5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW FROM AGENCIES PARTICIPATING IN THE NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT APPLIED RESEARCH & DATA PLATFORM

The National Police Foundation's Platform provides law enforcement agency executives with actionable survey information from multiple perspectives to inform decision-making. The results of Platform surveys are provided to individual agencies. Summary reports are shared with the Platform and broader law enforcement communities to share findings and trends in important topics.

The first core survey, O*fficer Safety and Wellness (OSW)*, explores aspects of the job and personal habits that affect an officer's health and well-being. The second survey, *Impact of New Technology (Tech)*, looks at the various technologies used in agencies across the country and solicits opinions on whether officers find that the technology improves their quality of their work, or impedes what they are trying to accomplish.

The Platform team compiled the results from the first 17 agencies to complete the OSW Survey, and the first 10 to complete the Tech Survey. They also evaluated the OSW results across agency size, and similar regions to discern any notable differences. The team did not compare results for the West or the less than 249 sworn benchmark categories, due to the small number of agencies in these groupings. The team also looked at differences in rank, gender, and generation for the more notable findings.

1 IMPACT OF INCREASED MEDIA ATTENTION AND PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Law enforcement officers and their agencies have faced increased scrutiny from the media and the public. 97% of Platform respondents said that this increased scrutiny has led to greater concerns about their safety. Officers also indicate that this has resulted in the public treating them with less respect than in the past (91%). A smaller, but still significant, majority of Platform respondents admitted that this scrutiny makes them less willing to stop and question those engaged in suspicious behavior. This response was more prevalent among male officers, than female officers.

2 SUFFICIENCY OF TRAINING

Training for active shoot situations, contacts with the mentally ill, and scenario-based trainings are most consistently provided in Platform agencies. Officers identified foot pursuit safety, identifying characteristics of weapon concealment, and recognizing indicators of ambush attacks as areas where more training is needed. Northeastern agencies responded that there is no, or they need more, hands-on driving training, while Southern and Midwestern agencies note that this type of training is sufficient.

3 SEATBELTS

Despite evidence of the importance of seatbelt compliance in driving safety, over one third (35%) of the Platform officers reported that they do not always wear their seatbelts. 83% of officers who provided a reason as to why they do not wear them, indicated they are inconvenient (54%) or it makes them feel less safe (31%). Inconvenience was indicated most often by respondents in the 30-34 range (26%) when compared to all other age ranges.

4 PLATFORM OFFICERS' HEALTH CONCERNS

Officers were asked whether they have been concerned about, have shown symptoms of, or have been diagnosed with a list of different health conditions. Poor sleep quality is most often cited as the biggest concern. The second highest concern is a job-related injury, followed by sleep disorders. Officers in the smallest agencies ranked sleep disorders as the biggest concern, over job-related injuries. High blood pressure was more of a concern than sleep disorders for Southern agencies.

5 TECHNOLOGY

Officers who took the Platform Impact of New Technology Survey seemed favorable toward the helpfulness of technology. They listed computer databases, the Internet, surveillance cameras on the street, and smart cell phones as the most helpful to patrol officers. Officers responded that body-worn cameras do not lead to unfair discipline, and tasers increase compliance by combative persons. Many officers indicated that technology enhances their ability to problem solve, and do their jobs, but also state that effective problem solving requires good hunches and intuitions. Perhaps not surprisingly, younger officers and those with less tenure indicated a stronger level of agreement when asked if technology enhances problem solving ability. The strongest dissent to this notion is seen for the oldest cohort in the age range of 55-64.

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