



# Investigation Profession Report

2021 - 2022

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## Investigation Profession Report

RSG is the market-leading provider of staffing services supporting the criminal, civil and commercial investigation professions.

Established nearly 20 years ago we offer unrivalled access to investigation talent and market data. The investigation profession report sets out the current opportunities and challenges for law enforcement organisations when acquiring and retaining experienced investigation professional talent. The aim of the report is to provide law enforcement organisations with an insight into the broader investigation professions talent market which sits outside policing, the differentials which exist between the sub sectors, and the opportunities open to law enforcement employers to target this highly relevant talent market.

For the purposes of this report the word 'investigator' and term 'investigation professional' will refer to the roles/jobs whose principal tasks are to manage a case load of allegations for which the worker is required to collect evidence, interview witnesses and alleged offenders, to compile case files and make recommendations for next stage actions.

### Market Size and Composition

Using the definition for the role of investigator set out, we estimate the total size of currently employed investigation officer talent market to be approximately 420,000.

The dominant sub sector within the investigation profession remains law enforcement, which is comprised of the police sector and an array of central government organisations, which are assigned criminal investigation powers.

All law enforcement, sworn officers, have investigative and enforcement powers. Within policing, there exists the further specialism of detective and police staff investigator.

The regulatory enforcement sector which is comprised of functions within local government (trading standards, environmental health) and free standing agencies described as 'regulators' employs a significant number of investigation officers who undertake roles which have a considerable amount of homogeneity when compared to each other and the criminal investigative roles within the law enforcement.

The commercial sector employs a large number of workers in roles which have an investigative remit. There is much less homogeneity within this sector when comparing roles within it and when compared to the role of criminal investigation officers. Internal investigation officers within enterprises whom investigate employee misconduct and theft. Intellectual property and trade mark contravention investigation officers and loss prevention officers in the retail sector can vary a great in terms of required competencies and expertise.

The legal sector employs approximately 60,000 paralegals in the UK. These roles are highly varied in scope within the sector and fall outside of the strict definition of the role of investigator. However a limited but significant pattern of transition from paralegal roles to police staff investigation roles has been identified in the last three years. A pattern of high representation within applications for the post and higher success rates in terms of appointment.

	SECTOR	NUMBER OF WORKERS
Police & Central Government	Sworn Officers	175,000
	Detectives	19,000
	Police Staff Investigators	6,500
	Local Government & Community Safety	34,000
	Regulatory Sector	35,000
	Military	2,500
	Private Sector	150,000
<b>Approximate total of UK Investigator workforce</b>		<b>422,000</b>
	Legal (Paralegals)	60,000

## Salary Survey

Set out below in table format is a survey on pay:

	Regulatory					
	London	South East	South West	Midlands	North East	North West
Entry Level Practitioner	£27,069	£24,500	£21,500	£22,500	£22,500	£22,500
Practitioner	£39,390	£35,000	£27,000	£27,000	£27,000	£27,000
Senior Practitioner	£52,289	£48,000	£42,000	£43,000	£39,000	£39,000

  

	Police					
	London	South East	South West	Midlands	North East	North West
Entry Level Practitioner	£22,000	£22,000	£22,000	£22,000	£22,000	£22,000
Practitioner	£33,215	£33,215	£33,215	£33,215	£33,215	£33,215
Senior Practitioner	£42,977	£42,977	£42,977	£42,977	£42,977	£42,977

	Local Government					
	London	South East	South West	Midlands	North East	North West
Entry Level Practitioner	£22,500	£22,500	£21,500	£21,500	£21,500	£21,500
Practitioner	£30,000	£30,000	£27,000	£28,000	£26,000	£26,000
Senior Practitioner	£42,500	£42,500	£38,500	£41,500	£35,500	£35,500

	Legal (Paralegals)					
	London	South East	South West	Midlands	North East	North West
Entry Level Practitioner	£23,000	£18,000	£18,000	£18,000	£17,500	£17,500
Practitioner	£25,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000
Senior Practitioner	£30,000	£24,000	£24,000	£24,000	£23,000	£23,000

