

2005

## **2005 survey report on the wellbeing of the professions: policing, nursing and teaching**

Institute for the Service Professions, Edith Cowan University

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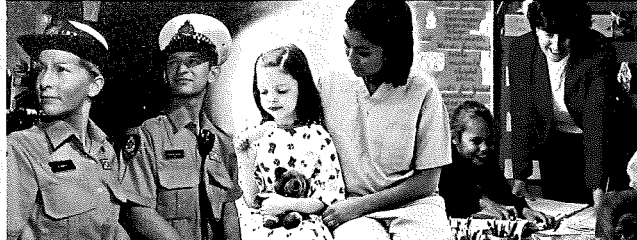
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EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY



**2005 Survey Report on the  
WELLBEING OF THE PROFESSIONS:  
POLICING, NURSING  
& TEACHING**

DECEMBER 2005



NL A906/647

## REPORT SUMMARY

### WHAT THIS REPORT IS ABOUT

The way people feel about their occupations and their workplace is an important feature of organisational wellbeing and the wellbeing of professions more generally. Wellbeing in the professions is indicated by high levels of occupational commitment, respect for organisational leaders, cooperation and support within work units, and feelings that employers treat staff fairly and provide them with opportunities to develop. Professions high in wellbeing can be expected to perform well and adapt well to a changing environment.

This report is about perceptions of wellbeing among police, nurses and teachers in Western Australia. The research has been innovative, collaborative and comprehensive. Most previous explorations of attitudes within professions have concentrated on a narrow range of issues. We have addressed a much broader spectrum. Members of the three professional groups looked both inwardly towards their jobs, and outwardly towards their employing organisations, and profession.

### HOW WE CONDUCTED THE RESEARCH

The project commenced in 2002 with the active support of all three professional groups. The initial task was to identify the key factors of wellbeing. We held focus groups throughout Western Australia, involving several hundred individuals in the public and private sectors. Focus group participants were asked to consider recent events in their work that caused positive or negative feelings. The wellbeing issues that emerged were grouped into those relating to managers, work units, employers and professions.

The research literature was examined to identify existing attitude measures for each of the wellbeing issues that emerged in the focus groups. A pilot survey of police, nurses and teachers was conducted in 2004 to investigate the technical adequacy of these attitude measures and fine-tune the survey questionnaire.

In 2005 we conducted surveys of 6,500 police<sup>1</sup>, 6,000 nurses and 9,000 teachers. Respondents expressed agreement or disagreement with statements covering 30 different wellbeing factors grouped in terms of issues relevant to line management, work units, their

employing organisation, and their occupation. 'Work unit' was defined differently for each profession.

Our intention in this first report on the results of the survey is to show key overall findings for police, nurses and teachers, and any effects of length of service on job and workplace attitudes. The results presented for police, nurses and teachers relate to all respondents, as well as those with up to five years service (when careers are being established), and those with at least 25 years service (when careers have been well established for many years).

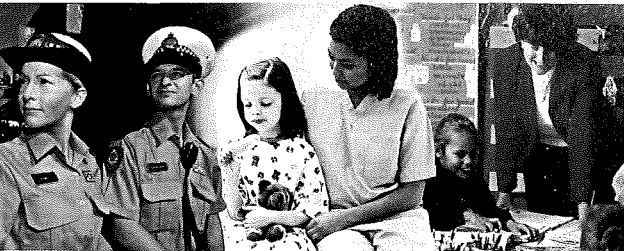
Information also was collected on the age, gender, qualifications, employment status, location and other factors for each respondent. The data and sample sizes are sufficient for more detailed analyses to be undertaken. We will continue to collaborate with the professional groups so that they may make maximum use of the rich data that has been collected via the survey they helped to design.

### WELLBEING FACTORS WITH POSITIVE RATINGS

Turning to the findings, there are several highly positive findings about wellbeing in policing, nursing and teaching.

- Most police, nurses and teachers are strongly motivated and intend to continue working in their chosen profession. They are personally fulfilled by their work and the benefits they bring to the community. They also feel they are held in high regard for their approachability, trustworthiness and dedication.
- Workgroup cooperation received favourable ratings in all three professions. The roles of team members are understood and respected, and teams rise to the challenges of unusual demands. Colleagues can be relied on to lend a helping hand when asked.
- Most police, nurses and teachers feel they have an appropriate degree of direct control over their work. They are mainly positive about the encouragement, feedback and support given by their line managers.

1. The number of 'police' surveyed includes police officers, police staff, and Aboriginal Police Liaison Officers. The findings of the survey of 5,180 police officers, Aboriginal Police Liaison Officers, recruits and recruits in training are presented in this report. A separate report is being prepared for the total Western Australian Police workforce.



## 2005 Survey Report on the Wellbeing of the Professions: Policing, Nursing and Teaching

- Feeling discriminated against, on the grounds of age, ethnicity, race or family responsibilities was not reported as a common problem. However it is important for those individuals who do feel discriminated against.
- Attempted bullying or intimidation by clients may happen in practice, but police, nurses and teachers feel they are well-supported if it occurs. Bullying by colleagues is not reported as a common problem, however, again it is important for those who do experience it.

### WELLBEING FACTORS WITH MODERATE OR LOW RATINGS

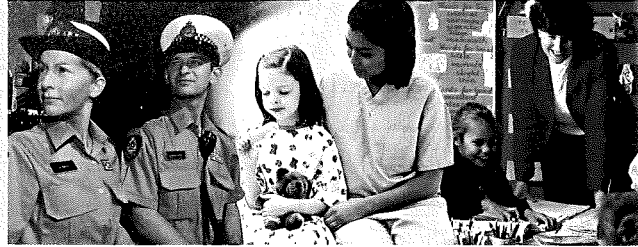
Other findings of the survey are less reassuring. When police, nurses and teachers look beyond their own jobs and work units, there are concerns.

- About two thirds of police, nurses and teachers are uncomfortable with the pressure of work. They report feeling emotionally drained, have difficulty in sleeping and often feel reluctant to face the demands of the working day. Many police, nurses and teachers also appear to have difficulty achieving an appropriate life-work balance.
- Individuals in all three professions regard their prestige, status and earnings as being lower than they deserve for the importance of their work. Many no longer see their profession as attractive compared with other careers. They feel that parents would be unlikely to encourage their children to enter policing, nursing or teaching.
- The management of change is widely viewed as problematic. An implication of the survey findings is that organisation-wide change that is not perceived as fully considering the impact on individuals and work units, is unlikely to be fully supported.
- A consequence of these unfavourable views is that while police, nurses and teachers feel attachment to their work and close colleagues, they appear to have less attachment to their employing organisations.
- Many respondents are sufficiently disenchanted with their organisation to speak critically of it to outsiders. Many appear to feel that rewards and recognition by their employing organisation do not match their personal contributions.

### LENGTH OF SERVICE AND WELLBEING RATINGS

The differences in wellbeing ratings between individuals who have up to five years service, or at least 25 years service, are generally small, but there are exceptions.

- Long-serving staff in all three professions report less favourable ratings for the support given by managers than those who are newer to the profession.
- Those newer to the profession feel more positively about professional growth than those with 25 years or more of service.
- The extent to which one has the opportunity to focus on core work (as opposed to 'paper work', for example), increases with length of service for police, but decreases for teachers. The implication is that police are less burdened with paperwork and clerical duties when they remain in the force, while long-serving teachers receive a higher administrative workload.
- The management of change by the employing organisation is rated less favourably by long-serving staff in all three professions. Police and teachers with at least 25 years service think poorly of the way change is managed.
- The perceived pressure of work increases with length of service for police, nurses and teachers.
- Long-serving police and teachers feel more drained by their work than those in the early career stage.
- A relatively high level of cynicism toward employing organisations is evident, particularly among police and teachers. Cynicism about organisational policies and practices and whether staff are treated fairly, worsens with length of service for all three professions.
- Pride in the profession and enthusiasm about the work decreases slightly for all three professions but remains high for long-serving staff.
- Long-serving staff in all the professions hold less favourable views about their status and prestige and the attractiveness of their profession compared with other opportunities.



## THE NEXT STEP

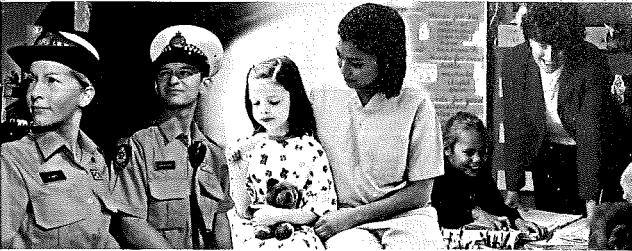
The wellbeing ratings reported here do not directly indicate what should be done. Instead, they offer an initial insight into issues that should be examined more closely. The findings will be most useful for each professional group separately, both as overall indicators and as pointers to where more detailed understanding of the causes of unfavourable ratings should be sought in order for corrective action to be taken. Collaboration will continue with the three professions to assist them explore the issues and identify groups with the lowest levels of wellbeing.

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

There can be little doubt that the professions of policing, nursing and teaching will face some serious challenges to their wellbeing in the coming decade. Individuals who feel alienated, cynical and disillusioned, cease to be maximally productive. Understanding how individuals working in these industry sectors think about the wellbeing of their profession and monitoring this, will inform both workforce development policy and implementation.

Our hope is that the impetus of this research will be maintained. Workforce attitudes relating to work and organisations need to be monitored and addressed. We believe the approach we have adopted in the present research provides a systematic and comprehensive template for working collaboratively with the professions to address issues they identify as important to their wellbeing.

Interested researchers, practitioners, policy makers and the public more generally can access up-to-date information about the project at <http://isp.ecu.edu.au>



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A project of this magnitude requires significant and regular consultation with key members of the service professions whose expertise and experience contributes to the relevance of the study. The researchers gratefully acknowledge the sustained input to the project of the members of the nursing, policing and teaching professions listed below. The researchers also acknowledge funding support from the Australian Research Council through an ARC Industry Linkage Grant with funding support from the following industry partners:

WA Police

Western Australian Police Union of Workers

Office of the Chief Nurse, Department of Health,  
Western Australia

Nurses Registration Board of Western Australia

Department of Education and Training, Western Australia

Association of Independent Schools, Western Australia

State Schools Teachers Union, Western Australia

Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Western Australia

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Carmel Maloney (Chief Investigator, Teaching)

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Chris Dawson, WA Police

Jo Harrison-Ward, WA Police

Ross Napier, WA Police, Chair, Wellbeing Project Committee

Mick Dean, WA Police Union of Workers

Peter Browne, WA Police Union of Workers

Anne Van Wees, Community & Public Sector Union/Civil Service Assn

Phil McGuinness, Community & Public Sector Union/Civil Service Assn

Irene Froyland, Corruption & Crime Commission

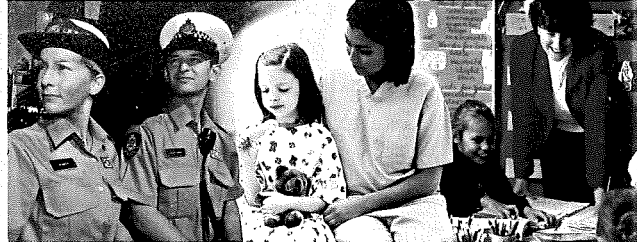
WA Police Wellbeing Project Committee members:

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## 2005 Survey Report on the Wellbeing of the Professions: Policing, Nursing and Teaching



### **NURSING REFERENCE GROUP**

Nola Cruickshank, (Chair 2005) Private Hospital Sector

Beryl Cosgrove, (Chair 2003/5) Royal College of Nursing

Phillip Della, Department of Health, Western Australia

Margaret Watson, Nurses Board of Western Australia

Jenny Prentice, Nurses Board of Western Australia

Sue Davis, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital

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Robyn Collins, Midwifery & Obstetrics

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Janet Edmondson, State School Teacher's Union, Western Australia

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Ian Fraser, Association of Independent Schools, Western Australia

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Nadia Masso, Catholic Education Office

Pauline O'Brien, Beaconsfield Primary School

Pamela Paton, WA College of Teaching and Chair

Bev Vickers, Department of Education and Training

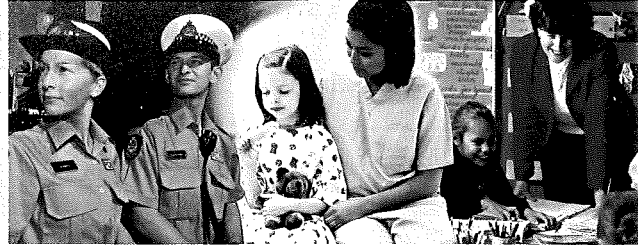
In addition the contribution made by the following people during the early stage of the research is acknowledged with thanks:

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## 2005 Survey Report on the Wellbeing of the Professions: Policing, Nursing and Teaching



## INTRODUCTION

### THE REPORT PRESENTS THE RESULTS OF A 'PROFESSIONS WELLBEING' SURVEY

This report assesses the wellbeing of the professions of policing, nursing and teaching in Western Australia. The findings are derived from surveys of how individuals think about their occupations, their colleagues and employers. The level of wellbeing affects the ease of attracting and retaining staff and the quality of delivered services.

We present and discuss summary results of responses to questionnaires sent in 2005 to 5,180 police, 6,000 nurses and 9,000 teachers. Each of the professions is here regarded as a single group. The number of respondents is sufficient to allow many more detailed analyses to be performed and reported at a later date. A separate document will contain fuller details of the technical aspects of the research.

### FEW ORGANISATIONS MONITOR WELLBEING AT PRESENT

All employers recognise the advantages of good organisational health and strong occupational commitment. Strategic plans typically state that the workforce is the greatest asset. However, it is rare to find organisations that have defined what this means in practice, canvassed employee views, and used the findings to build on strengths and remedy weaknesses.

In a rapidly changing environment there is constant pressure for doing things differently. All restructures, changes in practice, as well as shifts in public expectations affect how individuals view their work, their employer and their profession. Unless these impacts are understood and managed, wellbeing and performance will suffer.

The first aim of this project was to measure wellbeing for policing, nursing and teaching in WA, but the approach we used could be adapted to other public or private sector activities. We would like to see the cycle of defining wellbeing, measuring its current levels and acting on the findings becoming a standard practice. Improving wellbeing is one of the most constructive ways of producing a satisfied, committed and capable workforce and, as a consequence, an informed and well-served public.

### THE RESEARCH APPROACH WAS COLLABORATIVE AND WIDE-RANGING

Our approach has been collaborative, balanced, innovative and comprehensive. Most previous related work in Australia and elsewhere has been more restricted in scope, concentrating on a few troublesome issues. We wanted to investigate the key wellbeing issues for police, nurses and teachers. It has been gratifying, though hardly surprising, to find high proportions of these groups who are proud of what they do, committed to their employer and appreciative of their colleagues, work units and employing organisation.

