles | | | | | | |
| Whole-time | 95% | 5% | 93% | 7% | 93% | 7% |
| Part-time | 94% | 6% | 94% | 6% | 94% | 6% |
| All | 95% | 5% | 93% | 7% | 93% | 7% |
| Control-specific roles | | | | | | |
| Whole-time | 99% | 1% | 93% | 7% | 97% | 3% |
| Part-time | 99% | 1% | 100% | 0% | 99% | 1% |
| All | 99% | 1% | 93% | 7% | 97% | 3% |

Base: 41

The average age of personnel in both firefighting and control-specific roles was 41, and in both cases was higher for part-timers (48 years) than whole-timers (41 years). In firefighting roles 40 per cent of personnel were aged 45 or over and 25 per cent were aged under 35, while in control-specific roles 39 per cent were aged 45 or over and 31 per cent were aged under 35. See Table 4.

Table 4: personnel by age group

| | Under 25 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55 and over | Average age (yrs) |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|-------------------|
| Firefighting roles | | | | | | |
| Whole-time | 3% | 22% | 35% | 35% | 5% | 41 |
| Part-time | 2% | 9% | 30% | 31% | 28% | 48 |
| All | 3% | 22% | 35% | 35% | 5% | 41 |
| Control-specific roles | | | | | | |
| Whole-time | 5% | 28% | 30% | 23% | 14% | 41 |
| Part-time | 3% | 11% | 29% | 21% | 37% | 48 |
| All | 5% | 26% | 30% | 23% | 16% | 41 |

Base: 45

The survey also covered three more characteristics that had not been covered before – gender identity, disability and sexual orientation. For all three, information

was not available for significant proportions of the workforce so the data should be treated with caution.

The survey asked whether the gender the current postholder identified with was the same as their sex registered at birth. This information was recorded for only 36 per cent of personnel in firefighting roles and 39 per cent in control-specific roles. Among those personnel for whom the information was supplied, all but a negligible number in firefighting roles (less than 0.5 per cent) identified as the same as their sex registered at birth.

The survey asked whether postholders had a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more. Information was provided for only 58 per cent of personnel in firefighting roles and 51 per cent of personnel in control-specific roles. If 'not knowns' are excluded from the figures, overall 5 per cent of those in firefighting roles reported such a disability and 8 per cent in control-specific roles. See Table 5.

Table 5: personnel by disability

| | Disability | No disability | Not known |
|-------------------------------|------------|---------------|-----------|
| Firefighting roles | | | |
| Whole-time | 3% | 55% | 42% |
| Part-time | 6% | 63% | 31% |
| All | 3% | 55% | 42% |
| Control-specific roles | | | |
| Whole-time | 4% | 46% | 50% |
| Part-time | 3% | 55% | 42% |
| All | 4% | 47% | 49% |

Base: 41

Information on sexual orientation was provided for only 56 per cent of personnel in firefighting roles and 54 per cent of personnel in control-specific roles. If 'not knowns' are excluded from the figures, overall 94 per cent of those in firefighting roles were heterosexual (94 per cent in control-specific roles), 3 per cent were gay or lesbian (4 per cent), 2 per cent were bisexual (2 per cent) and 1 per cent were of another sexual orientation (0 per cent). See Table 6.

Table 6: personnel by sexual orientation

| | Straight/ Hetero- sexual | Gay or lesbian | Bisexual | Other | Not known |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Firefighting roles | | | | | |
| Whole-time | 52% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 45% |
| Part-time | 60% | 2% | 2% | 1% | 36% |
| All | 52% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 44% |
| Control-specific roles | | | | | |
| Whole-time | 51% | 2% | 1% | 0% | 46% |
| Part-time | 56% | 0% | 1% | 0% | 43% |
| All | 51% | 2% | 1% | 0% | 46% |

Base: 41

Average annual salaries

The average annual basic pay for personnel in firefighting roles was £39,539 (£39,694 for whole-time personnel, £22,888 for part-time personnel). The average basic pay of male personnel, £39,750, was 6 per cent higher than the average for females, £37,560, although among part-time staff females earned slightly more than males on average. See Table 7.

The average annual gross pay for personnel in firefighting roles was 11 per cent higher than basic pay, at £43,867. The average gross pay of male personnel, £44,200, was 9 per cent higher than the average for females, £40,736, although as with basic pay among part-time staff females earned slightly more than males on average.

