



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN THE POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES SECTOR

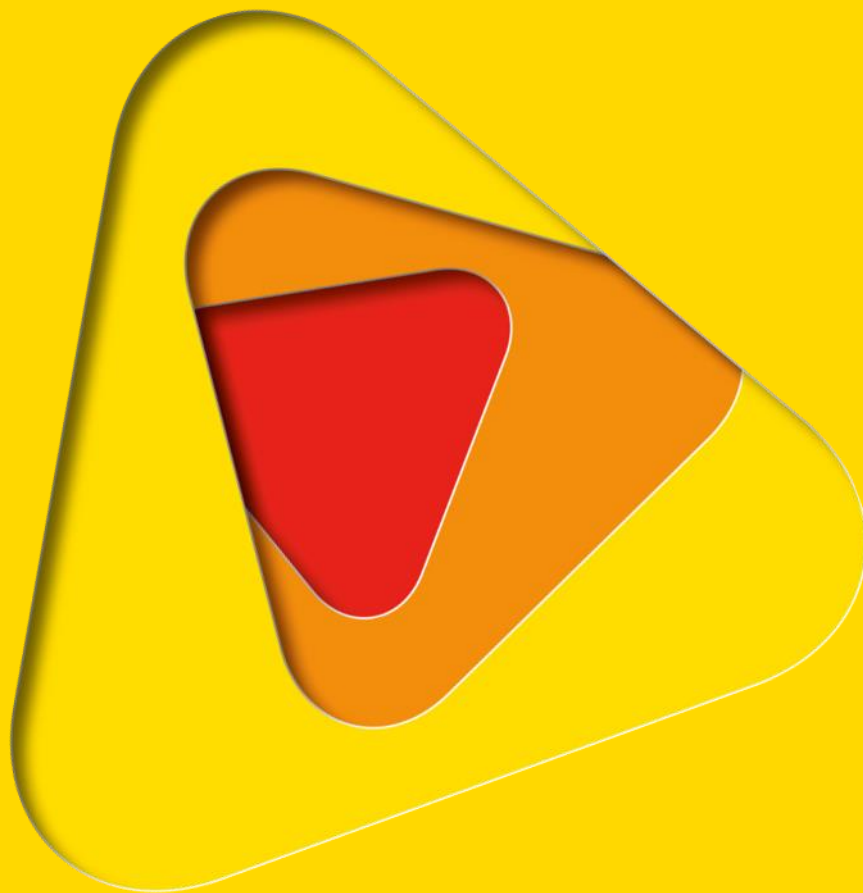
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ABSTRACT

While work in the emergency services sector is vital to the wellbeing of our communities, it can often be demanding and stressful. People who work or volunteer for ambulance, fire and rescue, police and state emergency services can face life and death challenges and at times respond to very distressing situations. Supporting and protecting the wellbeing of police and emergency service employees and volunteers is a key priority across the sector.

beyondblue is currently undertaking the National Mental Health and Wellbeing Study of Police and Emergency Services, with support from the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC. Phase two of this study involves the first nationally representative survey of police and emergency services workers and volunteers in Australia. This survey, called *Answering the Call*, is being conducted by The University of Western Australia and Roy Morgan Research on behalf of *beyondblue*. With participation from over 30 agencies from all Australian states and territories, the survey is investigating the prevalence of wellbeing and mental health conditions, the use of support services and programs, stigma, workplace culture and dynamics and other factors that impact on the wellbeing of police and emergency services personnel.

While results from the survey are expected to be released later in 2018, this presentation will discuss the approach that was taken to measure issues affecting mental health and wellbeing, the challenges faced in conducting the survey; and barriers and opportunities in engaging with agencies across the sector. An overview of what is already known from previous research in police and emergency services agencies and related sectors both in Australia and internationally will also be provided.