

<b>Institution:</b> University of Cambridge		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> UoA 21		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Improving trauma resilience and job quality in UK policing		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2013-2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Dr Jessica Miller	Research Associate	01.07.2017 to date
Professor Brendan Burchell	Professor of the Social Sciences	01.10.1985 to date
Dr Magdalena Soffia	Research Associate	15.11-2018 to 28.02.2020
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2017 to date		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> No		
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Research undertaken at the University of Cambridge's Department of Sociology in collaboration with Police Care UK has revealed for the first time the prevalence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in UK police and has provided the world's first incidence rate for Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (CPTSD) in a profession. Informed by rich qualitative research with police in high-risk roles, the project's wider study of trauma resilience has been steered in close collaboration with senior national policy makers to improve police wellbeing. National impact has been achieved across four areas: raising awareness of PTSD (including its relationship with poor job quality); delivering national training on trauma prevention; developing and delivering new trauma prevention/management tools; and, influencing national policy, primarily within the police force but also within the UK civil service.</p>		
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The project builds on two established strands of research: i) Brendan Burchell's work on job quality, its impact on mental health in the EU [R1, 2013] and its links to policy [R2, 2014]; and ii) Jess Miller's research on the neuropsychological impact of PTSD [R3, 2017] and its application in policing [R4]. The project's research has three strands: a national survey data of job quality and trauma incidence/impact; a feasibility study testing trauma processing techniques, and qualitative research on high-risk roles.</p> <p><b>Policing: The job &amp; the life (TJTL) survey.</b> The anonymous online survey conducted in 2018 involved 18,175 police personnel across the UK and collected data on trauma impact and management, working conditions and wellbeing. The survey provided the world's first prevalence rate for work-related CPTSD and the UK's first police PTSD prevalence rate. TJTL found that 20% of UK police are likely to have PTSD or CPTSD, 12% of service officers suffer from CPTSD, with 93% attending work as usual, and 72% unaware they have the condition, even though the symptoms have an extreme negative impact on personal, family and working lives. Benchmarked against UK and European data, the survey revealed below-average job quality on multiple indicators, many of which were correlated with higher rates of PTSD and poor mental health, providing new insights into the aggravating factors behind the high prevalence of police PTSD. The survey findings were released first in a report in 2019 [R5] and then in an academic paper in 2020 [R6, 2020]. Further analysis of the survey data led to the creation of a trauma exposure checklist which is now in press [R4].</p> <p><b>A Randomised Control Trial to test the feasibility of Trauma Impact Prevention Techniques (TIPT)</b> was conducted in 2018/19. This study demonstrated that teaching mapping and timeline techniques in a police training environment can facilitate processing of traumatic or difficult incidents, providing immediate and statistically significant improvements in feelings of ease. The majority of participants reported improved recall of events and increased senses of</p>		

ease and objectivity about traumatic incidents. No participants reported adverse effects, and advocacy for sharing the techniques with police peers was high among participants [R7, 2019].

**Multi-method qualitative research into high-risk roles** (including child sexual exploitation, firearms, emergency call handling and counter terrorism) was undertaken from 2017-2019, comprising over 15 focus groups, 20 in-person interviews, 15 telephone interviews, 25 email consultations, and four observation studies with job shadowing. This research engaged with over 150 individual serving officers and staff to explore personal stories of traumatisation and resilience in police service, many of which were being verbalised for the first time. As part of this work, in 2017 the UK's Head of Counter Terrorism (CT) requested that the research team conduct qualitative research into the specific trauma resilience needs of those working in CT and CT family liaison for a confidential report. This report was used to inform further wellbeing work for senior command to which Miller was assigned in 2020 (see Section 4).