Table 7: average annual pay by working status and sex (firefighting roles)

| | Whole-time | Part-time | All |
|---------------|------------|-----------|---------|
| Female | | | |
| Basic | £37,981 | £23,081 | £37,560 |
| Gross | £41,204 | £24,638 | £40,736 |
| Male | | | |
| Basic | £39,873 | £22,807 | £39,750 |
| Gross | £44,347 | £24,014 | £44,200 |
| All | | | |
| Basic | £39,694 | £22,888 | £39,539 |
| Gross | £44,050 | £24,198 | £43,867 |

Base: 45

The average annual basic pay for personnel in control-specific roles was £33,903 (£35,290 for whole-time personnel, £20,946 for part-time personnel). The average basic pay of male personnel, £35,235, was 5 per cent higher than the average for females, £33,432. See Table 8.

The average annual gross pay for personnel in control-specific roles was 9 per cent higher than basic pay, at £37,004. The average gross pay of male personnel, £38,029, was 4 per cent higher than the average for females, £36,642.

Table 8: average annual pay by working status and sex (control-specific roles)

| | Whole-time | Part-time | All |
|---------------|------------|-----------|---------|
| Female | | | |
| Basic | £35,220 | £20,710 | £33,432 |
| Gross | £38,590 | £22,785 | £36,642 |
| Male | | | |
| Basic | £35,466 | £24,759 | £35,235 |
| Gross | £38,255 | £27,778 | £38,029 |
| All | | | |
| Basic | £35,290 | £20,946 | £33,903 |
| Gross | £38,495 | £23,076 | £37,004 |

Base: 45

Continual professional development payments

Just under a half of personnel in firefighting roles (47 per cent) received CPD payments, on average £882 (median of £842). While 48 per cent of males received payments, only 34 per cent of females did so, though there was little difference in the average amount received. See Table 9.

Table 9: average annual CPD payments and numbers in receipt by working status and sex (firefighting roles)

| | Whole-time | Part-time | All |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|--------|
| Female | | | |
| Mean | £879 | £514 | £869 |
| Median | £845 | £456 | £834 |
| Numbers in receipt | 881 | 43 | 924 |
| Percentage in receipt | 34% | 56% | 34% |
| Male | | | |
| Mean | £885 | £650 | £883 |
| Median | £845 | £512 | £843 |
| Numbers in receipt | 12,117 | 69 | 12,186 |
| Percentage in receipt | 48% | 38% | 48% |
| All | | | |
| Mean | £884 | £610 | £882 |
| Median | £845 | £496 | £842 |
| Numbers in receipt | 12,999 | 112 | 13,110 |
| Percentage in receipt | 47% | 43% | 47% |

Base: 45

A similar proportion of personnel in control-specific roles (45 per cent) received CPD payments, on average £839 (median of £795). In these roles, female personnel were more likely to receive payments than men (48 per cent compared with 37 per cent), though again there was little difference in the average amount received. See Table 9.

Table 10: average annual CPD payments and numbers in receipt by working status and sex (control-specific roles)

| | Whole-time | Part-time | All |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|------|
| Female | | | |
| Mean | £863 | £596 | £830 |
| Median | £831 | £562 | £798 |
| Numbers in receipt | 303 | 75 | 378 |
| Percentage in receipt | 44% | 77% | 48% |
| Male | | | |
| Mean | £870 | £650 | £866 |
| Median | £788 | £734 | £787 |
| Numbers in receipt | 103 | 2 | 105 |
| Percentage in receipt | 38% | 33% | 37% |
| All | | | |
| Mean | £865 | £600 | £839 |
| Median | £819 | £572 | £795 |
| Numbers in receipt | 405 | 77 | 482 |
| Percentage in receipt | 42% | 75% | 45% |

Base: 45

Additional Responsibility Allowance

Around one in eight personnel in firefighting roles (12 per cent) received ARA payments, on average £1,389 (median of £752). The proportion varied slightly between 12 per cent of males and 9 per cent of females though there was little difference in the average amount received. See Table 11.

The marked difference between the mean and median suggests that the distribution of payments is skewed with a relatively small number of personnel receiving much higher amounts than most personnel. In such cases, the median is a better measure of the average than the mean.