	Military					
	London	South East	South West	Midlands	North East	North West
Entry Level Practitioner	£15,985	£15,985	£15,985	£15,985	£15,985	£15,985
Practitioner	£27,326	£27,326	£27,326	£27,326	£27,326	£27,326
Senior Practitioner	£46,958	£46,958	£46,958	£46,958	£46,958	£46,958

	Private Sector					
	London	South East	South West	Midlands	North East	North West
Entry Level Practitioner	£27,000	£25,000	£19,000	£22,000	£18,500	£19,000
Practitioner	£38,000	£35,000	£27,000	£28,000	£26,500	£27,000
Senior Practitioner	£55,000	£47,000	£35,000	£37,000	£35,000	£36,500

## Skills Survey

Set out below is a table which sets out the occupational standards of the post of investigator in the different sub sectors of the aggregate profession of investigation officer. The purpose of the table is demonstrate where the different sub groups converge and diverge.

	Regulatory	Police	Local Government	Legal	Military	Private Sector
Pro-active Investigation Experience	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Desk Based Investigation Experience	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Case Building	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Face to Face Interview Experience	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Virtual Interview Experience	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Digital Forensic Experience	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓
Intelligence Gathering	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Intelligence Collection	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Intelligence building	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Disclosure / Eisclosure Experience	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓
Financial Intelligence Experience	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓
Financial Investigation Experience	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓

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## Table Glossary

**Pro-active Investigation Experience** – This term relates to active Investigations, interacting with the public on a regular basis and following up on lines of enquiry.

**Desk Based Investigation Experience** – This relates to the initial part of investigation, helping to develop lines of enquiry that are then passed to the proactive team to follow up on.

**Case Building** – Developing and quality assurance of case files that are then submitted to the courts to review.

**Face to Face Interview Experience** – interviewing suspects and witness's in person, following strict legislation and protocol.

**Virtual Interview Experience** – Interviewing suspects and witness's over the phone or internet platforms.

**Digital Forensic Experience** – Experience of using digital forensic software (Encase, FTK, etc.) to interrogate either Mobile Phones or Computers or both. This may also refer to the investigation of the information found.

**Intelligence Gathering** – The initial grading stage of intelligence received, beginning to link Intel that is then passed up the chain for further examination.

**Intelligence Collection** – Collecting intelligence that is submitted to the organisation and entering it onto internal databases so that it can be reviewed and graded.

**Intelligence Building** – Reviewing initial links that have been created between different forms of intelligence received, investigating further and producing intelligence products that can be passed on to investigation teams to act upon.

**Disclosure / E disclosure Experience** – Knowledge of CPIA and the ability to review case material and make sure it has all been recorded in the correct format and gathered using the correct policy.

**Financial Intelligence Experience** – Experience of Gathering, Collecting or Reviewing Intelligence that relates specifically to financial crime.

**Financial Investigation Experience** – Experience of Pro-active or Desk based investigation focusing on financial crime.

## Market Trends & Challenges Facing UK Policing in terms Building and Maintaining Criminal Investigative Capacity

The law enforcement sector continues to undergo a process of change in which it more and more conforms to standard labour market trends. The police sector still remains one of the last profession types which could still be described as a sector in which the 'job for life' principal remains. Nonetheless this principal has eroded significantly across the last five to ten years. The police sector and specifically the profession of police officer has seen attrition rates steadily grow. In the next ten to twenty years, it is highly likely the police sector will experience officer attrition rates comparable to standard profession market trends.

The reasons for this can be broken down into three broad themes.

### ***Broad socio-cultural changes and their impacts on the modern worker.***

Millennials, also known as Generation Y or Gen Y, are the demographic cohort following Generation X and preceding Generation Z. Researchers and popular media use the early 1980s as starting birth years and the mid-1990s to early 2000s

Millennials are a generation that are happy to move jobs more frequently to get what they want and build a 'portfolio career' where they have a number of jobs over a few years.

The millennial worker has inverted established work place values. Rather than stick with the view held by many from the older generations, that moving jobs regularly is not a good thing and shows a lack of staying power, the millennial worker see changing jobs frequently as a strength and expectation.

The latest research of more than 2,000 UK workers, undertaken by Tempo, found that 28% of people aged 18 to 34 have already had more than five jobs.

