Published on *Bushfire & Natural Hazards CRC* (https://www.bnhcrc.com.au)

Home > Research > National mental health and wellbeing study of police and emergency services > Projects (menu position rule)

Emergency workers responding to a call.
Key Topics:

- mental health [2]
- resilience [3]
- risk management [4]

National mental health and wellbeing study of police and emergency services [5]
For the first time, a nationwide research project investigated the mental health and wellbeing of Australia's emergency service staff and volunteers. Beyond Blue in collaboration with the CRC, surveyed 20,000 current and former personnel from 33 police and emergency organisations across Australia about their mental health and risk of suicide.

Project: detail Notabs

Research team

Research leader

[6]

Prof David Lawrence
[6]
RESEARCH LEADER

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN
AUSTRALIA

[7]

Research team

[8]

Bruce Packard
[8]
RESEARCH TEAM

[9]

[10]

Gerry Bardsley
[10]
RESEARCH TEAM

[9]

[11]

Jennifer Bartlett
[11]
RESEARCH TEAM

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

[7]

[12]

Wavne Rikkers
[12]
RESEARCH TEAM

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

[7]

End User representatives

[13]

Heather Stuart
[13]
END-USER

SES

[14]

[15]

Pat Jones
[15]
END-USER

[16]

[17]

Thomas Alexander
[18]
END-USER

SES

[14]

Description

For the first time, a nationwide research project investigated the mental health and wellbeing of Australia's emergency service staff and volunteers. Beyond Blue in collaboration with the CRC, surveyed 20,000 current and former personnel from 33 police and emergency organisations across Australia about their mental health and risk of suicide.

The final report, *Answering the Call*, is available on the Beyond Blue website [19].

A *Hazard Note*, summarising the main findings, is also available [20].

It was the first time data is being collected on a national scale from police and emergency service organisations. The research was conducted in three phases after qualitative analysis was gathered by Beyond Blue in phase one during 2016.

Police and emergency service workers were surveyed about their wellbeing; common mental health conditions; suicide risk; stigma; help-seeking behaviour; and factors supporting, or jeopardising, mental health in the workplace.

This project provides important information to understand both the number of people affected and the range of issues they face.

Initial findings from phase one suggest:

- the nature of the stigma associated with mental health conditions differs across police, fire and rescue and ambulance services;
- although exposure to trauma is seen as an underlying cause for post-traumatic stress disorder, workplace culture and practices also contribute to the prevalence of mental health conditions;
- working in police and emergency services, particularly for volunteers, can support workers' mental health.

Evidence-based strategies will be developed to individuals, improve organisational culture and address systemic concerns that impact on mental health and wellbeing across the sector nationally. They will be developed in collaboration with a cross-section of the police and emergency services sector including agencies, unions, government departments, individuals and family and community groups around Australia.

Related News

Queen's Birthday Honours for CRC end-users
CAPABILITY, EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

[21]

New online - March 2021
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, MULTI-HAZARD

[22]

New online - July 2020
COMMUNICATION, EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

[23]

Are we dropping the ball? A look to our workforce in 2030
CAPABILITY, EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

[24]

Emergency services focus on research
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, FIRE

[25]

Answering the call: mental health needs of first responders highlighted
COMMUNICATION, MENTAL HEALTH

[26]

Research reveals state of mental health
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, MENTAL HEALTH

[27]

Conference papers available online
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, MULTI-HAZARD

[28]

Study will reduce mental health risks, says former PM
MENTAL HEALTH, RESILIENCE

24 JUL 2018

[29]

New natural hazards science for Australia
MENTAL HEALTH, RESILIENCE

31 AUG 2017

[30]

World-first research into Australian police and emergency services personnel's mental health
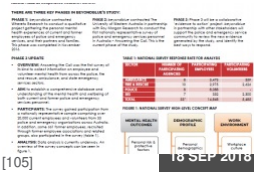MENTAL HEALTH, RESILIENCE

12 APR 2017

[31]