Table 11: average annual ARA payments and numbers in receipt by working status and sex (firefighting roles)

| | Whole-time | Part-time | All |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|--------|
| Female | | | |
| Mean | £1,481 | £808 | £1,462 |
| Median | £750 | £623 | £746 |
| Numbers in receipt | 240 | 7 | 247 |
| Percentage in receipt | 9% | 9% | 9% |
| Male | | | |
| Mean | £1,383 | £1,105 | £1,381 |
| Median | £750 | £1,149 | £753 |
| Numbers in receipt | 2,972 | 11 | 2,984 |
| Percentage in receipt | 12% | 6% | 12% |
| All | | | |
| Mean | £1,393 | £1,018 | £1,389 |
| Median | £750 | £994 | £752 |
| Numbers in receipt | 3,213 | 18 | 3,231 |
| Percentage in receipt | 12% | 7% | 12% |

Base: 45

Personnel in control-specific roles were less likely to receive ARA payments (6 per cent), although on average they received more than those in firefighting roles, £1,743 (median of £1,055). The proportion receiving payments was the same for females and males, and there was little difference in the median amount received. See Table 12.

Table 12: average annual ARA payments and numbers in receipt by working status and sex (control-specific roles)

| | Whole-time | Part-time | All |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|--------|
| Female | | | |
| Mean | £1,883 | £1,273 | £1,808 |
| Median | £993 | £1,187 | £1,017 |
| Numbers in receipt | 37 | 6 | 43 |
| Percentage in receipt | 5% | 7% | 6% |
| Male | | | |
| Mean | £1,595 | - | £1,561 |
| Median | £1,187 | - | £1,161 |
| Numbers in receipt | 20 | 0 | 20 |
| Percentage in receipt | 7% | 0% | 6% |
| All | | | |
| Mean | £1,801 | £1,199 | £1,743 |
| Median | £1,048 | £1,117 | £1,055 |
| Numbers in receipt | 57 | 6 | 63 |
| Percentage in receipt | 6% | 6% | 6% |

Base: 45

Overtime Pay

Just under a half of personnel in firefighting roles (47 per cent) received overtime payments, on average £4,226 (median of £2,772). This proportion was slightly higher among males (48 per cent) than females (41 per cent), and the median amount received by males was around 20 per cent higher. See Table 13.

Table 13: average annual Overtime payments and numbers in receipt by working status and sex (firefighting roles)

| | Whole-time | Part-time | All |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|--------|
| Female | | | |
| Mean | £3,577 | £3,495 | £3,575 |
| Median | £2,339 | £2,629 | £2,347 |
| Numbers in receipt | 1,076 | 20 | 1,096 |
| Percentage in receipt | 41% | 27% | 41% |
| Male | | | |
| Mean | £4,306 | £2,803 | £4,295 |
| Median | £2,833 | £726 | £2,817 |
| Numbers in receipt | 12,105 | 36 | 12,141 |
| Percentage in receipt | 48% | 20% | 48% |
| All | | | |
| Mean | £4,237 | £3,006 | £4,226 |
| Median | £2,786 | £1,287 | £2,772 |
| Numbers in receipt | 13,181 | 56 | 13,237 |
| Percentage in receipt | 48% | 22% | 47% |

Base: 45

Just under a third of personnel in control-specific roles (31 per cent) received overtime payments, on average £6,050 (median of £4,392). This proportion was slightly higher among males (36 per cent) than females (31 per cent), though the median amount was differed little. See Table 14.

Table 14: average annual Overtime payments and numbers in receipt by working status and sex (control-specific roles)

| | Whole-time | Part-time | All |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|--------|
| Female | | | |
| Mean | £6,360 | £5,150 | £6,211 |
| Median | £4,609 | £2,919 | £4,401 |
| Numbers in receipt | 219 | 27 | 246 |
| Percentage in receipt | 32% | 28% | 31% |
| Male | | | |
| Mean | £5,655 | £2,803 | £5,593 |
| Median | £4,390 | £3,353 | £4,367 |
| Numbers in receipt | 85 | 4 | 89 |
| Percentage in receipt | 31% | 67% | 36% |
| All | | | |
| Mean | £6,161 | £5,014 | £6,050 |
| Median | £4,547 | £2,944 | £4,392 |
| Numbers in receipt | 304 | 31 | 335 |
| Percentage in receipt | 32% | 30% | 31% |

Base: 45

Around one in fourteen personnel in firefighting roles (7 per cent) received Shift Allowance payments, on average £3,992 (median of £2,780), with little difference between females (5 per cent) and males (7 per cent), or in the median payment received. See Table 15.¹

¹ There was insufficient data to enable meaningful results for control-specific roles.