Indeed, the average millennial, with the oldest being 34, has already had 3.4 jobs, compared to 5.9 for those in the 55+ age bracket.

Of those millennials surveyed 52% said that they had plans to move jobs within the next two years and over a third (34%) within the next twelve months.

Work for millennials has to have meaning and purpose and they want to learn and develop. They place a great deal of emphasis on self-improvement but above anything else they want a job that fits in with their life, offers them greater flexibility and autonomy and the ability to lead a better life.

Millennials are not just seeking new jobs either, they perceive a 'portfolio career' as a great opportunity to try to learn something new and achieve self-improvement all while developing new skills.

The research highlights that two-thirds of under-35s (64%) want to move sectors, compared to just 39% of those between the ages of 35 to 55.

Millennials see key benefits in having a more multi-disciplined and diverse career where they not only change jobs regularly but sectors and even careers too because they perceive that those who embrace change and diversity are more adaptable, have a greater range of soft business skills and make more business and networking contacts.

This socio-cultural shift is both an opportunity and threat for the law enforcement sector generally and policing specifically.

Its impact will continue to increase levels of attrition as younger officers leave the service at the early to mid-service tenure point.

It represents an opportunity for the service to attract more mature candidates interested in the values, mission and diversity of experience the profession offers. Recent successful initiatives attracting established professionals to transfer to teaching in the later stages of their career for example should and could be replicated.

The already established direct entry pathways for inspectors and superintends is a good first step. The sector would be well served to broaden these pathways to attract specialist skills in areas such as digital forensics, cyber security and financial analysis for example.

#### ***Changes to the entrances terms to the profession and employment terms and conditions.***

The fixed thirty-year work tenure has ended for new entrants. The pension benefit offered to new entrants is less generous than the historical offer. The broad trend is for the terms offered to police officers to be aligned with the standard terms offered to civil servants.

The college's Police Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF) means that from July 2022 anyone joining the service as an officer will need either to already have a degree or obtain one before passing probation.

This change will further exacerbate attrition rates within policing by creating a 'graduate culture' within the ranks. A culture which expects advancement and will more readily leave the organisation to attain it.

#### ***Real and perceived challenges preventing serving police officers to undertaking detective roles.***

HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) called the lack of trained detectives a "national crisis" and the Police Federation's National Detectives Forum estimates that there are 5,000 vacant investigator posts across all forces in the UK. It also said morale was at an all-time low.

In 2020, HMIC suggested cuts to police funding had led to many victims of crime not receiving the service their crime demanded. It found house burglary and theft offences regularly being resolved over the phone or allocated to neighbourhood police officers for investigation. The demand to create and employ more detectives has therefore grown however, it is reported that, forces are struggling to encourage enough serving officers to undertake the detective training pathway.

So why are so many serving officers reluctant to become detectives? One reason is sure to be the hours. Unlike their uniformed colleagues who work structured shift patterns to maintain a 24-hour response capability, detectives tend to work irregular hours. Their time is dictated by the investigations they are dealing with. The ability to earn overtime has always been one incentive to become a detective. But this is no longer the case due to cuts in police funding which brought in overtime caps.

Detectives become invested in their cases, from start to finish, mainly because the option to hand them over to someone else is rare. And the dynamic nature of crime investigation means they often work long hours. The main reason for this is the time constraint placed on police by the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) when dealing with people in police custody. For example, only under exceptional circumstances can a person be detained longer than 36 hours before they must be charged or released.

Complex investigations can be laborious as they require painstaking analysis and attention to detail. Detectives need to plan ahead and manage their time well while constantly trying to avoid being overwhelmed by the workload and paperwork.

There is a perception that there is a mountain of administration in the role and the increasing need to interrogate electronic devices for digital evidence is makes the job cumbersome due to highly publicised



backlog of computers, tablets and phones awaiting examination and adding another level of complexity to investigations.

Officers have real and perceived negative perceptions of the work of the detective which becomes caricatured as unrelenting nature of the work can take its toll. There is a wide spread belief amongst officers that it can be debilitating and have a detrimental impact on personal relationships, physical and mental health.