A special feature of this project is the differentiation of occupational and organisational related attitudes. It is not uncommon for an employee to feel dedicated to his or her job, be satisfied with line management support, yet have reservations about the policies and practices of the employer, and have concerns about the status of the profession in terms of it being a good career option.

The work began in 2002, when reference groups were set up for each of the three professional groups. There is no private police force, but we included the private health and education sectors in the nurses and teachers groups. A review of the international literature provided an initial set of wellbeing issues, such as workload, stress, the work environment, professional growth, teamwork, autonomy, status and leadership.

Many of the issues are relevant to all jobs, but we avoided a 'one size fits all' approach. More than 50 focus groups involving over 400 participants were held in Perth and 13 regional areas. At these meetings we encouraged individuals to think about issues arising in their jobs, and the factors that made them feel good or anxious. With this extra input we produced, after the usual pilot exercises, a set of three broadly similar but customised questionnaires, one for each professional group.



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### THE MEANING OF THE WELLBEING FACTORS

Each wellbeing factor is a 'caption' embracing a set of statements with which respondents were asked to (strongly) agree or (strongly) disagree. For example, 'occupational commitment' is based on the statements:

I am proud to be in this profession

I identify with this profession

This profession is important to my self-image

Respondents expressed agreement or disagreement with statements covering 30 different wellbeing factors grouped in terms of issues relevant to line management, work units, their employing organisation, and their occupation. For example, items that measured attitudes to 'manager support' were referenced to the respondent's line manager, e.g., My line manager does a good job of negotiating clear objectives. Items that measured attitudes to leadership, on the other hand, were referenced to the respondent's work unit, e.g., My principal provides opportunities for staff to participate in decision making.

It is important to note here that 'work unit' was defined differently for each profession. For the police survey, the work unit referred to the police station, squads etc. in which the officer worked. For nurses, the work unit referred to the ward, office etc. For teachers, the work unit referred to the school in which they spent most of their time. Similarly, for the police survey the organisation referred to the employing organisation, viz., the WA Police. For nurses, the organisation referred to the hospital in which they worked. For teachers, the organisation referred to the employing organisation, i.e., the Department of Education and Training, the Catholic Education Office etc.

For each respondent, the responses across the set of statements was converted to a rating of 'very favourable', 'favourable', 'unfavourable' or 'very unfavourable'. There are minor variations between professions in the statements used to generate the ratings for some of the wellbeing factors. Some factors are not reported for all three professions.

The wellbeing factors are grouped under seven main headings. A brief description of each of the factors follows.

### WORK FOCUS, AUTONOMY, PROFESSIONAL GROWTH, MANAGER SUPPORT

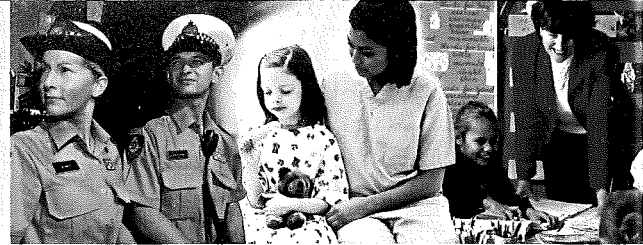
- Work Focus - The extent to which individuals have the opportunity to focus on their core work (as opposed to 'paper work', for example).
- Autonomy - The amount of control individuals have over how to meet their work related responsibilities.
- Professional Growth - The opportunities individuals have to pursue the development of professional skills and knowledge through the coaching and feedback received from their manager regarding performance.
- Manager Support - The effectiveness of the line manager's communication skills and ability to negotiate objectives and foster teamwork as perceived by the respondent.

### EMPLOYER RECOGNITION, ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT, WORK UNIT LEADERSHIP

- Employer Recognition - The extent to which one's contribution is valued by their employing organisation in respect of salary, job security and other positive regard.
- Organisational Change Management - The ways in which change is managed by the employing organisation.
- Work Unit Leadership - The extent to which leaders at the work unit level help create a work culture that brings out the best in all employees.

### INTER-PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION, COLLEGIAL SUPPORT, TEAMWORK

- Inter-professional Collaboration - The extent to which individuals from different professions and backgrounds work together to meet common goals.
- Collegial Support - The extent to which team members support one another in a professional context.
- Teamwork - The extent to which members of a work unit cooperate effectively as a team.



**WORK PRESSURE, WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION,  
BULLYING, WORK SAFETY**

- Work Pressure - The extent to which the pressures of work and time urgency dominate the work environment.
- Discrimination - The extent to which one feels discriminated against in the workplace.
- Bullying Amongst Staff - How inappropriate behaviour amongst staff in the workplace is viewed and managed.
- Bullying by Clients - The extent to which inappropriate behaviour within the work unit is tolerated.
- Work Safety - The extent to which one's personal safety is valued within the work unit.

NB: Police Officers do not have the Bullying by Clients factor.

**INTENTION TO REMAIN IN PROFESSION,  
OCCUPATIONAL COMMITMENT, INTRINSIC MOTIVATION,  
ORGANISATIONAL CYNICISM, ORGANISATIONAL  
COMMITMENT**

- Intention to Leave the Profession - Whether the individual plans to remain in, or leave their profession.
- Occupational Commitment - The extent of attachment to the profession.
- Intrinsic Motivation - The extent to which the individual is personally involved in their everyday work.
- Organisational Cynicism - The level of perceived fairness within the organisation, including flexibility, fair promotions and the integrity of what the organisation says.
- Organisational Commitment - The attachment individuals feel toward their employing organisation.

**PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT, EFFECTIVENESS,  
JOB IMAGE, PROFESSIONAL STATUS**

- Personal Accomplishment - The sense of one's personal professional accomplishment including the feeling of appreciation, making a difference in others' lives and accomplishing things on the job.
- Effectiveness - How well objectives are achieved within the work unit.

- Job Image - The level of respect afforded and value attached to the profession by the wider community.
- Professional Status - The perceived status of the profession and attractiveness as a career.

**LIFE-WORK BALANCE, PERSONAL WELLBEING**

- Life-work Balance - The extent to which one has achieved an appropriate balance between work responsibilities and life outside of work.
- Personal Wellbeing - The extent to which an individual's work impacts on their physical and emotional health.

**HOW THE SURVEY FINDINGS  
ARE PRESENTED**

Each of the three professional groups has its own chapter.

- A brief overview of the profession and the main challenges likely to affect wellbeing.
- A comparison of workforce and survey respondent demographics.
- Charts showing the attitudes (from 'very favourable' to 'very unfavourable') of respondents to wellbeing factors, with interpretative comments.

Three charts have been presented for each group of wellbeing factors. Firstly, a chart highlighting the attitudes of all respondents. Secondly, a chart for those in their 'Early Career' stage, defined as those respondents who have been in the profession for five years or less. Lastly, responses from those in an 'Established Career' stage, that is, those respondents who have been in the profession for 25 years or more.

The chapters for the individual professions are followed by a concluding chapter highlighting common themes, similarities and differences between the findings for police, nurses and teachers.



## 2005 Survey Report on the Wellbeing of the Professions: Policing, Nursing and Teaching

### POLICE

Policing is the most highly visible of the three professions. The public expect to see uniformed officers in places where problems might arise, and demand prompt responses in times of trouble. Police need to inspire confidence and respect.

Reform has been continuous for several years under successive governments, ministers and commissioners. The renaming of the police force as the police service and now as WA Police signals an important cultural shift, as does the recent re-focussing on frontline services. External factors inducing change include altered public perceptions and expectations, more social diversity, access to new technology, amendments to legislation, civilianisation and general trends in public behaviour and lawlessness. There has also been internal recognition that excessively rigid, male-dominated structures coupled with some entrenched attitudes are not well-suited to the needs of modern policing or organisational management.



The Kennedy Royal Commission commented on the importance of good community relations to maintain public confidence and foster partnerships in crime prevention. Values of honesty, respect, empathy, openness and accountability are non-negotiable within policing. Police work is often stressful and potentially dangerous. It demands exceptional qualities in officers. If the performance and reputation of the service are to be maintained, there must be constant attention to the wellbeing of the workforce.

Most previous research into policing has been directed at single or small sets of issues, such as professional status, stress, burn-out, teamwork, morale, support and cynicism. This wellbeing study is seen as a valuable extension of earlier work. High levels of professional wellbeing are now recognised as vital to the achievement of desired community outcomes.

Information obtained from the focus groups in 2002-03 was used to identify the key elements of wellbeing. More than 160 police officers and police staff reflected on recent events which had left them feeling positive or negative about their occupation and/or workplace. This approach revealed a more complete picture of occupation and workplace attitudes among police employees than had been obtained in the past.

The present research raises the importance of wellbeing as a central issue that needs to be monitored and acted upon. What has been done already, and the work that will follow, will enable WA Police to develop practical actions that address wellbeing issues for the benefit of police themselves and the community as a whole.

### SURVEY FINDINGS

The findings of the survey of police for the wellbeing factors are presented overleaf. There are three figures: one showing the results for the overall sample of survey respondents (2486 respondents); one for police who have working in the profession for 5 years or less, referred to as the early career stage (486 respondents); and, one for police who have been working in the profession for 25 years or more, referred to as the established career stage (444 respondents).



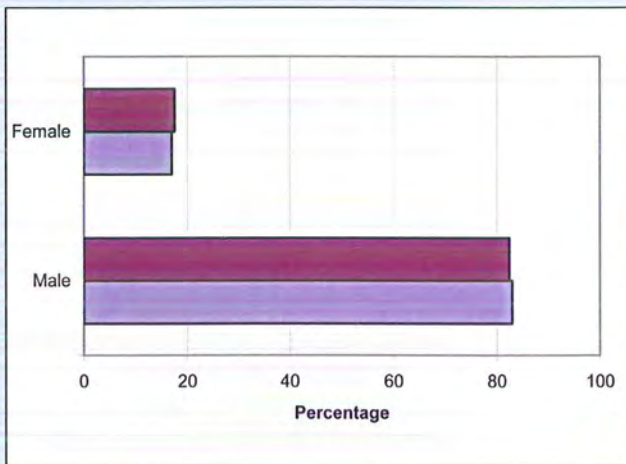
## PROFILE OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

2486 surveys were completed by police officers representing a survey response rate of 48%. The following charts provide information about the gender, age, years of service and rank for the sample of respondents and the entire workforce of police officers within WA Police.