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- R1: Smith, M., Piasna, A., Burchell, B., Rubery, J., Rafferty, A., Rose, J. & Carter, L. (2013). *Women, men and working conditions in Europe: A report based on the fifth European Working Conditions Survey*. Publications Office of the EU. [\[Link\]](#)
- R2: Burchell, B., Sehnbruch, K., Piasna, A., & Agloni, N. (2014). The quality of employment and decent work: Definitions, methodologies, and ongoing debates. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 38(2), 459-477. [\[DOI\]](#)
- R3: Miller, J. K., McDougall, S., Thomas, S., & Wiener, J. (2017). The impact of the brain-derived neurotrophic factor gene on trauma and spatial processing. *Journal of Clinical Medicine*, 6(12): 108. [\[DOI\]](#)
- R4: Miller, J. K., Brewin, C. R., Soffia, M., Elliott-Davies, M., Burchell, B., Peart, A. (in press). The development of a UK police traumatic events check list. *The Police Journal: Theory, Practice, Principles*. [delayed output]
- R5: Miller, J. K., Soffia, M., Brewin, C. R., Burchell, B. (2019). *Policing: The job and the life survey 2018. Summary report*. Police Care UK. [\[Link\]](#)
- R6: Brewin, C. R., Miller, J. K., Soffia, M., Peart, A., & Burchell, B. (2020). Posttraumatic stress disorder and complex posttraumatic stress disorder in UK police officers. *Psychological Medicine*, Early online view. [\[DOI\]](#)
- R7: Miller, J. K., Peart, A., & Soffia, M. (2019). Can police be trained in trauma processing to minimise PTSD symptoms? Feasibility and proof of concept with a newly recruited UK Police population, *The Police Journal: Theory, Practice and Principles*, 93(4), 310-331. [\[DOI\]](#)

This research has been published in peer-reviewed and reputable publications which meet the 2\* minimum REF requirement.

#### Funding:

PDT Police Trauma Resilience Research Project, Principal Investigator Brendan Burchell. Funded by Police Care UK (formerly The Police Dependents' Trust), awarded to Department of Sociology to the value of GBP123,441.09 (Phase 1: May 2017-April 2019, Phase 2: May 2019-2021).

### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

To facilitate impact, the project was steered through quarterly meetings with senior staff from Police Care UK, the National Police Chief's Council, the College of Policing, the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW), the National Chief Medical Officer for the police forces of England and Wales, and national trauma expert Prof Chris Brewin (UCL). Over 3,000 respondents to the 2018 TJTL survey volunteered to support the work of the project. Impact has

been achieved in four main areas: 1) raising awareness of PTSD; 2) delivering trauma prevention training; 3) developing trauma prevention/management tools; and 4) influencing national policy, primarily within the police force but also within the UK civil service and other emergency services.

### **1. Raising public, professional and parliamentary awareness of PTSD**

The project has gained national and international media coverage, including being featured by BBC and C4 documentaries (Inside Out, The One Show and Dispatches), The Guardian, The Independent, Metro and on BBC 5 Live, Radio Scotland, Radio 5 Live and Talk Radio.

Within the police service, force-level reports of TJTL findings were disseminated in 2019-20 [R5]. Since 2017, the team have presented at over 20 national police conferences including the National Police Chiefs' Council Annual Wellbeing Conference and The Royal Foundation's Emergency Responders Research Symposium on Mental Health & Wellbeing. Discussing the impact of the TJTL survey, the National Chair for the Police Federation of England and Wales stated, "... [TJTL] has greatly contributed to key organisations within policing, such as the College of Policing, National Police Chiefs Council and Her Majesties Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, ... recognising the impacts of trauma within policing, ... [and] the importance of mental health and welfare service provision for police officers" [E1]

The project's impact has resonated in the political arena since 2017. The research lead was invited to a Wellbeing Roundtable by the Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service in 2017 and has contributed to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Mindfulness in Defence & Policing since 2018 [E2]. In 2019-20, three parliamentary questions cited the research [E3].

### **2. National trauma impact prevention training**

In 2019 a national training programme, Trauma Impact Prevention Techniques (TIPT), was delivered based on the findings from the qualitative research into high-risk roles and results of the Policing: The Job & The Life survey. The one-day course followed the Train-The-Trainer model and includes psychoeducation, an animation, short film, workbooks and accreditation for those with appropriate qualifications and has now reached over 1,500 officers, with a further 9,000 due for training in 2021.

The Mental Health lead at Hampshire Constabulary leads on TIPT train-the-trainer delivery but has also used the method himself. He said: "This is a fantastic tool to help our officers and staff process and file some of the difficult things they have to deal with on a daily basis. It is a very simple method that helps our brain put things into perspective and move on. Having used it personally I can categorically say that it works, and I have received some really positive feedback from colleagues who have also applied the techniques successfully. I would highly recommend this tool to anyone working in the emergency services, or who otherwise has to deal with trauma" [E4].