Shift Allowance

Table 15: average annual Shift Allowance payments and numbers in receipt by working status and sex (firefighting roles)

| | Whole-time | Part-time | All |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|--------|
| Female | | | |
| Mean | £3,521 | £2,572 | £3,494 |
| Median | £2,717 | £2,228 | £2,703 |
| Numbers in receipt | 140 | 3 | 143 |
| Percentage in receipt | 5% | 4% | 5% |
| Male | | | |
| Mean | £4,065 | £1,310 | £4,045 |
| Median | £2,802 | £903 | £2,789 |
| Numbers in receipt | 1,769 | 10 | 1,779 |
| Percentage in receipt | 7% | 6% | 7% |
| All | | | |
| Mean | £4,014 | £1,682 | £3,992 |
| Median | £2,794 | £1,293 | £2,780 |
| Numbers in receipt | 1,909 | 13 | 1,922 |
| Percentage in receipt | 7% | 5% | 7% |

Base: 45

Other payments/allowances

Just over a third of personnel in firefighting roles (37 per cent) received other payments or allowances, on average £2,202 (median of £881), with little difference between females (36 per cent, median £871) and males (38 per cent, median £882). See Table 16.

Table 16: average annual other payments and numbers in receipt by working status and sex (firefighting roles)

| | Whole-time | Part-time | All |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|--------|
| Female | | | |
| Mean | £2,104 | £966 | £2,072 |
| Median | £884 | £447 | £871 |
| Numbers in receipt | 953 | 26 | 979 |
| Percentage in receipt | 36% | 35% | 36% |
| Male | | | |
| Mean | £2,225 | £911 | £2,216 |
| Median | £884 | £604 | £882 |
| Numbers in receipt | 9,350 | 82 | 9,432 |
| Percentage in receipt | 37% | 45% | 38% |
| All | | | |
| Mean | £2,214 | £927 | £2,202 |
| Median | £884 | £558 | £881 |
| Numbers in receipt | 10,303 | 108 | 10,411 |
| Percentage in receipt | 37% | 42% | 37% |

Base: 45

Around half as many personnel in control-specific roles (16 per cent) received other payments or allowances, on average £3,205 (median of £1,344), with little difference between females (16 per cent) and males (19 per cent), although the median amount received by males was about 27 per cent higher than that received by females. See Table 17.

Table 17: average annual other payments and numbers in receipt by working status and sex (control-specific roles)

| | Whole-time | Part-time | All |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|--------|
| Female | | | |
| Mean | £3,957 | £1,134 | £3,609 |
| Median | £1,371 | £425 | £1,254 |
| Numbers in receipt | 105 | 20 | 126 |
| Percentage in receipt | 15% | 21% | 16% |
| Male | | | |
| Mean | £2,262 | £911 | £2,233 |
| Median | £1,616 | £767 | £1,598 |
| Numbers in receipt | 48 | 2 | 50 |
| Percentage in receipt | 17% | 33% | 19% |
| All | | | |
| Mean | £3,478 | £1,121 | £3,250 |
| Median | £1,440 | £445 | £1,344 |
| Numbers in receipt | 153 | 22 | 175 |
| Percentage in receipt | 16% | 22% | 16% |

Base: 45

Overall, 2 per cent of personnel in firefighting roles were in receipt of a five per cent day crewing retainer (the proportion in control-specific roles was negligible).

Retained Personnel

Number of personnel and workforce characteristics

The survey estimated a total of 16,568 retained personnel in the UK of which 86 per cent were male and 14 per cent female. More than half of all retained personnel were in the firefighter competent role. The proportions of staff who were male and female varied little by role. See Table 18.

Overall, 73 per cent of retained staff were part cover and 27 per cent were full cover.