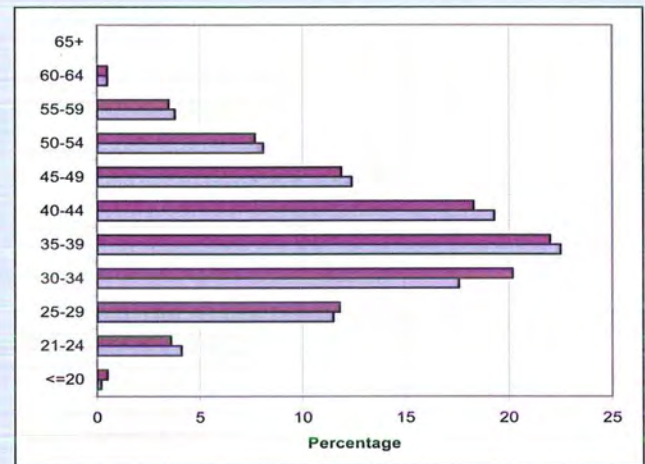
### KEY TO CHARTS



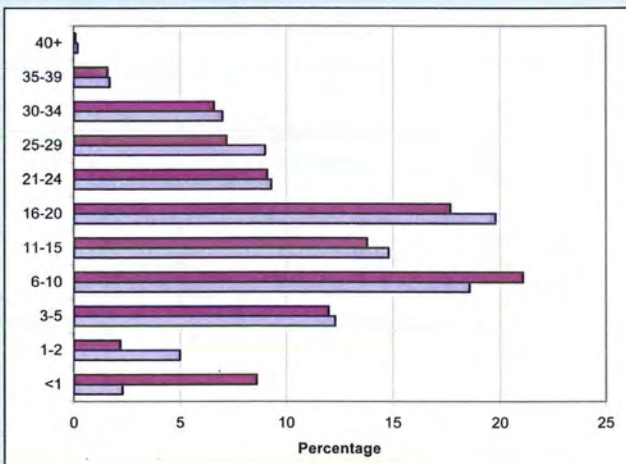
### GENDER



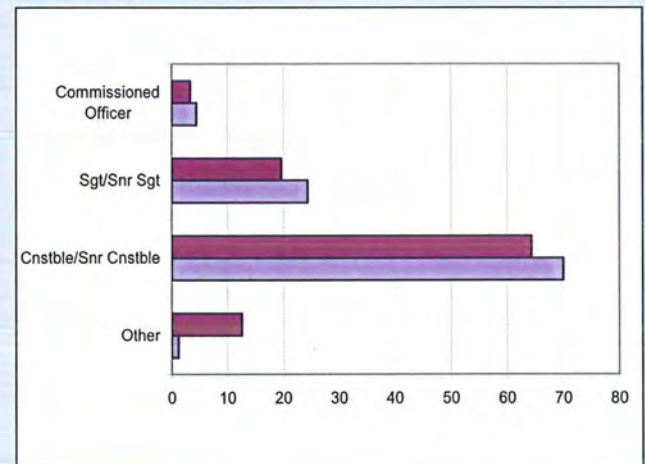
### AGE GROUP



### YEARS IN WA POLICE SERVICE



### RANK HELD<sup>2</sup>

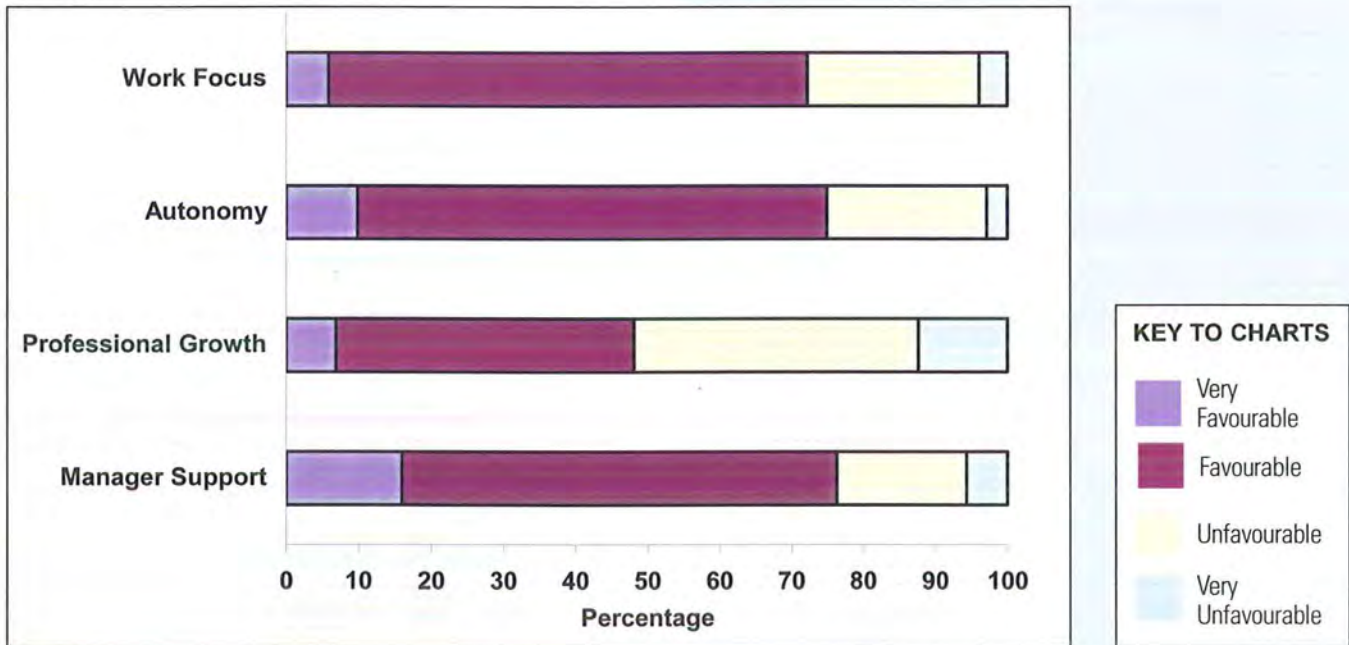


2. N.B. Other includes Aboriginal Police Liaison Officers, recruits and recruits in training

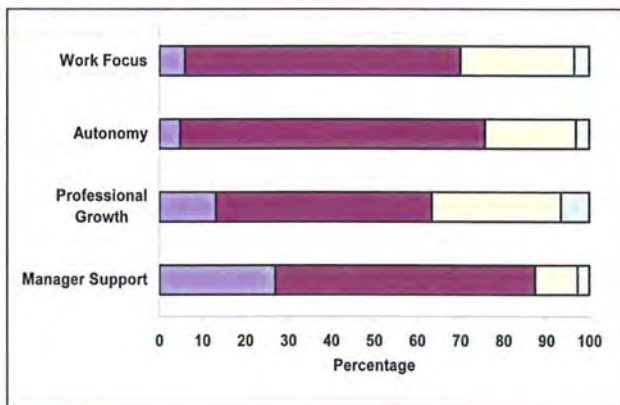


## WORK FOCUS, AUTONOMY, PROFESSIONAL GROWTH, MANAGER SUPPORT

### OVERALL



### EARLY CAREER



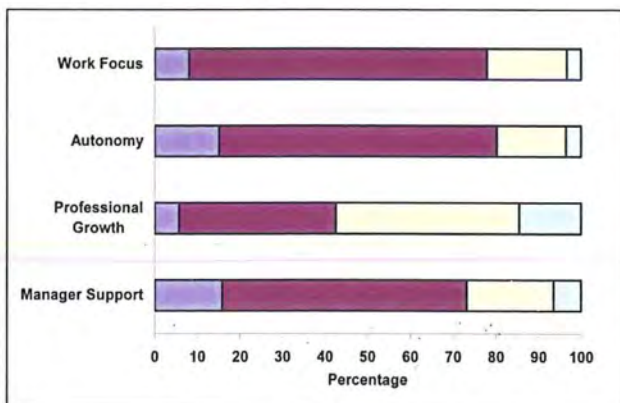
**Work Focus** - Nearly 30% of respondents would like to spend more time on front line tasks rather than on paperwork and clerical duties.

**Autonomy** - About 75% of early career respondents and over 80% of long-serving respondents feel they have sufficient direct control over their work and are rarely frustrated by the instructions they receive.

**Professional Growth** - Over half of all respondents rate informal feedback, coaching and the interest taken in their professional growth unfavourably. Dissatisfaction levels are higher among long-serving respondents.

**Manager Support** - Almost 90% of early career respondents feel favourably about the way their line managers negotiate objectives, encourage teamwork and provide information. Long-serving respondents are less satisfied by these aspects of manager support.

### ESTABLISHED CAREER

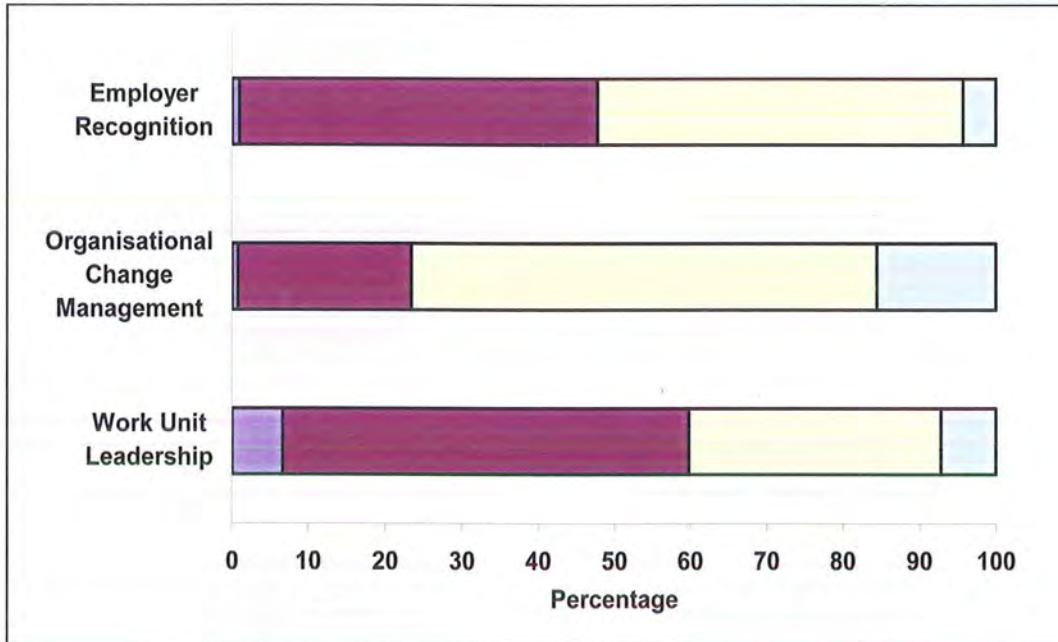


**Overall** - Officers in the early stage of their career who responded to the survey are highly satisfied with the way they are supervised, but some would like to spend more time on direct service. There are also concerns about professional growth. Long-serving staff, despite their experience and acquired skills, would welcome more feedback, coaching and further personal development opportunities.

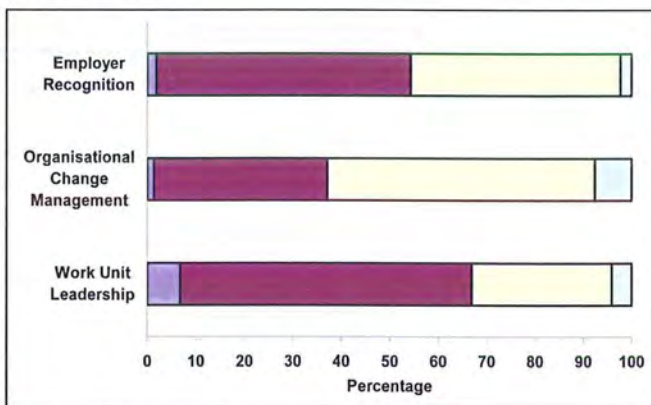


## EMPLOYER RECOGNITION, ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT, WORK UNIT LEADERSHIP

### OVERALL



### EARLY CAREER

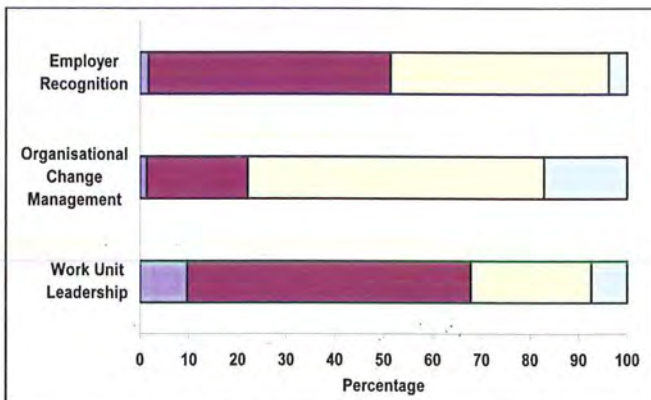


**Employer Recognition** - Favourable or unfavourable feelings about pay levels and whether outstanding service is recognised by the organisation, are almost equally balanced for early career and long-serving respondents.

**Organisational Change Management** - A majority of respondents, including 75% of those with 25 years service, felt unfavourably about departmental responses to work unit level issues, and disagreed that changes had produced good results for them.

**Work Unit Leadership** - Both groups gave favourable ratings for leadership qualities in their work units.

### ESTABLISHED CAREER



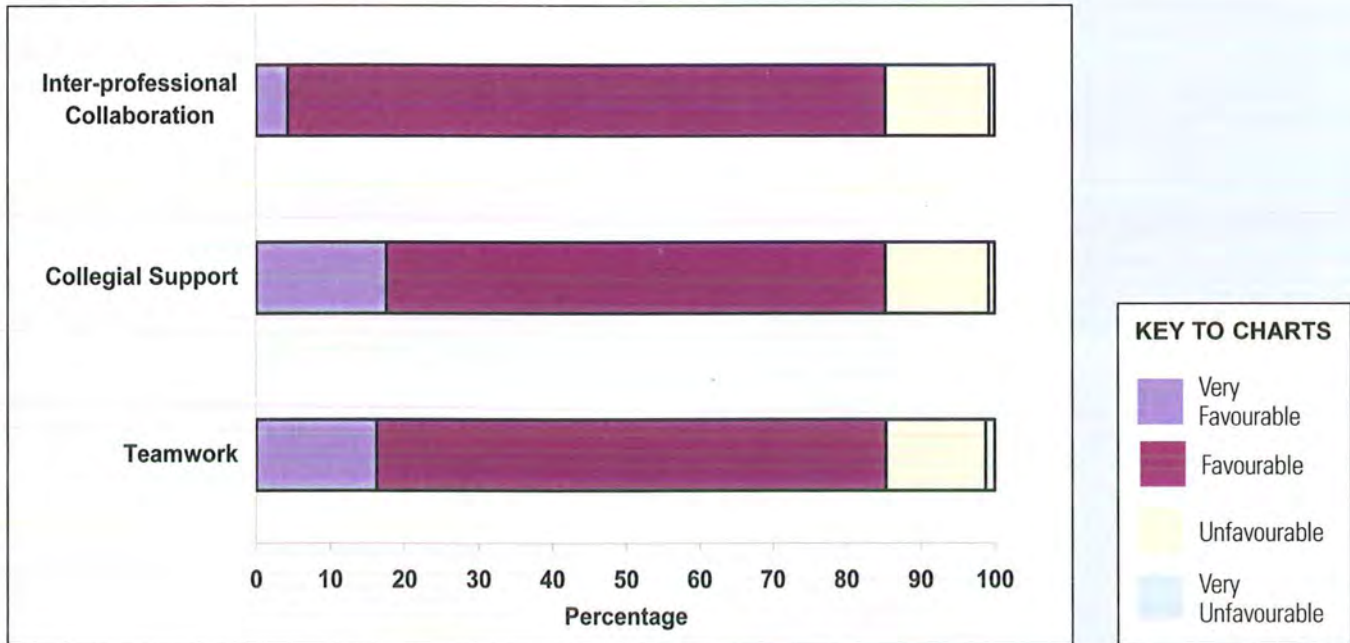
**Overall** - There are strong indications that police officers responding to the survey feel major change is not well managed and that individual excellence is poorly rewarded. A majority of officers feel positively about their work unit leaders.



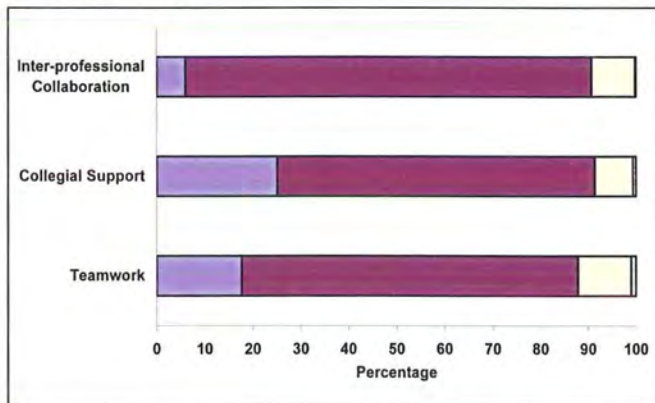


## INTER-PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION, COLLEGIAL SUPPORT, TEAMWORK

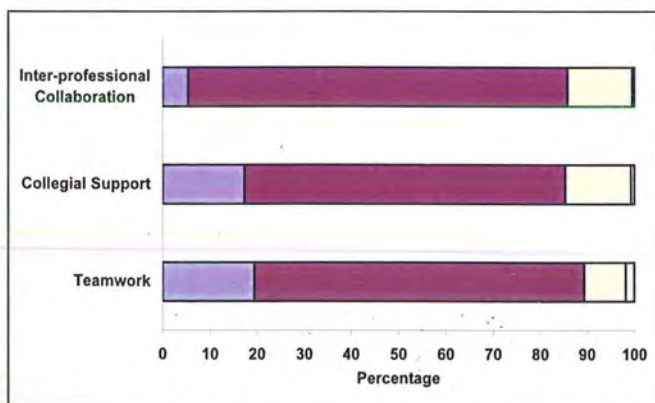
### OVERALL



### EARLY CAREER



### ESTABLISHED CAREER



**Inter-professional Collaboration** - Dealings with colleagues on work matters were given favourable ratings by nearly all respondents, regardless of length of service.

**Collegial Support** - Respondents are confident they can rely on close colleagues for assistance and experience little friction within work units.