Following the qualitative research with high-risk groups, a bespoke course (TIPT Plus) was developed for atypical trauma exposure in roles including Firearms and Child Sexual Exploitation. Bespoke TIPT Plus modules for Call Handling and Counter Terrorism (CT) and CT Senior Command were also delivered from 2018 to 2020. TIPT basic training is also being disseminated across the 11 CT regions, aiming to reach all 8,000 officers by the end of 2021. The National Lead for Counter Terrorism Policing has stated: "As a result of your work, the subject of trauma processing as a key part of the wellbeing of my staff has become a fundamental point of development and I am passionate about driving this work forward." [E5]

### **3. Developing and delivering new trauma prevention/management tools**

TJTL survey data was used to produce the UK's first Police Trauma Exposure Checklist. By identifying the types of work-related events that carry the highest risk for trauma impact, this monitoring tool can help prevent cumulative trauma load and reduce rates of PTSD. The checklist is currently being piloted by Police Care UK, Durham Constabulary and Police Scotland.

Praising the TIPT training and Trauma Exposure Checklist, the Chief Constable for Durham Constabulary has said: “We have received excellent feedback from all officers trained. We are now beginning to see evidence TIPT is becoming embedded within the force and being utilised in a variety of situations. Standing in front of our officers and staff talking openly about trauma and building that connection with them, giving them an opportunity to meet and discuss what we have done to try and learn and improve has greatly improved officers and staff’s willingness to engage” [E6].

Extensive guidance material was created on trauma resilience and management in policing, as well as more specific guidance for families of officers involved in critical/major incidents and for officers working with extreme material and coping with Covid-19 [E7].

#### 4. Influencing national policy

The project’s impact in policy includes embedding of research findings in the police national wellbeing strategy and inclusion in HR policy for the UK civil service.

The College of Policing has embedded the research outputs in the National Wellbeing Strategy and disseminated them online through Oscar Kilo (the police force’s national wellbeing data depository) [E7]. The project’s trauma resilience training was the main focus of the College of Police’s workforce leadership and CPD programme in 2019-2021, including training over 60 Chief Officers and Chief Superintendents for the National Police Chief’s council.

Describing the impact on national policy, the National Police Wellbeing Lead and Chief Constable for Lancashire has stated: “The research has been hugely influential in shaping our priorities using best evidence [and has] enabled us to rapidly translate evidence into practice, particularly in terms of what interventions and preventative activities can be scaled up ... Awareness of PTSD has been hidden beneath a culture of denial and the research has broken the silence, enabling us to generate a national call for action to invest in the mental health of our frontline officers and staff ... Dr Miller didn’t walk away after the research was published and because of her strong relationships with key stakeholders in policing, she has already applied her work to several thousand frontline staff” [E8].

The project is now beginning to have impact beyond the police service. In 2020 the research team provided editorial input to the Civil Service’s new guide for managing trauma, including providing a section on trauma resilience [E9]; and, Dr Miller now sits on the Emergency Responders’ Wellbeing Working Group at the Royal Foundation, providing an opportunity for broader diffusion of the team’s new tools for trauma resilience across other UK emergency services during 2021.

#### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

E1: Testimonial: National Chair, Police Federation England and Wales.

E2: Invitation to roundtable from Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service, December 2017.

E3: Parliament. Commons. Hansard Vol. 684. 25 November 2020. Mental health support: Policing. [\[Link\]](#)

E4: Testimonial: Deputy Police Chief, Hampshire Constabulary (with quote from Mental Health Lead).

E5: Testimonial: National Lead for Counter Terrorism Policing (and Assistant Commissioner, New Scotland Yard).

E6: Testimonial: Chief Constable for Durham Constabulary.

E7: Materials: National Police Wellbeing Service and College of Policing, Police Care UK

(i) Website: Trauma and post incident management. Oscar Kilo (National Police Wellbeing Service). [\[Link\]](#)

(ii) Website: Trauma resilience in UK Policing. Oscar Kilo (National Police Wellbeing Service). [\[Link\]](#)

(iii) College of Policing. *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and policing: Short guidance document*. [\[Link\]](#)

(iv) Website: Covid 19 resilience for the policing brain: Covid 19 infographics. Police Care UK/University of Cambridge. [\[Link\]](#)

E8: Testimonial: National Police Wellbeing Lead and Chief Constable of Lancashire.

E9: UK Civil Service HR. (2020). Managing work-related trauma: a practical guide for frontline, operational and specialist teams in the Civil Service.