Table 18: retained personnel by role and sex

| | Female Number | Female Per cent | Male Number | Male Per cent | Total Number |
|----------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Firefighter - Trainee | 44 | 12% | 315 | 88% | 359 |
| Firefighter - Development | 372 | 17% | 1,820 | 83% | 2,192 |
| Firefighter - Competent | 1,360 | 14% | 8,140 | 86% | 9,500 |
| Crew Manager - Development | 42 | 14% | 264 | 86% | 306 |
| Crew Manager - Competent | 383 | 14% | 2,413 | 86% | 2,796 |
| Watch Manager - Development | 19 | 15% | 110 | 85% | 129 |
| Watch Mgr - Competent A | 22 | 15% | 124 | 85% | 146 |
| Watch Mgr - Competent B | 122 | 11% | 1,015 | 89% | 1,137 |
| Station Manager - Development | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 |
| Station Mgr - Competent A | 0 | 0% | 2 | 100% | 2 |
| Station Mgr - Competent B | 0 | 0% | 1 | 100% | 1 |
| Group Manager - Development | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 |
| Group Mgr - Competent A | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 |
| Group Mgr - Competent B | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 |
| Area Manager - Development | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 |
| Area Manager - Competent A | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 |
| Area Manager - Competent B | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 |
| All staff | 2,364 | 14% | 14,204 | 86% | 16,568 |

Base: 45

Overall, 2 per cent of retained personnel were from an ethnic minority. This proportion varied little by sex or whether personnel were full cover or part cover. See Table 19.

Table 19: retained personnel by sex and ethnic origin

| | Female White | Female BAME | Male White | Male BAME | Total White | Total BAME |
|------------|--------------|-------------|------------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Full cover | 97% | 3% | 99% | 1% | 99% | 1% |
| Part cover | 99% | 1% | 98% | 2% | 98% | 2% |
| All | 98% | 2% | 98% | 2% | 98% | 2% |

Base: 45

The average age of retained personnel was 40, slightly higher for full cover (44 years) than part cover (39). Overall, 34 per cent of retained personnel were aged 45 or over and 34 per cent were aged under 35. See Table 20.

Table 20: retained personnel by age group

| | Under 25 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55 and over | Average age (yrs) |
|------------|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|-------------------|
| Full cover | 5% | 19% | 28% | 28% | 20% | 44 |
| Part cover | 8% | 30% | 33% | 21% | 8% | 39 |
| All | 7% | 27% | 32% | 23% | 11% | 40 |

Base: 46

The survey also covered three more characteristics that had not been covered before – gender identity, disability and sexual orientation. For all three, information was not available for significant proportions of the workforce so the data should be treated with caution.

The survey asked whether the gender the current postholder identified with was the same as their sex registered at birth. This information was recorded for only 23 per cent of personnel. Among those personnel for whom the information was supplied, all but a negligible number of part cover personnel (less than 0.5 per cent) identified as the same as their sex registered at birth.

The survey asked whether postholders had a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more. Information was provided for only 48 per cent of personnel. If 'not knowns' are excluded from the figures, overall 3 per cent of personnel reported such a disability. See Table 5.

Table 21: retained personnel by disability

| | Disability | No disability | Not known |
|------------|------------|---------------|-----------|
| Full cover | 1% | 32% | 67% |
| Part cover | 2% | 51% | 47% |
| All | 2% | 47% | 52% |

Base: 41

Information on sexual orientation was provided for only 47 per cent of personnel. If 'not knows' are excluded from the figures, overall 97 per cent of retained personnel were heterosexual, 1 per cent were gay or lesbian, and 1 per cent were bisexual. See Table 22.

Table 22: retained personnel by sexual orientation

| | Straight/ Hetero- sexual | Gay or lesbian | Bisexual | Other | Not known |
|------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|----------|-------|--------------|
| Full cover | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 66% |
| Part cover | 50% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 48% |
| All | 46% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 53% |

Base: 41

Retainers and Additional Pay

The average (mean) annual retainer for retained personnel was £4,822 (£5,247 for part cover personnel). The average retainer for male personnel, £4,897, was 16 per cent higher than the average for females, £4,219. See Table 23.

The average (mean) annual gross pay for retained personnel was 104 per cent higher than retainer, at £9,823. The average gross pay of male personnel, £9,913, was 9 per cent higher than the average for females, £9,093.

Table 23: average (mean) annual retainer and gross pay by cover and sex

| | Full cover | Part cover | All |
|---------------|------------|------------|--------|
| Female | | | |
| Retainer | £3,314 | £4,579 | £4,219 |
| Gross | £11,833 | £8,004 | £9,093 |
| Male | | | |
| Retainer | £3,696 | £5,328 | £4,897 |
| Gross | £12,072 | £9,138 | £9,913 |
| All | | | |
| Retainer | £3,651 | £5,247 | £4,822 |
| Gross | £12,044 | £9,016 | £9,823 |

Base: 45

The average (median) annual retainer for retained personnel was £2,950. The average retainer for male personnel, £2,956, was 2 per cent higher than the average for females, £2,897. See Table 24.