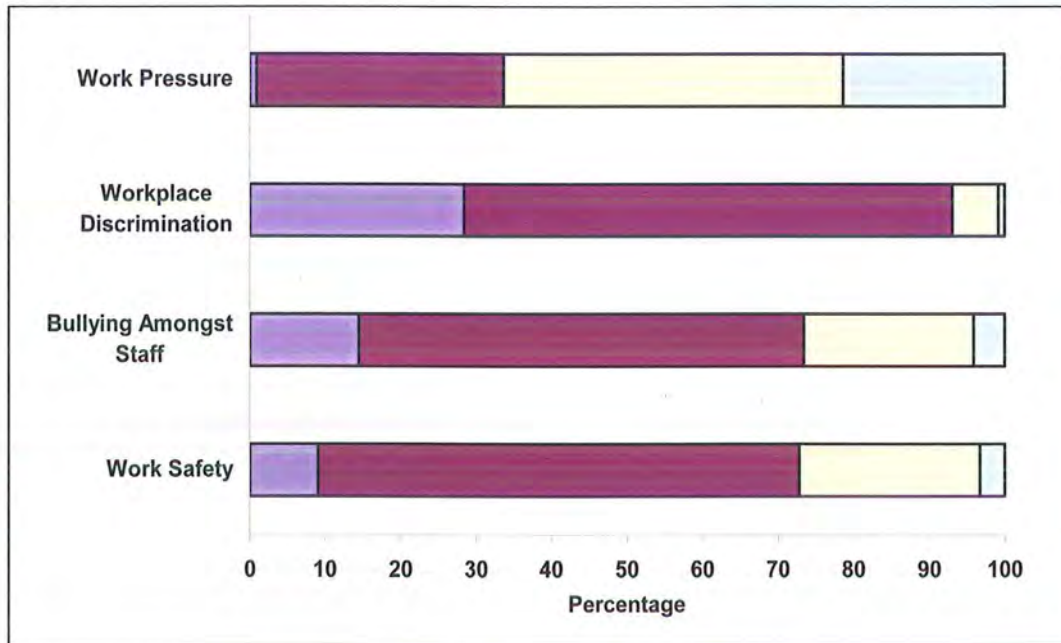
**Teamwork** - All aspects of teamwork are rated favourably by more than 85% of respondents. Team members know their roles, share information well, meet their objectives and cope with any unusual demands.

**Overall** - Police officers responding to the survey rate workgroup cooperation highly. The overall impression is of a culture where members of workgroups strongly support each other.

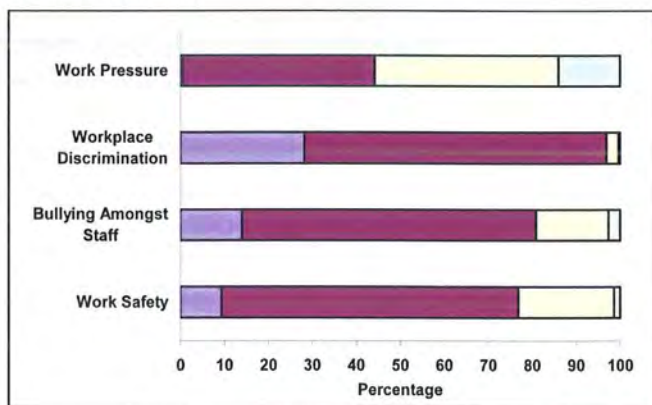


## WORK PRESSURE, WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION, BULLYING, WORK SAFETY

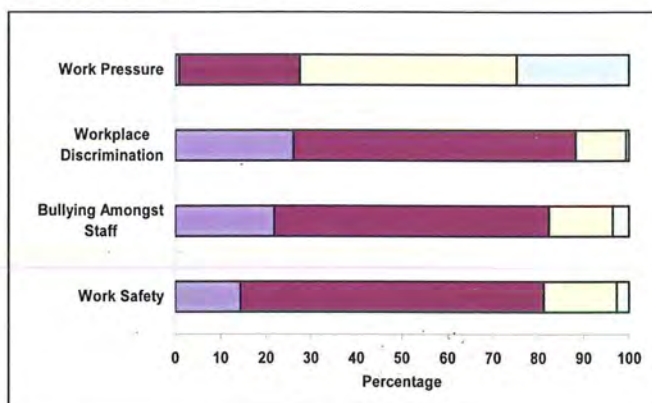
### OVERALL



### EARLY CAREER



### ESTABLISHED CAREER



**Work Pressure** - A majority of respondents across the whole experience spectrum were concerned about the difficulties of dealing with a continuous, heavy, urgent workload.

**Workplace Discrimination** - Few respondents felt they were discriminated against, but a small proportion of long-serving staff were concerned that their age counted against them.

**Bullying Amongst Staff** - Most respondents see bullying by other officers as something that is not considered acceptable. However, about 20% had concerns about bullying within WA Police.

**Work Safety** - Ratings on safety are generally high, Early career respondents expressed slightly less favourable views on attitudes towards safety.

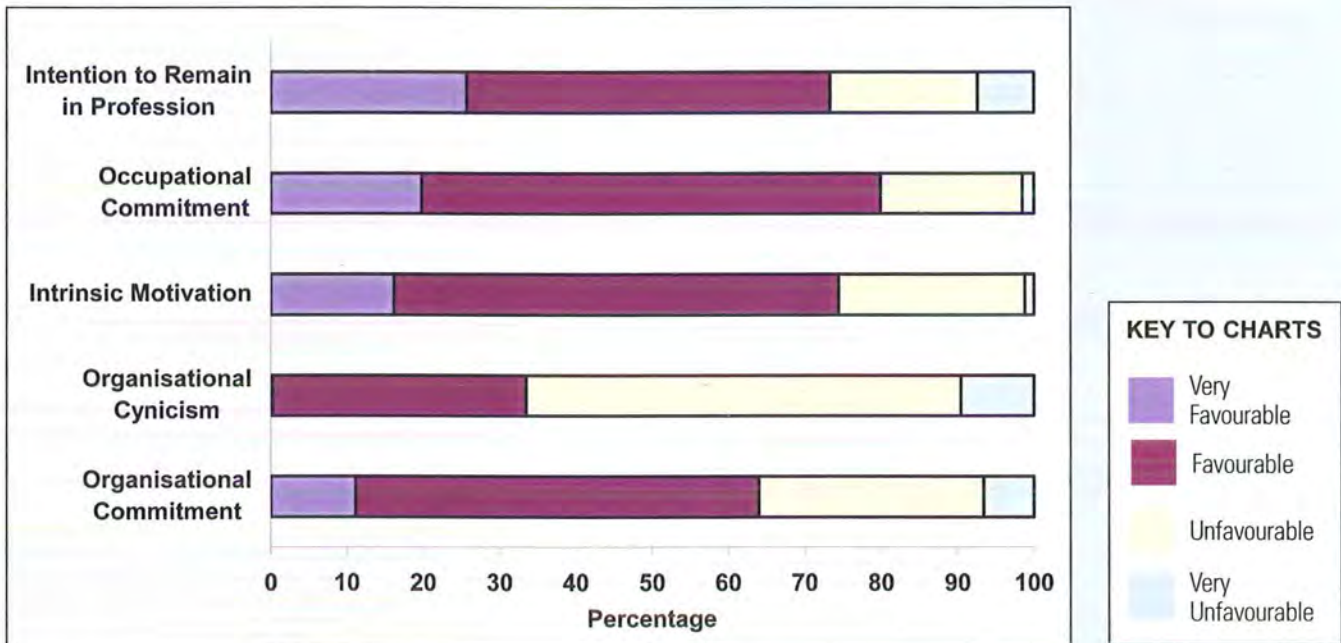
**Overall** - The responses indicate that the officers who responded to the survey consider policing is demanding, and there is constant pressure to keep working. Few felt discriminated against. Bullying among staff does not appear to be widely tolerated, and safety in the workplace is taken seriously.



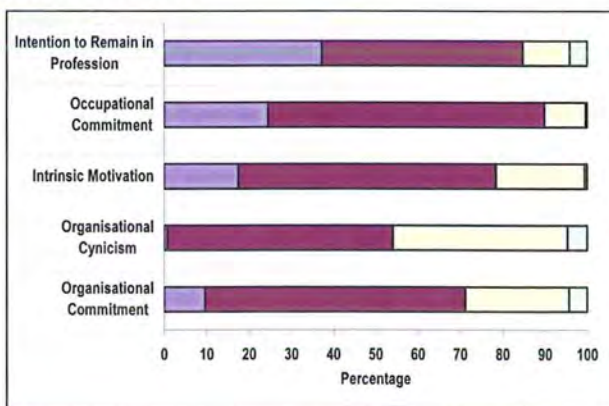
## 2005 Survey Report on the Wellbeing of the Professions: Policing, Nursing and Teaching

### INTENTION TO REMAIN IN PROFESSION, OCCUPATIONAL COMMITMENT, INTRINSIC MOTIVATION, ORGANISATIONAL CYNICISM, ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

#### OVERALL



#### EARLY CAREER



#### Intention to Remain in the Profession -

Nearly 90% of early career respondents had no immediate plans to seek work outside policing. Some 20% of long-serving respondents were actively seeking a different job or considering leaving within a year.

**Occupational Commitment** - Pride in, identification with, and enthusiasm about policing were reported by 90% of early career respondents. The corresponding rating for long-serving staff is slightly lower, but commitment to the job is high overall.

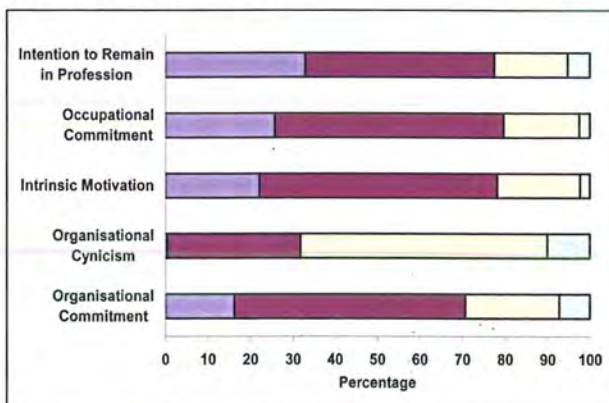
**Intrinsic Motivation** - Respondents report high levels of personal interest in their work, finding it absorbing and stimulating, and being prepared to take on extra duties.

**Organisational Cynicism** - About two-thirds of respondents consider that WA Police expects one thing of its staff but rewards another. Many respondents report they criticise the policies and practices of their organisation to people outside policing. These attitudes are more common among long-serving respondents.

**Organisational Commitment** - The mixed feelings of survey respondents toward their employing organisation are indicated by the 30% who reported little sense of belonging and attachment to WA Police.

**Overall** - The majority of respondents to the survey are positive with respect to staying in a job that stimulates them. However, there appears to be cynicism among many officers and a significant proportion of staff who feel little attachment to the organisation.

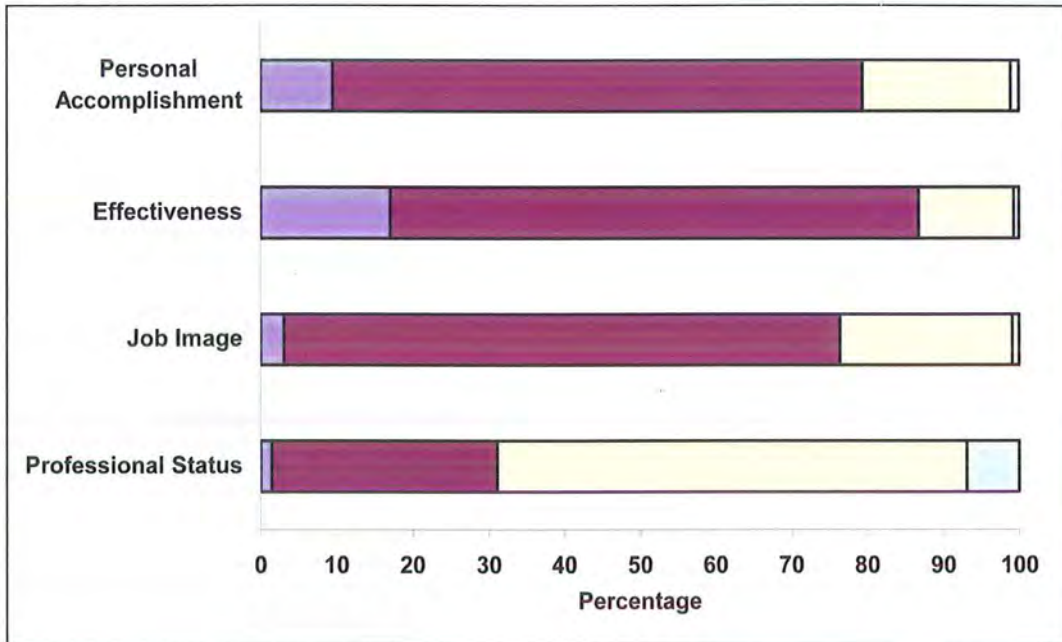
#### ESTABLISHED CAREER





## PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT, EFFECTIVENESS, JOB IMAGE, PROFESSIONAL STATUS

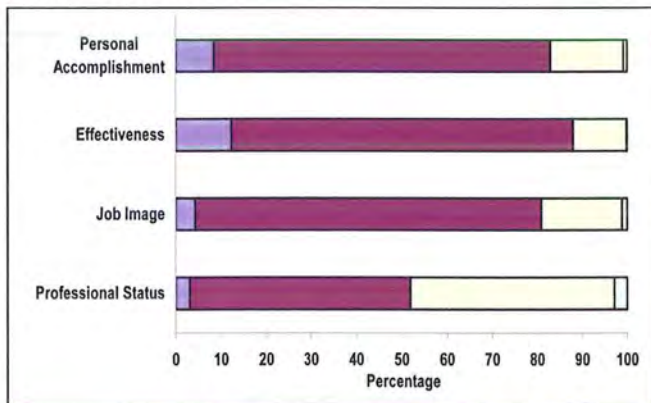
### OVERALL



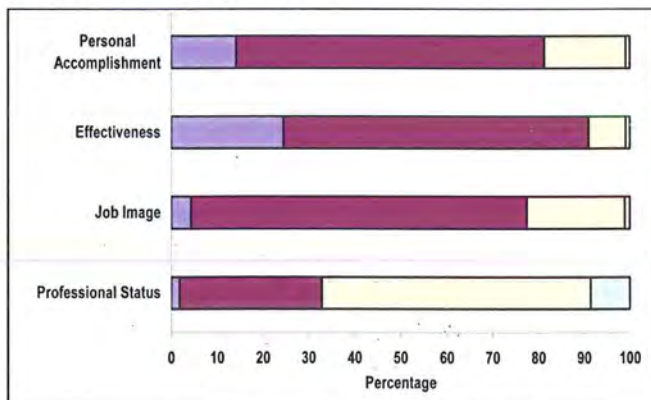
#### KEY TO CHARTS

- Very Favourable
- Favourable
- Unfavourable
- Very Unfavourable

### EARLY CAREER



### ESTABLISHED CAREER



**Personal Accomplishment** - Nearly all respondents felt a sense of personal accomplishment in their work believing that they had accomplished worthwhile achievements in the job and were appreciated for the work they did.

**Effectiveness** - Around 90% of respondents regard their job and work unit highly for quality, importance and the desire to perform even better.

