



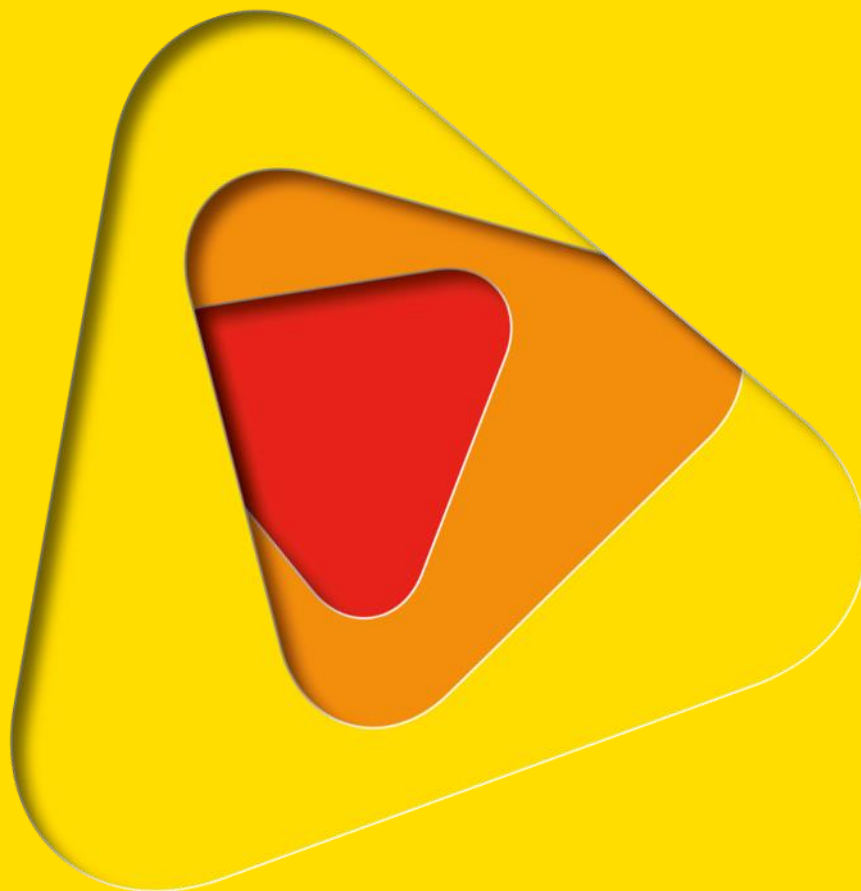
# NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING STUDY OF POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Non-peer reviewed research proceedings from the Bushfire and Natural  
Hazards CRC & AFAC conference  
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## ABSTRACT

People who work or volunteer for ambulance, fire and rescue, police and state emergency services provide vital care and protection to the Australian community. The nature of emergency services work means police and emergency services personnel routinely face life and death challenges and can witness very distressing situations. Like other workers, they can experience common workplace risks to mental health, such as heavy workloads, high demands, and bullying. Stigma regarding mental health conditions is still prevalent in many traditionally male-dominated occupations, such as emergency services. There is also anecdotal evidence to suggest that police and emergency service personnel who retire or leave the job may have high rates of depression, anxiety and suicide.

*beyondblue*, with support from the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre, is currently undertaking a national research study to build a comprehensive picture of the mental health and wellbeing of police and emergency services personnel in Australia. This study is using qualitative and quantitative methods in combination with a strong focus on knowledge translation to develop ways to improve mental health in the workplace. As part of this study, we are conducting the first national survey of mental health and wellbeing of current and former employees and volunteers across the sector.

This presentation will describe the development and design of the study. It is planned to survey over 20,000 employees and volunteers nationwide using an online survey vehicle. The survey will collect information about wellbeing and common mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, suicide risk, stigma, help-seeking behaviour and factors that support or jeopardise the mental health of police and emergency services personnel. A key aspect of the project will be the knowledge translation phase which will draw from the survey findings to identify and develop feasible, acceptable and practical interventions and strategies to improve the mental health and wellbeing of police and emergency services personnel around Australia.