



Furthering Fresh Futures for NSWPF Well-being

This ACU-led research builds on a pilot study undertaken in 2014, designed to assist the NSW Police Force to understand officers' well-being and resilience in the face of adversity and traumatic events. The pilot study also aimed to assist NSWPF to support officers with stress-related illness and to investigate operational impacts on well-being. This larger study is the first to undertake an holistic and whole-of-service approach to police well-being.

Professor Rhonda Craven, Director of the Institute for Positive Psychology and Education (IPPE, Australian Catholic University), is heading the study, which brings together representatives from the NSW Police Force and researchers from ACU. "Every day the NSW Police Force puts their lives on the line to protect and serve all Australians — they are unsung Australian heroes," says Professor Craven. "We aim to find out what factors protect and enhance the health and well-being of our NSW Police Force".

Funded by a three-year Australian Research Council Linkage Project Grant, this longitudinal project will survey every police command in NSW once a year for three years.

Interviews will also be conducted with small groups of new recruits, officers with more than 20 years' service and officers who have returned successfully from long-term stress-related leave. These interviews will provide a more nuanced understanding of officers' experiences, their resilience and their views on organisational issues that impact on their well-being.

By emphasising a scientific understanding of what makes police officers fit and well, the intention of the project is to develop additional opportunities, driven by positive psychology, to enable the NSWPF to support the well-being of its staff and to help officers cultivate their own tools to remain well in a stressful and often traumatic job.

Since 2014, NSW Police Force has independently implemented a range of initiatives focused on improving well-being through physical health and injury support. In partnership with NSWPF Human Resources Command, led by Assistant Commissioner Carlene York, this study will further facilitate the training and support of psychologically healthy and resilient police officers and unsworn staff.

Findings of the study will be used to inform the Police Force's further development of interventions to enable well-being and to help officers deal with stress and trauma. The potential rewards for identifying these factors extend to police members, tax payers and the public whom officers protect and serve.

Project Title:

Furthering Fresh Futures for NSWPF Well-Being

Start Date:

1 July 2014

End Date:

30 June 2017

Funding Body:

ARC Linkage Grant

Contact:

Rhonda.Craven@acu.edu.au