**Job Image** - About 80% of respondents feel that police are widely regarded as approachable, helpful, trustworthy and dedicated. Around 20%, are not so confident that their profession is held in such high esteem by the general public.

**Professional Status** - The professional status of policing is rated less favourably, including by early career officers. For all respondents, 70% have concerns about opportunities for advancement and are unsure about the attractiveness of policing compared to other jobs.

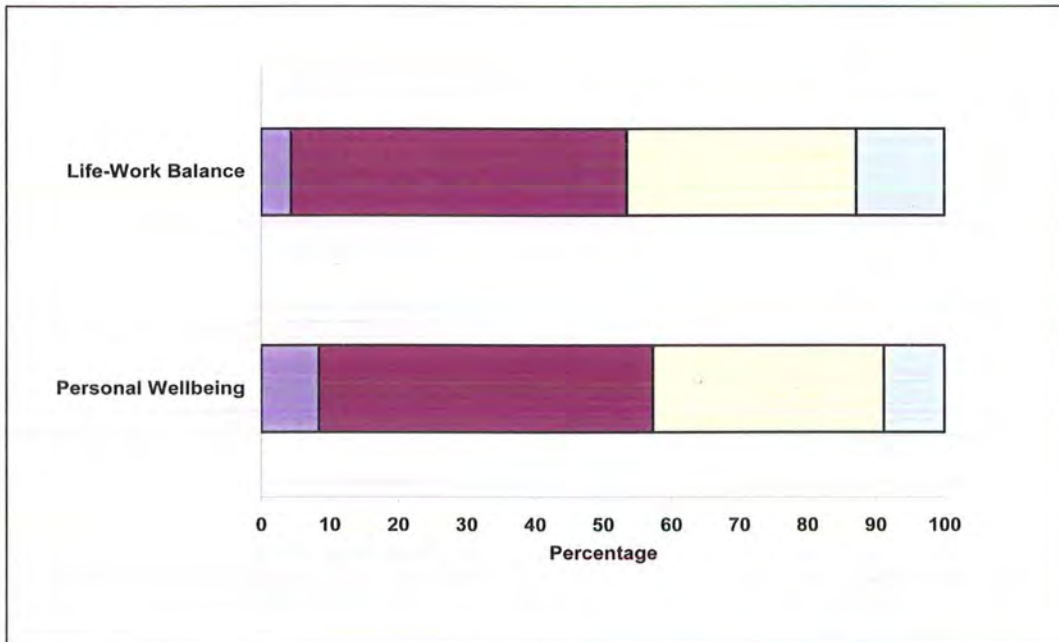
**Overall** - The many positive feelings of the importance and quality of police work are reinforced by these ratings. The minority view that police have a poor public image is an important issue, as is the unfavourable view of professional status.



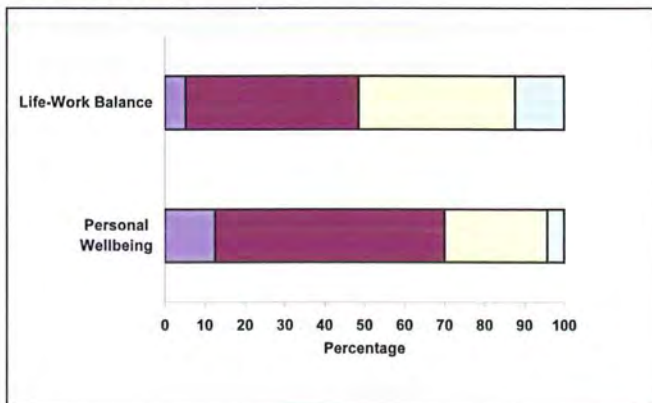
## 2005 Survey Report on the Wellbeing of the Professions: Policing, Nursing and Teaching

### LIFE-WORK BALANCE, PERSONAL WELLBEING

#### OVERALL



#### EARLY CAREER

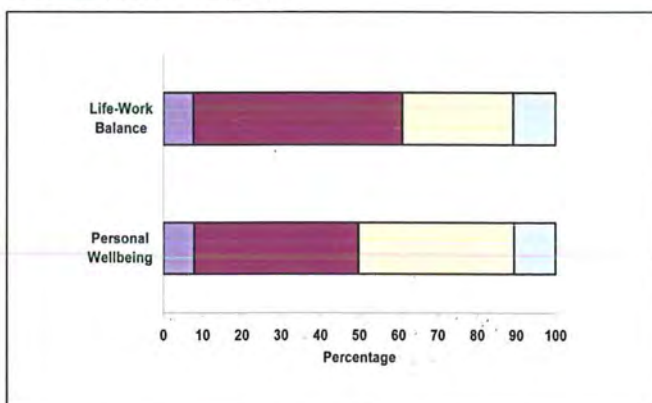


**Life-work Balance** - Establishing an appropriate balance between the demands of work and life outside of work appears to be less of a problem for long-serving respondents than those in their early career stage.

**Personal Wellbeing** - Work interfered with sleep, was emotionally draining and caused reluctance to get up for about 30% of early career respondents, and 50% of those with 25 years or more of service.

**Overall** - An appropriate life-work balance does not appear to have been achieved for 40% of the police officers who responded to the survey. For many officers the demands of work are emotionally and physically draining.

#### ESTABLISHED CAREER





## NURSES

Nurses perform a wide range of roles in the public and private sectors. Most work in hospitals but significant numbers work in aged care facilities, general practice health centres, remote area nursing posts or within the community. The profession is mainly female but the proportion of males is slowly increasing. In Australia, about half of the employed nurses work part-time. There is a substantial pool of agency staff who have no firm attachments to particular work units.

There are two main nurse grades, registered and enrolled. Large numbers of qualified nurses leave the profession permanently or for long periods, often to raise families. Despite the total population of nurses, there are often staff shortages. Retention of existing staff and persuading former nurses to resume their careers are two of the main workforce management challenges.

Wider career choices, especially for women, increase the problems of attracting new recruits. The media frequently run stories implying that health services are in a state of crisis, which does not boost the attractiveness of nursing to potential recruits.



Various factors bring about the need for change in nursing, such as advances in technology, an ageing population and changes in the way care is delivered. Cost-cutting drives have resulted in high bed occupancies, shorter stays and increased acuity of patients. The scope of nursing practice has changed, for example, the introduction of unlicensed care assistants requires the nurse to have accountability for delegation of care. Recent legislation has enabled the introduction of an extended practice role as Nurse Practitioner. Patients now tend to be better informed which requires nurses to communicate with them in different ways.

Nursing research in Australia and elsewhere indicates that key factors in retaining staff include autonomy, opportunities to use skills and develop professionally, working conditions and the ability to contribute to policy development. In the USA, the 'Magnet Hospital' system for credentialing best practice has produced good results. Hospitals meeting the standards benefit from more satisfied nurses, lower staff turnover, higher patient satisfaction and improved medical outcomes. Best practice includes many of the wellbeing factors covered by this research.

Nurses associated with the delivery of nursing services are optimistic about the value of the wellbeing study. The approach and its findings should contribute to policy development, organisational review and change. This, in turn, should raise the attractiveness of nursing as a career, assist staff retention and further improve the quality of care.

### SURVEY FINDINGS

The findings of the survey of nurses for the wellbeing factors are presented overleaf. There are three figures: one showing the results for the overall sample of survey respondents (1884 respondents); one for nurses who have been working in the profession for 5 years or less, referred to as the early career stage (161 respondents); and, one for nurses who have been working in the profession for 25 years or more, referred to as the established career stage (838 respondents).

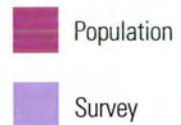


## 2005 Survey Report on the Wellbeing of the Professions: Nursing, Policing and Teaching

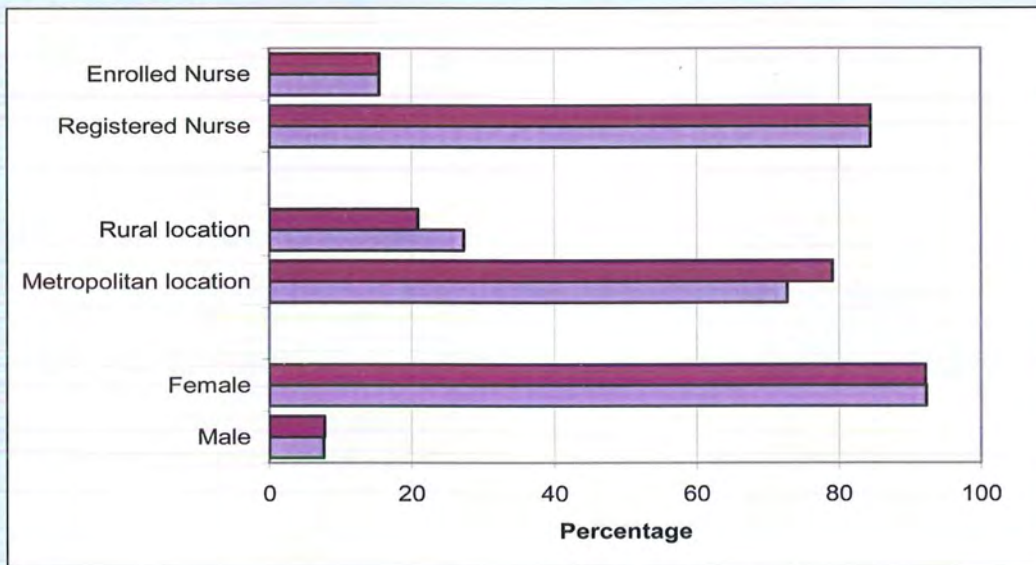
### PROFILE OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

1884 surveys were completed by nurses representing a survey response rate of 31.5%. The following charts provide information about the registration status (enrolled or registered nurse), location, gender and age for the sample of respondents with the same demographics for all registered nurses within Western Australia.

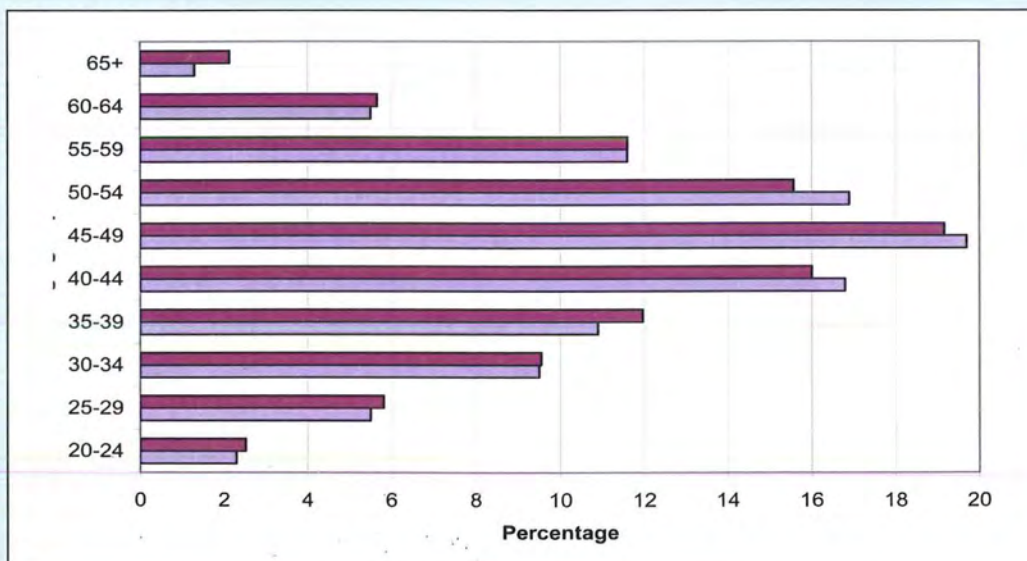
#### KEY TO CHARTS



#### DEMOGRAPHIC



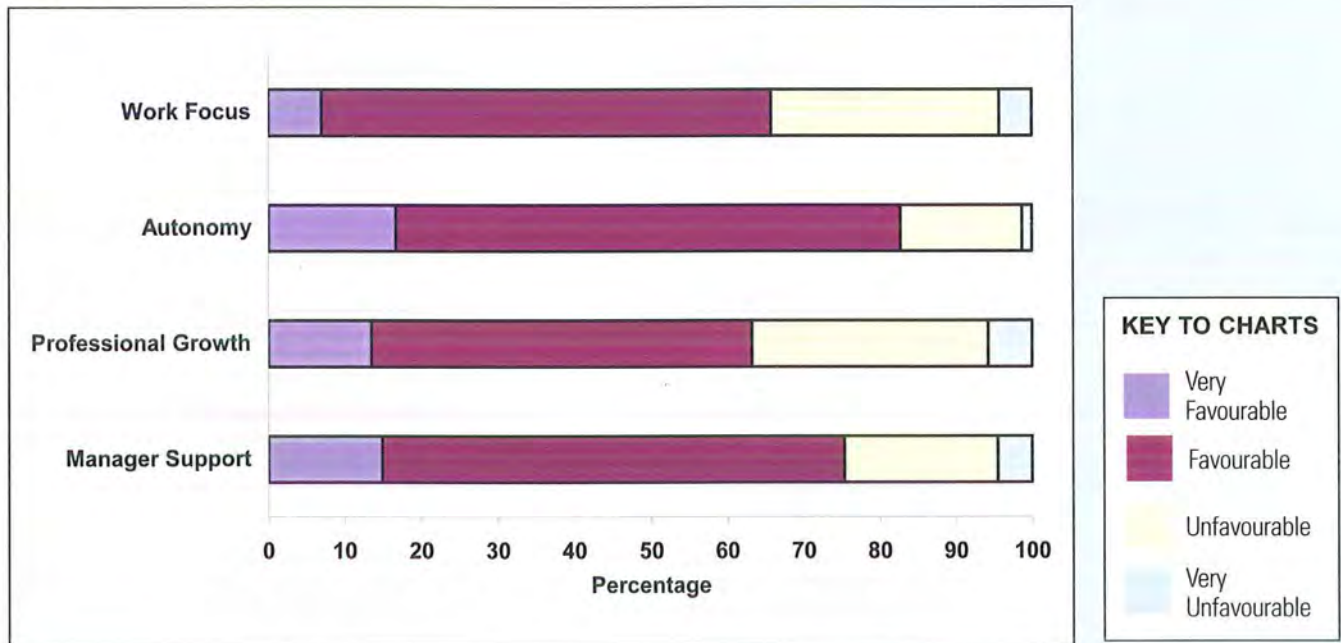
#### AGE GROUP



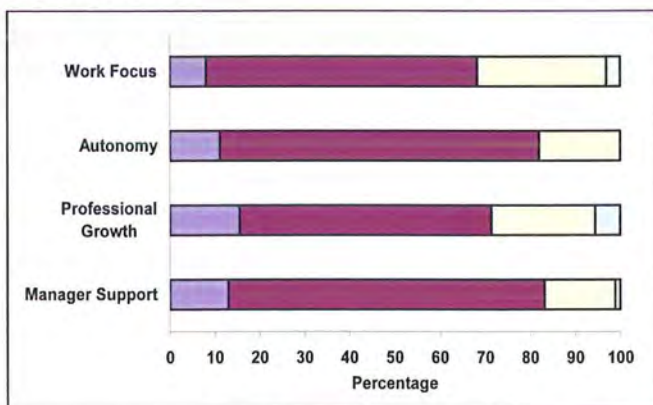


## WORK FOCUS, AUTONOMY, PROFESSIONAL GROWTH, MANAGER SUPPORT

### OVERALL



### EARLY CAREER



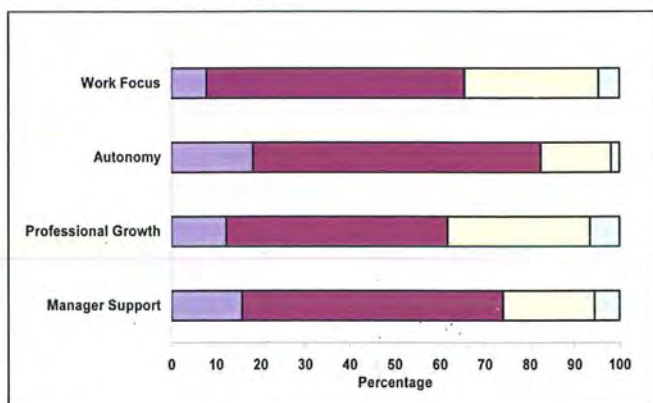
**Work Focus** - Around 65% of respondents felt they had adequate time to focus on their core work while the remainder felt that they would like to spend more time taking care of patients.