## Opportunities for Law Enforcement Work Force Planning

Work force planning professionals need to accept the new reality within the sector. The market will continue to experience increased levels of entrance and exit from the profession and a greater level of mobility between the sub sectors of the profession.

The police sector has embraced new ways to attract talent creating new and interesting entrance pathways such as the detective direct entrance schemes. We believe the RSG skills survey demonstrates there are further opportunities to create pathways for the law enforcement sector to create a greater mobility of investigation talent between different sub sectors within the broad investigation profession.

For example, RSG provides a transition and gateway training for investigators from non-policing sectors in subject matters which reflect the PIP2 syllabus. RSG already provide support to Police Force L&D by providing training capacity on a draw down basis to provide resilience for their internal training courses as well as providing off-site standalone courses that fit the PIP criteria.

RSG provides training which fills the gaps in knowledge and is delivered in a modular and blended learning format to maximise the upskill and minimise costs. The training is undertaken either in role or prior to deployment and assists already overburdened L&D teams by providing a supportive external resource that aligns with their own training protocols and requirements.

With a more strategic approach to procurement and supplier engagement UK Policing could leverage it's spend on contingent labour to support a greater transition of investigation talent towards the sector.

The status quo is one in which the sector loses established investigation talent at a greater rate than it gains it. The police sector creates investigation capability and loses it to other sectors. It is not good and attracting established investigation talent from other markets.

RSG believes a smarter approach to procurement which allows the market to provide a more developed, sophisticated contingent labour recruitment pathway, could create an outcome in which policing's current supply chain can help to redress this imbalance of talent loss, at no further cost the sector.

Criminal / Investigative Paralegals have similar skill sets to those of case builders / workers in Police fields. Paralegals skills focus on research and some intelligence building. With minimal training (introduction to policing, legislation that they would need to understand, etc.) these skill sets could be off benefit to the Police, freeing up front line officers time. Salary levels at entry level are similar, the potential for an increase in salary in the legal field is far greater but there is an opportunity here.

Many Paralegals have a lot of experience with E-Disclosure and document review. With CPIA / disclosure training these skill could be easily transferred into the disclosure team, reviewing evidence bundles and providing reports to lead officers.

Military Intelligence Officers tend to have experience in live intelligence reporting, tracking developing situation and reporting in real time.

Whilst these wouldn't fit exactly into a standard intelligence role in the police the skill sets could be used in counter terrorism tracking live events or in the operation room again reporting in real time on live operations. Training could be given on Police systems and Policies to achieve this, salary levels from the army to Police match up closely so could be workable.

Digital Forensics role within the Police continue to pay far below the equivalent rates in the private sector, this gap only increases as you progress from entry level to senior roles. This well-known challenge continues to create high levels of attrition from policing into the commercial forensic services service. In the absence of a radical shake up policing's pay structure a counter measure could be to have the police sector's recruitment supply chain work harder and smarter.

There is scope to create a pre deployment training academy in which highly able entry level candidates undertake up to 60 hours of self-funded training on key digital tools to make them job ready for deployment as agency workers. This type of programme would require partnership working between organisation's and its supply chain to mitigate risks however it could be achieved with no further additional costs incurred by the end user customers.

Analysts and intelligence staff from the financial sectors (KYC, AML, SARs, etc.) have very similar core skill sets to intelligence researchers within the Police / central government which could be developed by Police to fit into a range of intel roles not just in the financial crime area (although this would obviously provide the smoothest transition), Salary's across the country are in a similar range across entry and junior roles. There does exist a distinct pay differential between the law enforcement and the commercial sector at the practitioner and senior practitioner and but at the entry level point there does exist an opportunity for the law enforcement sector to attract recently experienced talent.

Case workers in regulatory backgrounds have similar skill sets to case builders in the police sector and compare well to police staff investigators (PSI) at a PIP1 training level. Training can be adapted to individual force needs in conjunction with Force L&D professionals.

Similarly, workers engagement by local authorities undertaking community safety, anti-social behaviour, trading standards and environmental health investigation roles perform roles which follow the police sector PSI template.

Given the changing employment landscape within UK policing. RSG believes there is a strong business case to create formal and informal gateways to rebalance the flow of investigation talent between the police and non-police experienced investigation talent market.