

Participant information about *Answering the call*

A survey measuring the mental health and wellbeing of police and emergency services personnel in Australia

Invitation

You have been invited to take part in *Answering the call* – the first national survey of the mental health and wellbeing of police and emergency services. The survey is funded by *beyondblue* with support from the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre. It is being conducted by Roy Morgan Research and The University of Western Australia. A sample of employees, volunteers and former employees from across Australia have been randomly selected to participate.

The survey should take about 20–25 minutes to complete. **To complete the survey, please follow the instructions in your survey invitation.**

What is the aim of the survey?

The survey is Phase 2 of *beyondblue's* National Mental Health and Wellbeing Study of Police and Emergency Services, which aims to investigate the prevalence of mental health conditions, suicide, stigma and help-seeking behaviour among police and emergency service personnel. The research will establish important national baseline measures and provide clear evidence about the issues affecting the mental health of police and emergency services personnel and enable *beyondblue* to work with agencies, unions and other key groups to identify the best ways to provide support.

The study is part of *beyondblue's* Police and Emergency Services Program, which aims to promote the mental health of current and former police and emergency services personnel and their families.

Who can take part in the survey?

More than 20,000 employees, volunteers and former employees in police, ambulance, fire and rescue and state emergency services across Australia are being invited to participate in this survey. Participants are selected at random and not on the basis of their wellbeing. This is to provide a representation of the needs of the whole police and emergency services sector.

What does participation involve?

Participation in the survey involves answering a series of questions about your work or volunteer work and your health and wellbeing. After starting the survey, you can stop at any time, save your progress securely and confidentially, and complete it later using the same unique survey link.

Voluntary participation and withdrawal from the survey

Your participation in the survey is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate, we hope that you will answer all questions. If you can't answer or don't feel comfortable answering any question, you don't have to. You can withdraw from the survey at any time.

Your privacy

The information you provide will be held securely and managed by Roy Morgan Research and The University of Western Australia. Information that could possibly identify you, such as name, date of birth or ISP address will not be recorded. You have been randomly selected, and the research team analysing the results will not have your name, email address or any other such information that may identify you. The survey software is provided by Roy Morgan Research and is completely independent of your organisation's IT environment. Your organisation will not see or be able to access any information that you provide as an individual. Your answers will be combined with the results of about 20,000 other people before being analysed by researchers or used in any reports or other results released from the survey. No individuals will be able to be identified from any reports or results released from the survey.

Health care and support services available to you

The survey includes questions about issues you may have experienced and services that you may have used. If participating in this survey raises any concerns about how you have been feeling, and you would like assistance, there are a number of support options available.

You can visit your GP, another health professional, or your agency's Employee Assistance Program. The *beyondblue* Support Service also provides free, immediate, short-term counselling advice and referrals to people in Australia via telephone and email 24/7, and web chat from 3pm to midnight (AEST), every day. The Support Service can be contacted on 1300 22 4636 or via email or web chat at beyondblue.org.au/get-support

For crisis support and suicide prevention services, contact Lifeline on 13 11 14, available 24/7, or online text chat from 7pm to 4am (AEST) at lifeline.org.au/get-help/online-services/crisis-chat

Contacts

If you would like any further information about the survey, please visit beyondblue.org.au/pesresearch and click on the 'FAQs for participants' link. You can also phone the research team on 1800 677 248 or email answeringthecall@roymorgan.com

Thank you in anticipation of your time – we greatly appreciate your input in this important study.

David Lawrence
Chief Researcher



This survey is funded by *beyondblue* as part of the National Mental Health and Wellbeing Study of Police and Emergency Services with support from the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre

Ethics Approval – all states and territories

Approval to conduct this research has been provided by the University of Western Australia with reference number RA/4/1/9036 in accordance with its ethics review and approval procedures. Any person considering participation in this research project, or agreeing to participate, may raise any questions or issues with the researchers at any time. In addition, any person not satisfied with the response of researchers may raise ethics issues or concerns, and may make any complaints about this research project by contacting the Human Ethics office at UWA on (08) 6488 4703 or by emailing to humanethics@uwa.edu.au. All research participants are entitled to retain a copy of any Participant Information Form and/or Participant Consent Form relating to this research project.

Most organisations involved in the project have given their approval to participate pursuant to The University of Western Australia's ethics approval process. In the three specific cases listed below, organisations had additional ethics approval processes. For these organisations additional approvals have been provided as follows:

Additional information for Tasmanian participants:

This study has also been approved by the Tasmanian Health and Medical Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study you should contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on (03) 6226 6254 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. You will need to quote TAS: H0016690.

Additional information for Victoria Police participants:

This study has also been approved by Victoria Police Human Research Ethics Committee (VPHREC). If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research The National Mental Health and Wellbeing Study of Police and Emergency Services is being conducted, please contact:

Secretariat, Research Coordinating Committee
Corporate Strategy and Governance Department
Level 5, Tower 1, Victoria Police Centre
637 Flinders Street, Docklands VIC 3008
Tel: +61 3 9247 3385; Fax: +61 3 9247 6712
Email: research.committee@police.vic.gov.au

Additional information for NSW Ambulance participants:

This study has also been approved by the Ethics Review Committee (RPAH Zone) of the Sydney Local Health District. Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study should contact the Executive Officer on 02 9515 6766 and quote protocol number X17-0232