**Autonomy** - Over 80% of respondents feel they have sufficient direct control over their work and are rarely given conflicting instructions by different managers.

**Professional Growth** - A clear majority of early career respondents are satisfied with the encouragement and interest taken by their managers in their professional growth. Long-serving nurses gave slightly less favourable ratings.

**Manager Support** - Three quarters of all respondents feel positively about how managers understand the scope of their work, encourage teamwork and provide the right information. Manager support is rated more highly by early career respondents than their long-serving colleagues.

### ESTABLISHED CAREER



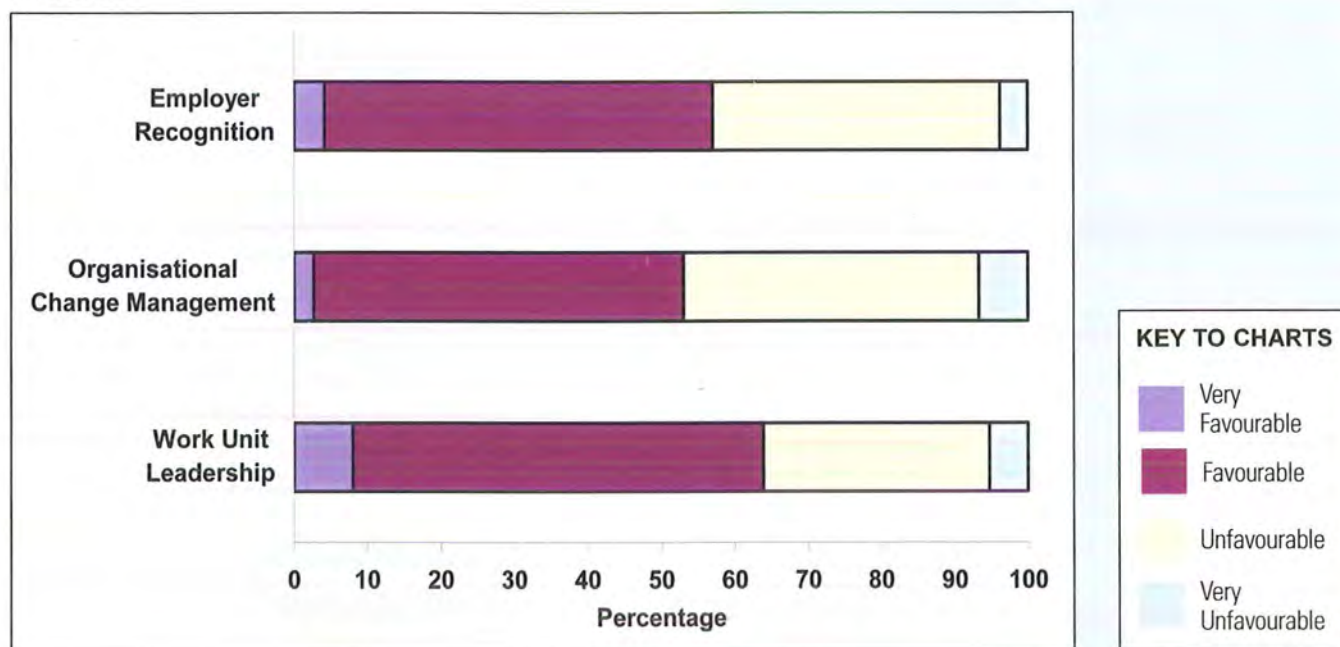
**Overall** - Nurses who responded to the survey generally report managerial support that leaves them an appropriate level of autonomy in their work. A substantial minority of nurses would like career development and professional growth to be improved.



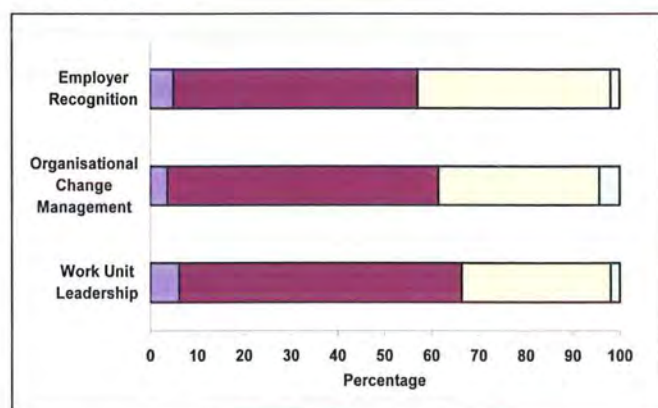


## EMPLOYER RECOGNITION, ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT, WORK UNIT LEADERSHIP

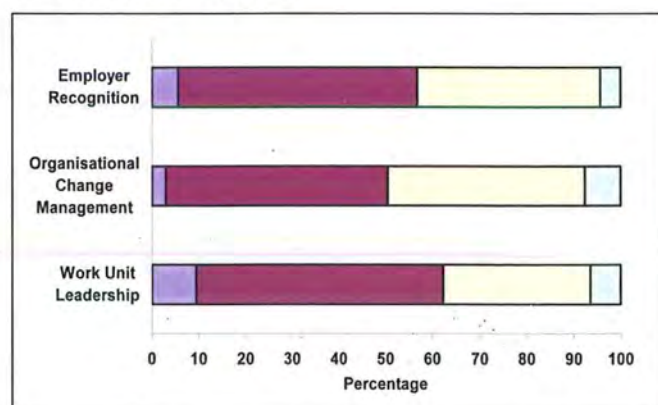
### OVERALL



### EARLY CAREER



### ESTABLISHED CAREER



**Employer Recognition** - Respondents at all levels of experience have mixed views about salaries, job security and the way outstanding individual performance is recognised.

**Organisational Change Management** - Slightly more than half of all respondents feel their organisation responds effectively to work unit issues, supports change with the appropriate resources and accepts responsibility when change does not produce the desired outcomes. These favourable views are not shared by the remainder.

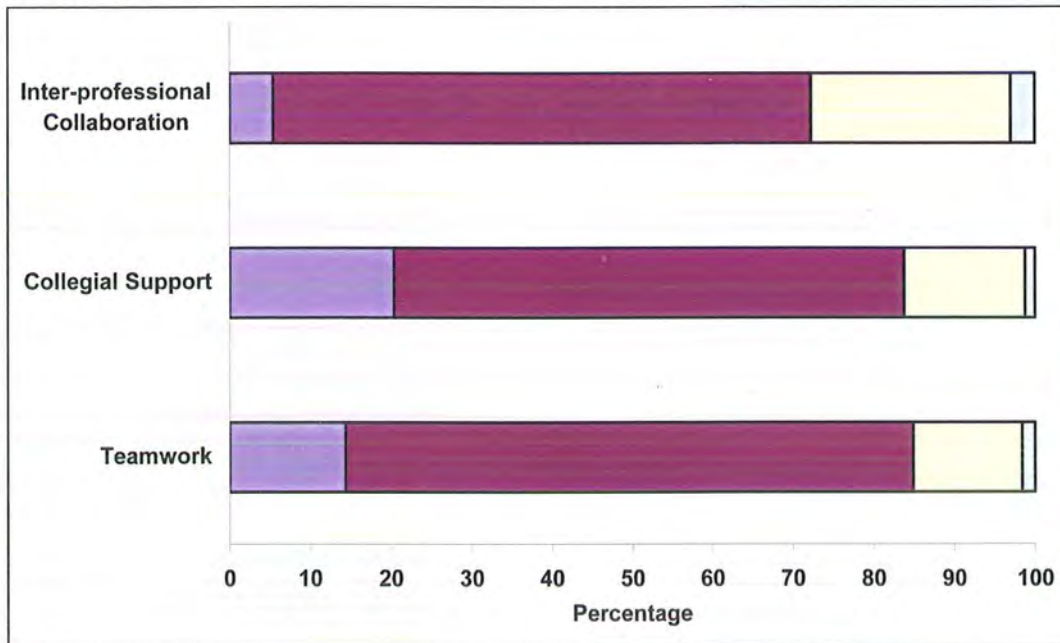
**Work Unit Leadership** - About two thirds of respondents agree that their leaders at the work unit level enable staff to participate in decision making, foster collaboration and treat staff fairly.

**Overall** - For each wellbeing factor in this group, more nurses hold favourable rather than unfavourable attitudes. The ratings indicate scope for improvement in leadership at the work unit level, change management at the organisational level, and the recognition of individuals.



## INTER-PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION, COLLEGIAL SUPPORT, TEAMWORK

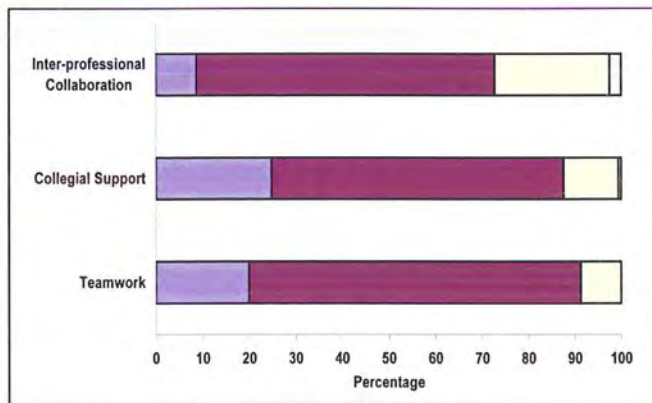
### OVERALL



#### KEY TO CHARTS

- Very Favourable
- Favourable
- Unfavourable
- Very Unfavourable

### EARLY CAREER

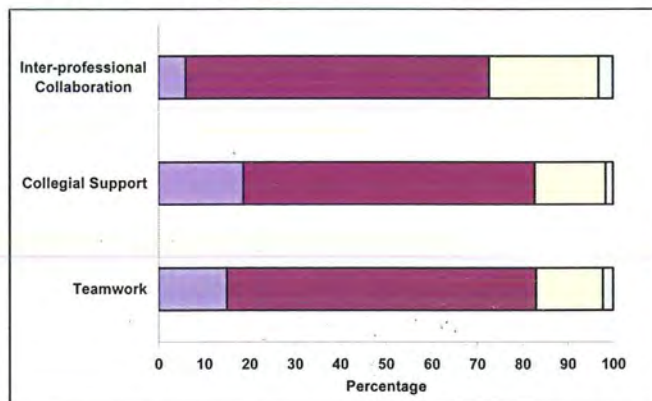


**Inter-professional Collaboration** - Over 70% of respondents feel that other health professionals hold reasonable expectations about what nurses can do, and invite their advice when appropriate.

**Collegial Support** - Nearly 85% of respondents report little friction in their work unit, regard their colleagues as civil, supportive and ready to lend a hand if needed.

**Teamwork** - Nearly all respondents consider that their work unit achieves its objectives, shares information and responds well to any unusual demands.

### ESTABLISHED CAREER

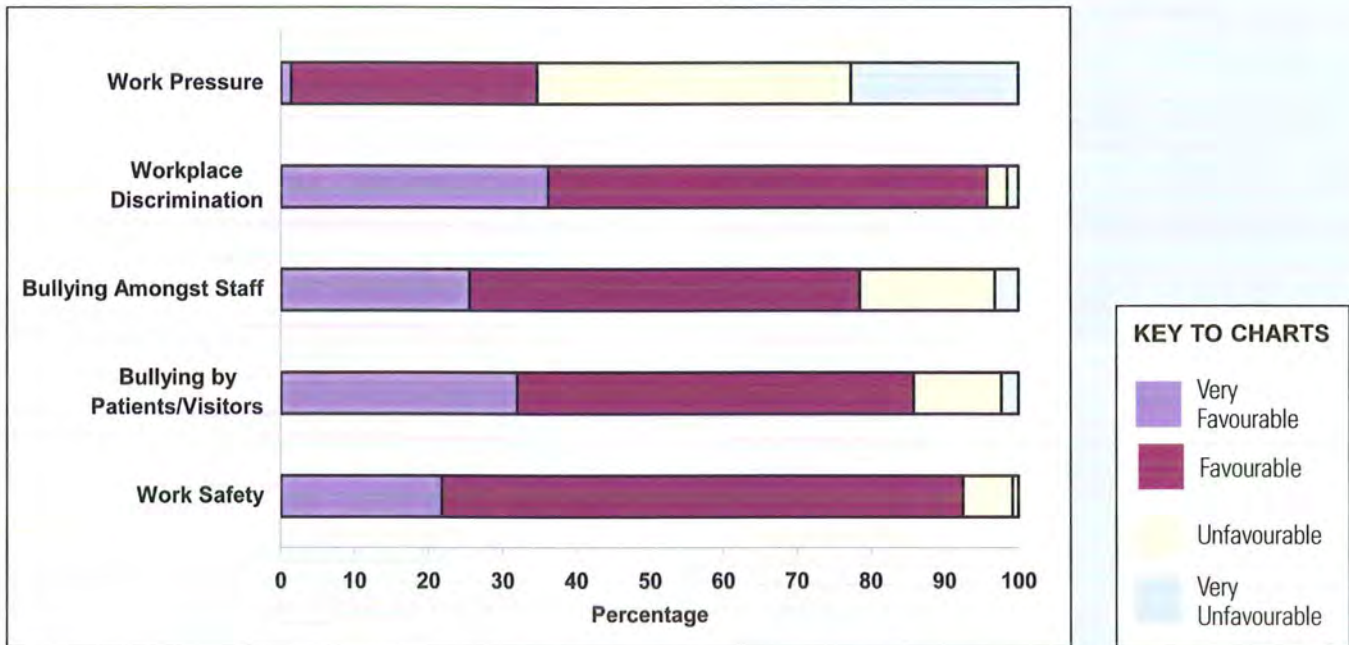


**Overall** - Nurses who responded to the survey mainly give favourable ratings for the way they support each other, the effectiveness of teamwork, and relationships with other health professionals.