The average (median) annual gross pay for retained personnel was 188 per cent higher than the average retainer, at £8,484. The average gross pay of male personnel, £8,605, was 15 per cent higher than the average for females, £7,504.

Table 24: average (median) annual retainer and gross pay by cover and sex

| | Full cover | Part cover | All |
|---------------|------------|------------|--------|
| Female | | | |
| Retainer | £3,351 | £2,717 | £2,897 |
| Gross | £9,038 | £6,895 | £7,504 |
| Male | | | |
| Retainer | £3,623 | £2,717 | £2,956 |
| Gross | £9,671 | £8,222 | £8,605 |
| All | | | |
| Retainer | £3,591 | £2,717 | £2,950 |
| Gross | £9,597 | £8,080 | £8,484 |

Base: 45

Payments for Work Activity

Nine out of ten retained personnel (90 per cent) received PWA, on average £6,322 (median of £4,996). There was little difference between females and males in either the proportion in receipt of payments or the average amount received. See Table 9.

Table 25: average annual Payments for Work Activity and numbers in receipt by cover and sex

| | Full cover | Part cover | All |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|--------|
| Female | | | |
| Mean | £7,747 | £5,756 | £6,322 |
| Median | £4,980 | £4,565 | £4,683 |
| Numbers in receipt | 466 | 1,120 | 1,586 |
| Percentage in receipt | 90% | 86% | 87% |
| Male | | | |
| Mean | £7,395 | £5,936 | £6,322 |
| Median | £5,379 | £4,910 | £5,034 |
| Numbers in receipt | 3,543 | 9,748 | 13,291 |
| Percentage in receipt | 91% | 90% | 90% |
| All | | | |
| Mean | £7,436 | £5,917 | £6,322 |
| Median | £5,333 | £4,873 | £4,996 |
| Numbers in receipt | 4,009 | 10,868 | 14,877 |
| Percentage in receipt | 91% | 89% | 90% |

Base: 45

Continual Professional Development payments

Just under a third of retained personnel (31 per cent) received CPD payments, on average £234 (median of £212). While 33 per cent of males received payments, only 16 per cent of females did so, though on average females received slightly more than males. See Table 26.

Table 26: average annual CPD payments and numbers in receipt by cover and sex

| | Full cover | Part cover | All |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|-------|
| Female | | | |
| Mean | £302 | £234 | £253 |
| Median | £240 | £206 | £216 |
| Numbers in receipt | 120 | 168 | 287 |
| Percentage in receipt | 23% | 13% | 16% |
| Male | | | |
| Mean | £264 | £220 | £232 |
| Median | £223 | £208 | £212 |
| Numbers in receipt | 1,737 | 3,178 | 4,915 |
| Percentage in receipt | 45% | 29% | 33% |
| All | | | |
| Mean | £268 | £221 | £234 |
| Median | £225 | £208 | £212 |
| Numbers in receipt | 1,857 | 3,346 | 5,203 |
| Percentage in receipt | 42% | 28% | 31% |

Base: 45

Additional Responsibility Allowance payments

One in twenty retained personnel (5 per cent) received ARA payments, on average £563 (median of £290). There was little difference between males and females, though females on average received slightly higher payments than males. See Table 11.

Table 27: average annual ARA payments and numbers in receipt by cover and sex

| | Full cover | Part cover | All |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|------|
| Female | | | |
| Mean | £614 | £622 | £619 |
| Median | £401 | £561 | £516 |
| Numbers in receipt | 10 | 59 | 69 |
| Percentage in receipt | 2% | 5% | 4% |
| Male | | | |
| Mean | £596 | £541 | £556 |
| Median | £116 | £315 | £263 |
| Numbers in receipt | 75 | 667 | 742 |
| Percentage in receipt | 2% | 6% | 5% |
| All | | | |
| Mean | £598 | £550 | £563 |
| Median | £150 | £341 | £290 |
| Numbers in receipt | 85 | 726 | 811 |
| Percentage in receipt | 2% | 6% | 5% |

Base: 45

Disturbance payments

A little under two-thirds of retained personnel (62 per cent) received disturbance payments, on average £622 (median of £421). The proportion varied slightly between 63 per cent of males and 53 per cent of females though there was little difference in the average amount received. See Table 28.