Publications

Year	Type	Citation
2021	Journal Article	Kyron, M. [32] *et al.* **Mental health and wellbeing of Australian police and emergency services employees** [33]. *Archives of Environmental & Occupational Health* (2021). doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/
2021	Journal Article	Kyron, M. [38] *et al.* **Sexual Orientation and Prevalence of Mental Health Difficulties among Emergency Services Employees** [39]. *Journal of Affective Disorders* (2021). doi:https://doi.org/10.1016
2020	Journal Article	Kyron, M. [32] *et al.* **Prevalence and predictors of suicidal thoughts and behaviours among Australian police and emergency services employees** [44]. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psy*
2020	Journal Article	Kyron, M. [32], Rikkers, W. [12], O'Brien, P. [49], Bartlett, J. [50] & Lawrence, D. [6] **Experiences of Police and Emergency Services Employees with Workers' Compensation Claims for Mental He**
2019	Conference Paper	Thacker, G. [56], Luke, R. [57] & Court, E. [58] **Fit for Duty pilot: ensuring the safety of CFA members and increasing access to health services** [59]. *Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC Research*
2018	Conference Paper	Lawrence, D. [6], Rikkers, W. [12] & Bartlett, J. [50] **Mental health and wellbeing in the police and emergency services sector** [64]. *AFAC18* (Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC, 2018). Google Scho
2018	Conference Paper	Bates, J. [68] **Research proceedings from the 2018 Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC and AFAC Conference** [69]. *Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC & AFAC annual conference 2017* (Bushfire a
2018	Report	**Answering the call national survey, National Mental Health and Wellbeing Study of Police and Emergency Services – Final report** [73]. (Beyond Blue, 2018). at <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/
2017	Conference Paper	Rumsewicz, M. [78] **Research proceedings from the 2017 Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC and AFAC Conference** [79]. *Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC & AFAC annual conference 2017* (Bus
2017	Conference Paper	Bartlett, J. [50] **National mental health and wellbeing study of police and emergency services** [83]. *AFAC17* (Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC, 2017). Google Scholar [84] BibTeX [85] EndNote X

Presentations & Resources

DATE [87]	TITLE [88]	DOWNLOAD	KEY TOPICS
07 Jul 2017	Lightning presentation: promoting mental health and wellbeing in the emergency services setting [89]	1.4 MB	mental health [2], resilience [3], risk management [4]
31 Aug 2017	Fire Australia Issue Three 2017 [91]	5.22 MB	[92] fire [93], prescribed burning [94], severe weather
07 Sep 2017	Beyondblue national mental health and wellbeing study of police and emergency services [96]	625.47 KB	[97] [2], volunteering [98], vulnerability [99]
29 Nov 2018	Mental health needs of first responders [20]	406.11 KB	[100] [2], resilience [3], risk management [4]
08 May 2019	Rescuers at Risk - the mental health and wellbeing of emergency services RAF May 2019 [101]	434.1 KB	[102] management [103], mental health [2]
01 Dec 2020	Answering the call [104]		mental health [2], resilience [3], risk management [4]

Posters

[105]

beyondblue's National Mental Health and Wellbeing Study of Police and Emergency Services Phase 2 Update

[105]

MENTAL HEALTH [2], RESILIENCE [3]

beyondblue is undertaking the National Mental Health and Wellbeing Study of Police and Emergency Services to...

[106]

31 AUG 2020

Service use and help-seeking experiences of Australian first responders with mental health conditions

[106]

Key findings: Only 1 in 5 first responders seek and receive adequate help for a mental health condtion

---

Source URL: https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/node/3403/generate-pdf