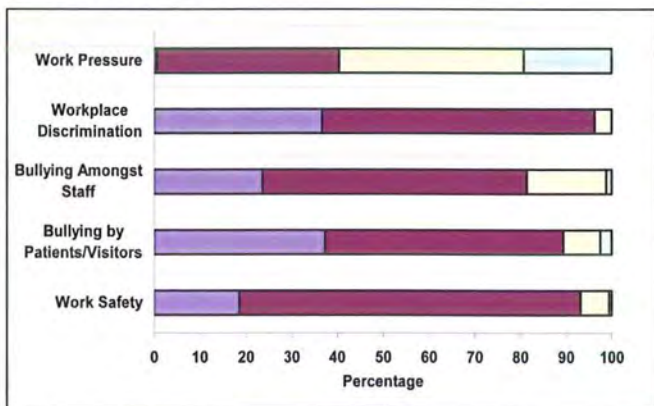


## WORK PRESSURE, WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION, BULLYING, WORK SAFETY

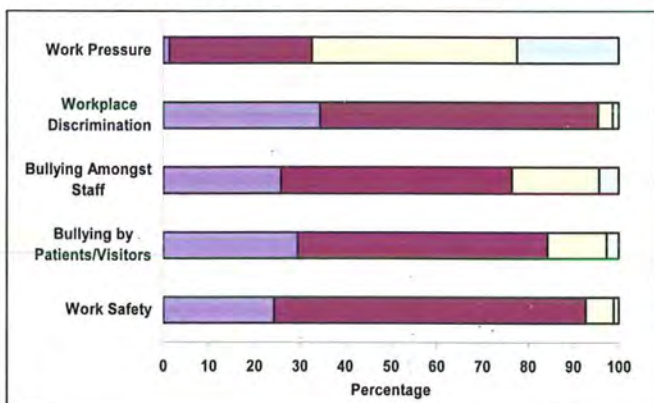
### OVERALL



### EARLY CAREER



### ESTABLISHED CAREER



**Work Pressure** - More than half of all respondents feel constant pressure and have difficulty in keeping up with their workload. Long-serving nurses were most badly affected.

**Workplace Discrimination** - Nearly all respondents feel there is no discrimination against them because of age, ethnic origin, race or family responsibilities.

**Bullying Amongst staff and/or Patients/Visitors** - Bullying of nurses by patients or visitors is not a significant issue but about 20% of respondents have concerns about bullying by other staff.

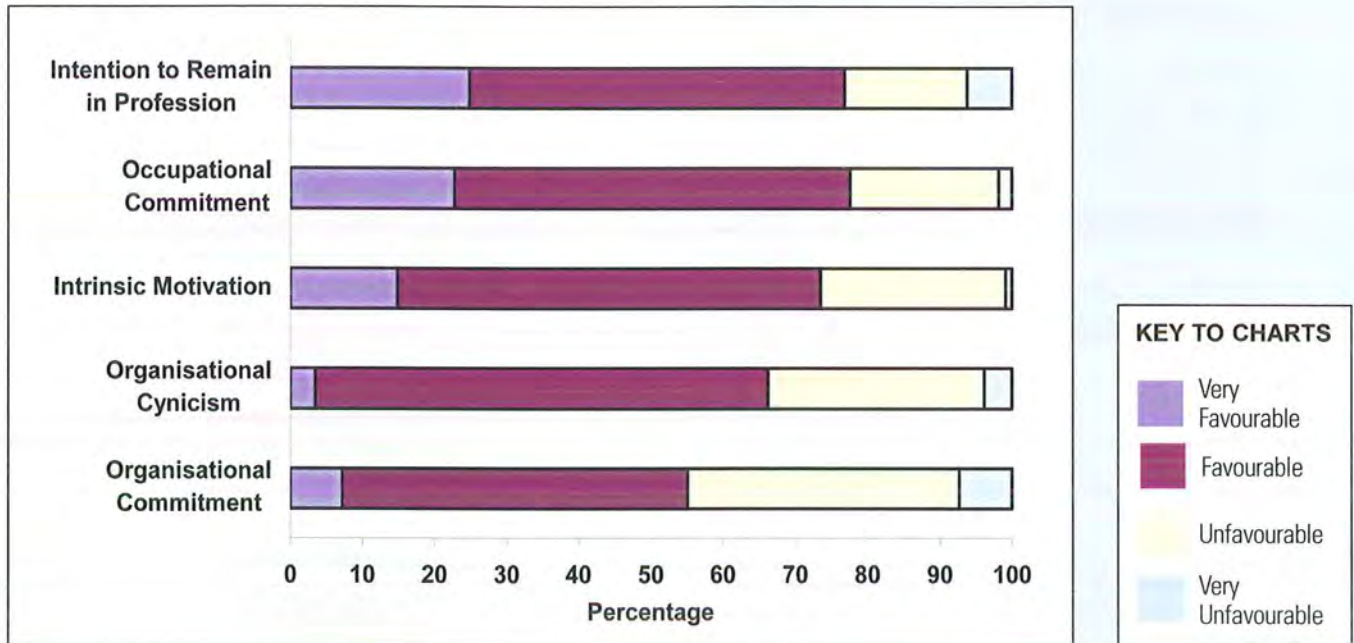
**Work Safety** - Ratings on safety at work are very favourable. Respondents consider that hazard reporting is good and corners are not cut on safety for the sake of convenience.

**Overall** - Nurses give largely favourable ratings for discrimination, safety and bullying. However, more than half of those responding to the survey find the pressures of work demanding.

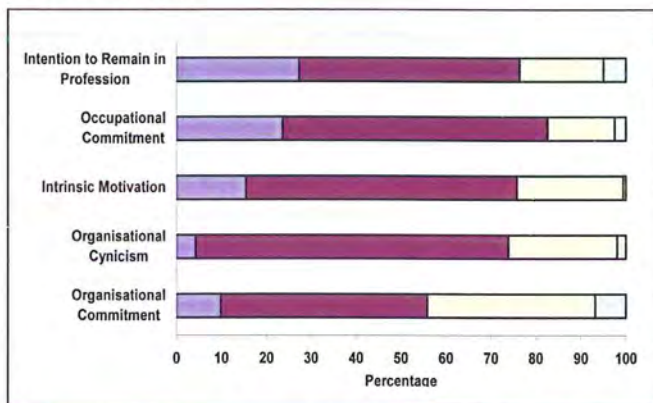


## INTENTION TO REMAIN IN PROFESSION, OCCUPATIONAL COMMITMENT, INTRINSIC MOTIVATION, ORGANISATIONAL CYNICISM, ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

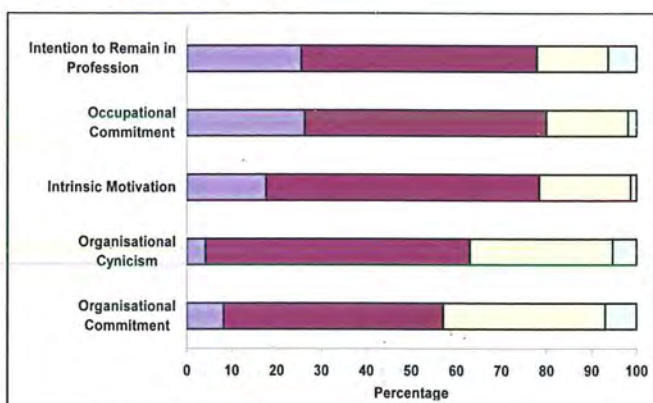
### OVERALL.



### EARLY CAREER



### ESTABLISHED CAREER



**Intention to Remain in the Profession** - Nearly 80% of respondents have no plans to leave the profession within the next year. The remainder are actively seeking another job, often think about quitting or report they are likely to leave soon.

**Occupational Commitment** - Pride in being a nurse and enthusiasm for the work are at a high level for all respondents.

**Intrinsic Motivation** - About 75% of all respondents report high levels of personal interest in their work, finding it absorbing and stimulating, and being prepared to take on extra duties.

**Organisational Cynicism** - Some two thirds of respondents consider that nursing expectations and rewards are well matched, promotions are fair and that their organisation is not excessively rigid.

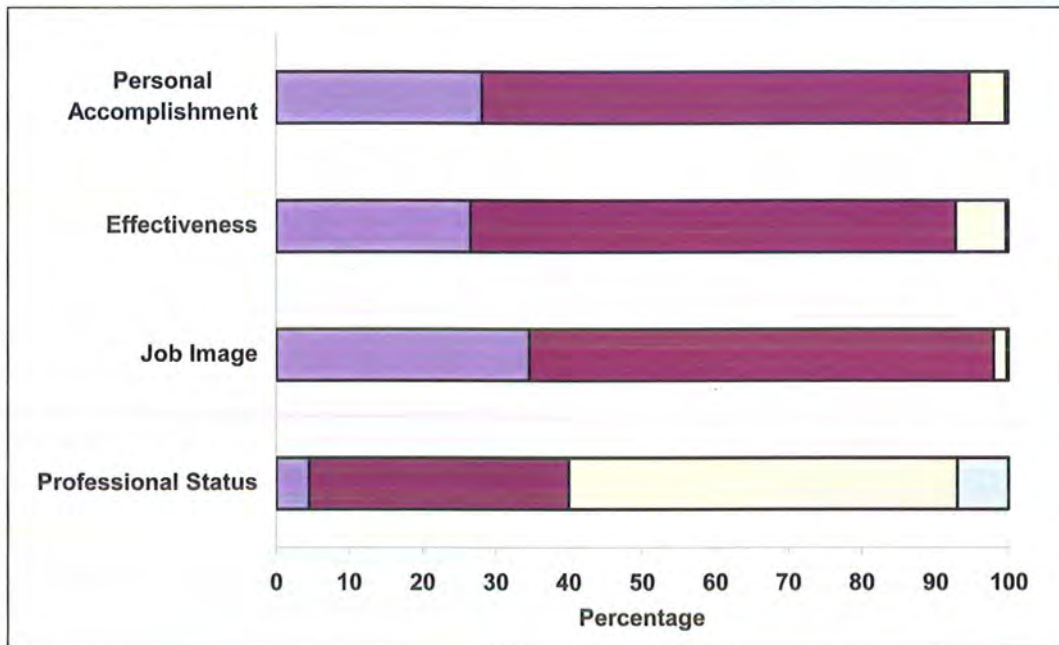
**Organisational Commitment** - Almost half of all respondents do not have a strong attachment or sense of belonging to their organisation.

**Overall** - Nurses who responded to the survey are, on the whole, strongly motivated and committed to their work, and keen to remain in their profession. However, many do not have the same degree of attachment to their place of work.



## PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT, WORK UNIT EFFECTIVENESS, JOB IMAGE, PROFESSIONAL STATUS

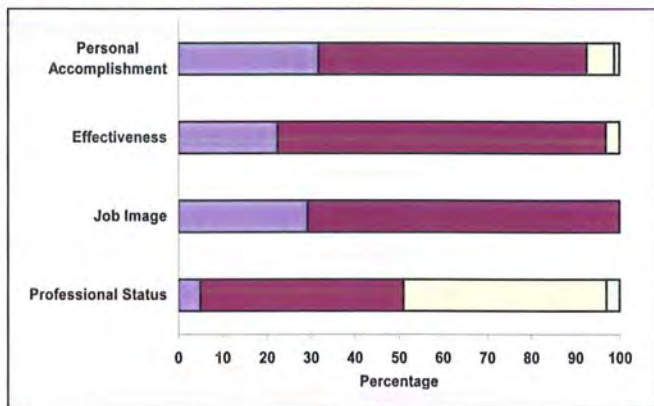
### OVERALL



#### KEY TO CHARTS

- Very Favourable
- Favourable
- Unfavourable
- Very Unfavourable

### EARLY CAREER



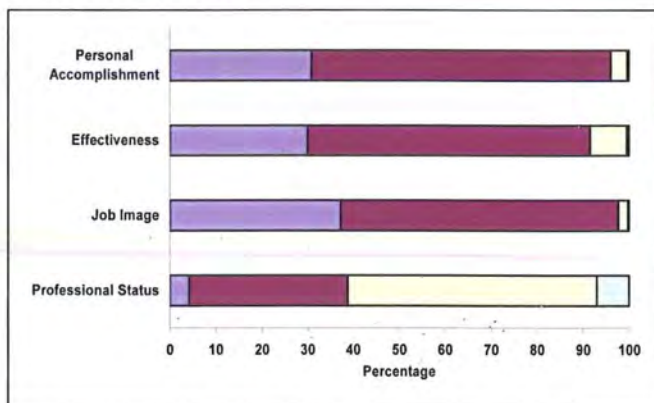
**Personal Accomplishment** - Nearly all respondents feel they make a difference to other people's lives, accomplish many useful things in their work and are appreciated by patients for what they do.

**Work Unit Effectiveness** - Over 90% of respondents see their work as important and strive to improve on standards that are already high.

**Job Image** - Almost unanimously, respondents feel they are regarded by the general public as helpful, trustworthy and dedicated.

**Professional Status** - About 60% of all respondents have unfavourable views about career progression, the status of their profession and whether being a nurse is a better job than most.