Table 28: average annual Disturbance payments and numbers in receipt by cover and sex

| | Full cover | Part cover | All |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|--------|
| Female | | | |
| Mean | £994 | £447 | £602 |
| Median | £458 | £300 | £345 |
| Numbers in receipt | 271 | 698 | 969 |
| Percentage in receipt | 52% | 54% | 53% |
| Male | | | |
| Mean | £963 | £503 | £624 |
| Median | £515 | £401 | £431 |
| Numbers in receipt | 2,439 | 6,789 | 9,228 |
| Percentage in receipt | 63% | 63% | 63% |
| All | | | |
| Mean | £966 | £497 | £622 |
| Median | £508 | £390 | £421 |
| Numbers in receipt | 2,710 | 7,487 | 10,197 |
| Percentage in receipt | 61% | 62% | 62% |

Base: 45

Overtime Pay

One in twenty retained personnel (5 per cent) received overtime payments, on average £4,224 (median of £1,592). This proportion varied little by sex, though females received on average more than males (median £1,847 compared with £1,561). See Table 29.

Table 29: average annual Overtime Pay and numbers in receipt by cover and sex

| | Full cover | Part cover | All |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|--------|
| Female | | | |
| Mean | £6,658 | £4,841 | £5,357 |
| Median | £2,283 | £1,674 | £1,847 |
| Numbers in receipt | 30 | 86 | 116 |
| Percentage in receipt | 6% | 7% | 6% |
| Male | | | |
| Mean | £5,698 | £3,505 | £4,084 |
| Median | £2,382 | £1,266 | £1,561 |
| Numbers in receipt | 100 | 644 | 744 |
| Percentage in receipt | 3% | 6% | 5% |
| All | | | |
| Mean | £5,811 | £3,648 | £4,224 |
| Median | £2,370 | £1,310 | £1,592 |
| Numbers in receipt | 130 | 730 | 860 |
| Percentage in receipt | 3% | 6% | 5% |

Base: 45

Additional Information

Additional Responsibility Allowances

Details of additional responsibility allowances paid were provided by 28 services. The main items were acting-up/temporary promotions (10 respondents), specialist rescue skills such as USAR (8), and trainer/instructor. A wide variety of other items were listed by smaller numbers of respondents.

Secondary contracts by type of contract

Almost all respondent services reported personnel with secondary contracts, totalling 4,846. More than four-fifths of these were on whole-time/retained contracts. See Table 32.

Table 30: number of personnel with secondary contracts by type of contract

| | Number of personnel | Number of FRSs |
|---|---------------------|----------------|
| Whole-time/Retained | 4,049 | 44 |
| Whole-time/Support | 53 | 35 |
| Whole-time/Community Safety | 19 | 35 |
| Support/Retained | 278 | 39 |
| Support/Community Safety | 35 | 35 |
| Dual Retained contracts (within an FRS) | 233 | 39 |
| Other | 179 | 10 |
| Total | 4,846 | |

Base: 43

Recruitment and retention difficulties

Only 7 per cent of respondent services reported difficulties recruiting whole-time or part-time personnel and only 16 per cent reported retention difficulties.

For retained personnel the picture was very different, with 80 per cent reporting recruitment difficulties and 68 per cent reporting retention difficulties. See Table 33.

Table 31: number of FRSs experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties

| | Recruitment - Number of FRS | Recruitment - % of FRSs | Retention - Number of FRS | Retention - % of FRSs |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Whole-time and part-time personnel – Yes | 3 | 7% | 7 | 16% |
| Whole-time and part-time personnel – No | 39 | 89% | 32 | 73% |
| Whole-time and part-time personnel – Don't know | 2 | 5% | 5 | 11% |
| Retained personnel – Yes | 35 | 80% | 30 | 68% |
| Retained personnel – No | 8 | 18% | 9 | 20% |
| Retained personnel – Don't know | 1 | 2% | 5 | 11% |

Base: 44

Respondents who reported that they were having difficulties were asked to provide details of their problems and any actions they had taken to remedy them. Recruitment difficulties for retained personnel mostly related to rural areas due to the distances involved and/or because the local population was too small. The actions taken mostly revolved around recruitment campaigns (12 respondents), amending terms and conditions, including pay (6), reviewing policies and procedures (5), and amending working practices (5).



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