Links

[1] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/files/cfasesandambulancejpg [2] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/research/topics/mental-health [3] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/research/topics/resilience [4] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/research/topics/risk-management [5] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/research/resilience-hazards/3403 [6] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/people/dlawrence [7] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/organisations/uwa [8] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/people/bpackard [9] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/organisations/roy-morgan [10] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/people/gbardsley [11] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/people/jbartlett [12] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/people/wrikkers [13] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/people/hstuart [14] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/organisations/nswses [15] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/people/pjones [16] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/organisations/act-rfs [17] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/people/thomasalexander [18] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/people/thomas.alexander [19] https://www.beyondblue.org.au/about-us/about-our-work/workplace-mental-health/pes-program/national-mental-health-and-wellbeing-study-of-police-and-emergency-services [20] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/hazardnotes/56 [21] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/news/2021/queen-s-birthday-honours-crc-end-users [22] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/news/2021/new-online-march-2021 [23] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/news/2020/new-online-july-2020 [24] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/news/2019/are-we-dropping-ball-look-our-workforce-2030 [25] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/news/2019/emergency-services-focus-research [26] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/news/2019/answering-call-mental-health-needs-first-responders-highlighted [27] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/news/2018/research-reveals-state-mental-health [28] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/news/2018/conference-papers-available-online [29] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/news/2018/study-will-reduce-mental-health-risks-says-former-pm [30] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/news/2017/new-natural-hazards-science-australia [31] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/news/2017/world-first-research-australian-police-and-emergency-services-personnel-s-mental-health [32] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio?f%5Bauthor%5D=1852 [33] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/bnh-7880 [34] http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19338244.2021.1893631 [35] http://scholar.google.com/scholar?btnG=Search%2BScholar&as_q=%22Mental%2Bhealth%2Band%2Bwellbeing%2Bof%2BAustralian%2Bpolice%2Band%2Bemergency%2Bservices%2Bemployees%22&as_sauthors=Kyron&as_occt=any&as_ep [36] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/bibtex/7880 [37] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/xml/7880 [38] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio?f%5Bauthor%5D=1942 [39] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/bnh-7869 [40] http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2021.02.032 [41] http://scholar.google.com/scholar?btnG=Search%2BScholar&as_q=%22Sexual%2BOrientation%2Band%2BPrevalence%2Bof%2BMental%2BHealth%2BDifficulties%2Bamong%2BEmergency%2BServices%2BEmployees%22&as_sauthors=Kryon&as [42] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/bibtex/7869 [43] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/bnh-7041 [44] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/xml/7869 [45] http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0004867420937774 [46] http://scholar.google.com/scholar?btnG=Search%2BScholar&as_q=%22Prevalence%2Band%2Bpredictors%2Bof%2Bsuicidal%2Bthoughts%2Band%2Bbehaviours%2Bamong%2BAustralian%2Bpolice%2Band%2Bemergency%2Bservices%2Bemployees%22&a [47] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/bibtex/7041 [48] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio?f%5Bauthor%5D=1853 [50] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio?f%5Bauthor%5D=1174 [51] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/bnh-7040 [52] http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10926-020-09909-8 [53] http://scholar.google.com/scholar?btnG=Search%2BScholar&as_q=%22Experiences%2Bof%2BPolice%2Band%2BEmergency%2BServices%2BEmployees%2Bwith%2BWorkers%E2%80%99%2BCompensation%2BClaims%2Bfor%2BMental%2BHealth%2BIss [54] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/bibtex/7040 [55] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/xml/7040 [56] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio?f%5Bauthor%5D=1768 [57] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio?f%5Bauthor%5D=1769 [58] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio?f%5Bauthor%5D=1770 [59] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/bnh-6401 [60] https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/australian-journal-of-emergency-management-monograph-series/ [61] http://scholar.google.com/scholar?btnG=Search%2BScholar&as_q=%22Fit%2Bfor%2BDuty%2Bpilot%3A%2Bensuring%2Bthe%2Bsafety%2Bof%2BCFA%2Bmembers%2Band%2Bincreasing%2Baccess%2Bto%2Bhealth%2Bservices%22&as_sauthors=Th [62] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/6401 [63] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/xml/6401 [64] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/bnh-4768 [65] http://scholar.google.com/scholar?btnG=Search%2BScholar&as_q=%22Mental%2Bhealth%2Band%2Bwellbeing%2Bin%2Bthe%2Bpolice%2Band%2Bemergency%2Bservices%2Bsector%22&as_sauthors=Lawrence&as_occt=any&as_epq=&amp [66] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/bibtex/4768 [67] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/xml/4768 [68] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/people/john-bates [69] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/researchproceedings2018 [70] http://scholar.google.com/scholar?btnG=Search%2BScholar&as_q=%22Research%2Bproceedings%2Bfrom%2Bthe%2B2018%2Bbushfire%2Band%2BNatural%2BHazards%2BCRC%2Band%2BAFAC%2BConference%22&as_sauthors=Bates&as_oc [71] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/bibtex/4739 [72] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/xml/4739 [73] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/bnh-6413 [74] https://www.beyondblue.org.au/about-us/about-our-work/workplace-mental-health/pes-program [75] http://scholar.google.com/scholar?btnG=Search%2BScholar&as_q=%22Answering%2Bthe%2Bcall%2Bnational%2Bsurvey%2C%2BNational%2BMental%2BHealth%2Band%2BWellbeing%2BStudy%2Bof%2BPolice%2Band%2BEmergency%2BServices%2B%E [76] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/xml/6413 [77] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/people/michael-rumsewicz [79] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/researchproceedings2017 [80] http://scholar.google.com/scholar?btnG=Search%2BScholar&as_q=%22Research%2Bproceedings%2Bfrom%2Bthe%2B2017%2Bbushfire%2Band%2BNatural%2BHazards%2BCRC%2Band%2BAFAC%2BConference%22&as_sauthors=Rumsewicz& [81] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/bibtex/3946 [82] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/xml/3946 [83] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/bnh-3885 [84] http://scholar.google.com/scholar?btnG=Search%2BScholar&as_q=%22National%2Bmental%2Bhealth%2Band%2Bwellbeing%2Bstudy%2Bof%2Bpolice%2Band%2Bemergency%2Bservices%22&as_sauthors=Bartlett&as_occt=any&as_epq=&an [85] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/bibtex/3885 [86] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/export/xml/3885 [87] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/node/3403/generate-pdf?order=field_date_release&sort=asc [88] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/node/3403/generate-pdf?order=title&sort=asc [89] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/resources/presentation-slideshow/3764 [90] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/file/7577/download?token=8Wzqsp3o [91] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/resources/fireaustralia-edition/3943 [92] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/file/7804/download?token=wmB8emre [93] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/research/topics/child-centred [94] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/research/topics/prescribed-burning [95] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/research/topics/severe-weather [96] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/resources/presentation-slideshow/3970 [97] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/file/7826/download?token=zyx_OBMf [98] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/research/topics/volunteering [99] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/research/topics/vulnerability [100] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/file/9302/download?token=JOwXE7On [101] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/resources/presentation-slideshow/5581 [102] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/file/9954/download?token=LWBLiNA6 [103] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/research/topics/emergency-management [104] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/casestudy/answeringthecall [105] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/resources/poster/4855 [106] https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/resources/poster/7771