### ESTABLISHED CAREER

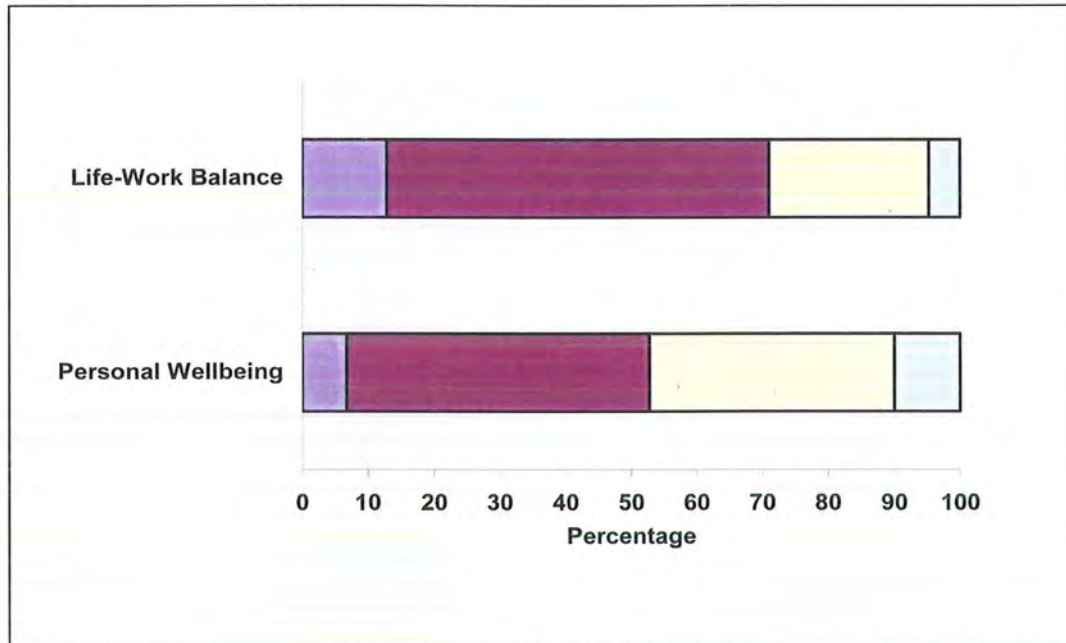


**Overall** - Nurses who responded to the survey are very positive about what they achieve personally, the value of nursing as a whole and their image with the general public. Despite these views, a majority of nurses have negative feelings about the status of their profession, and reservations about a career in nursing.



## LIFE-WORK BALANCE, PERSONAL WELLBEING

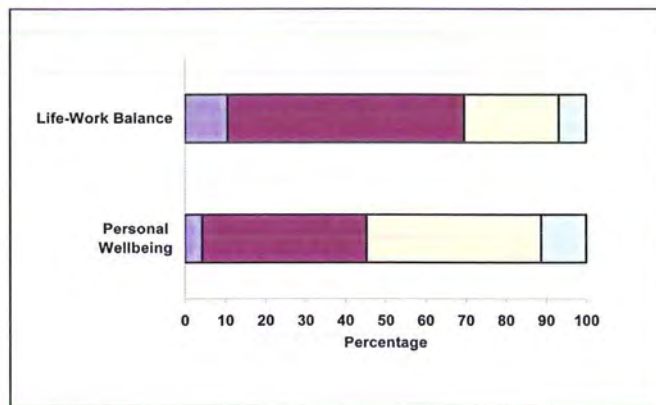
### OVERALL



**KEY TO CHARTS**

- Very Favourable
- Favourable
- Unfavourable
- Very Unfavourable

### EARLY CAREER

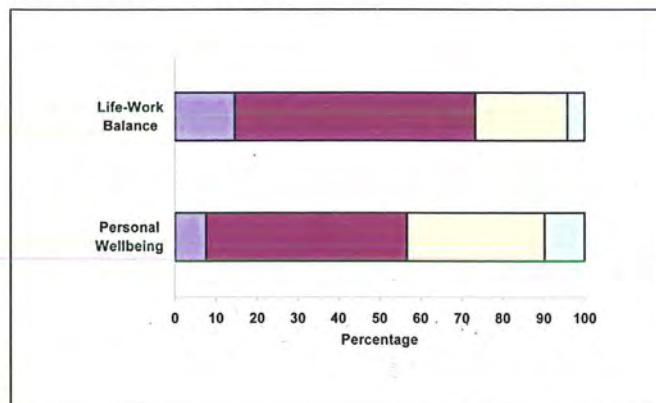


**Life-work Balance** - Establishing an appropriate balance between the demands of work and life outside of work appears to be achievable for a majority of long-serving respondents and those in the early career stage.

**Personal Wellbeing** - Early career respondents report adverse effects on personal wellbeing, such as difficulty in sleeping and emotional drain. Long-serving nurses cope slightly better, but many still experience the same effects.

**Overall** - An appropriate life-work balance appears to have been achieved for many of the nurses who responded to the survey. However, the demands of work are emotionally and physically draining for many nurses.

### ESTABLISHED CAREER





## TEACHERS

The teaching profession plays a critical role in shaping the nation's future through the provision of high quality, innovative education. The wellbeing of teachers and the profession as a whole are significant factors that contribute to the quality of education service delivery.

In an increasingly diverse and competitive job market, the attractiveness of teaching as an occupation and career and the retention of quality teaching staff in the profession are directly impacted on by perceptions of wellbeing. Within the (Western) Australian context the challenge for the government, Catholic and Independent sectors as employers is to target the factors known to contribute to teacher wellbeing and ensure these are sustained at high levels.

It is widely acknowledged that the teaching profession has undergone rapid and intensive changes over the last decade, including structural and curriculum reform, placing increasing pressure on teachers. Several research reports have highlighted general dissatisfaction for a number of wellbeing factors including administrative support, salary

levels, student discipline problems and workload. In *Australia's Teachers, Australia's Future (2003)*<sup>3</sup> teacher retention is reported as a serious challenge, which requires strategies such as sustained improvements in working conditions, support for beginning teachers, flexible workplaces and strong school-based leadership.

In recent years improvements in attracting people to the teaching profession have been attributed to improved remuneration, facilities and resources. Job satisfaction and retention have been underpinned by better access to technology, smaller class sizes and opportunities for professional development. Teachers are more likely to stay in a school because of its management, ethos and the general morale among staff members. Liu and Meyer (2005)<sup>4</sup> report that wellbeing is generally higher when teachers are praised, supported and feel autonomous.

In general the satisfaction of teaching comes from the intrinsic rewards of student and personal achievement. To sustain a strong and vibrant profession it is important for these motivating factors to be supported by highly professional and supportive work environments and community recognition.

Through their involvement in this research the three sectors and other key stakeholders have demonstrated a strong commitment to the establishment of a baseline for the monitoring of teacher wellbeing. The findings of this research provide an important springboard for innovative responses that will complement successful strategies and actions already established.



### SURVEY FINDINGS

The findings of the survey of teachers for the wellbeing factors are presented overleaf. There are three figures: one showing the results for the overall sample of survey respondents (3562 respondents); one for teachers who have been working in the profession for 5 years or less, referred to as the early career stage (589 respondents); and, one for teachers who have been working in the profession for 25 years or more, referred to as the established career stage (1010 respondents).

3. Committee for the Review of Teaching and Teacher Education 2003. *Australia's Teachers: Australia's Future-Advancing Innovation, Science, Technology and Mathematics*, Department of Education, Science and Training, Canberra.
4. Liu, X., & Meyer, J. (2005) Teachers' perceptions of their jobs: A multilevel analysis of the teacher follow-up survey for 1994-95. *Teachers College Record*, (5), pp.985-1003.



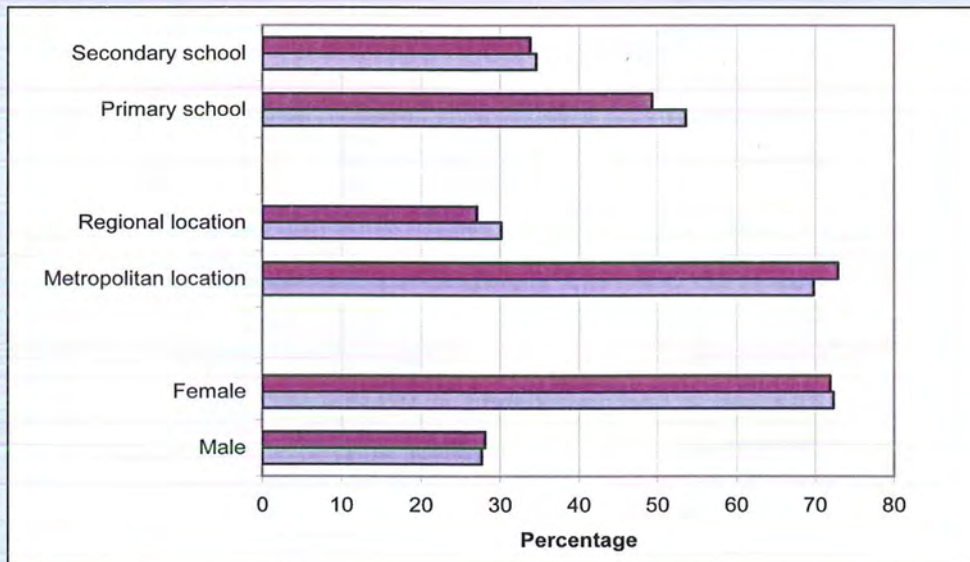
## PROFILE OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

3562 surveys were completed by teachers working within the government, Catholic and Independent schools sectors, representing a survey response rate of 40%. The following charts provide information about the school (primary, secondary), location, gender and age for the sample of respondents from the government and Catholic education sectors (combined) and the entire workforce of these two sectors. Workforce information was not available for the Independent schools sector.

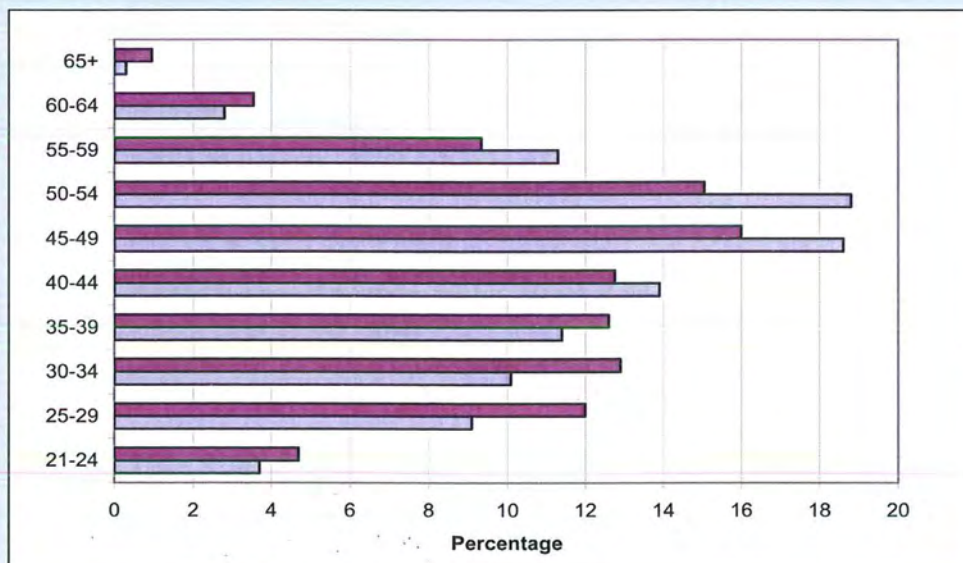
### KEY TO CHARTS

- Population
- Survey

### DEMOGRAPHIC



### AGE GROUP

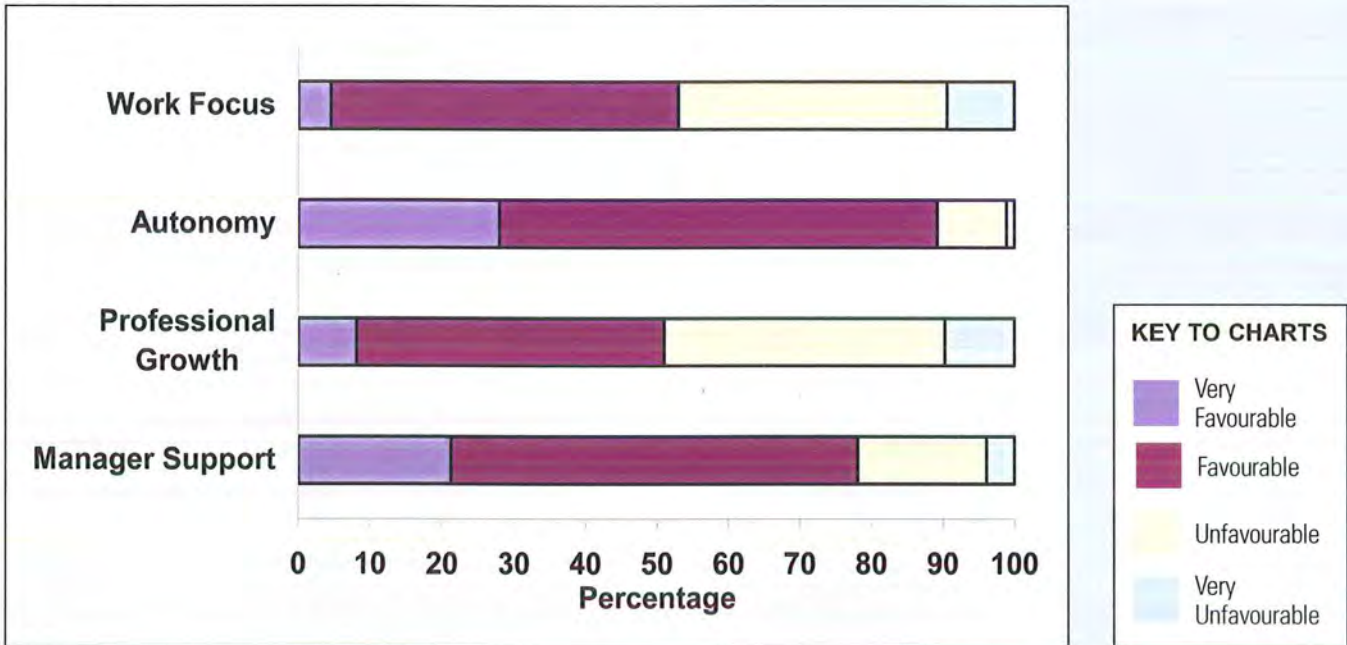




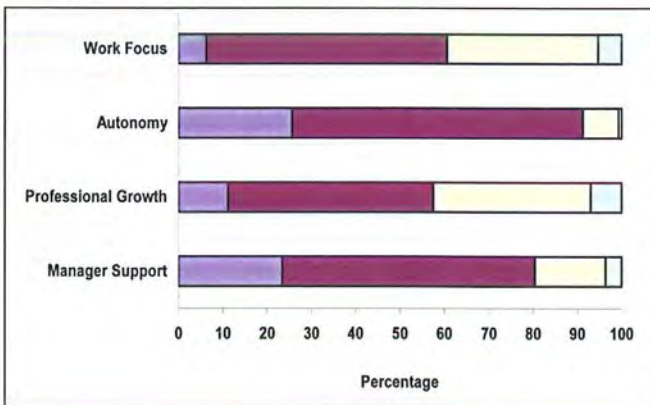


## WORK FOCUS, AUTONOMY, PROFESSIONAL GROWTH, MANAGER SUPPORT

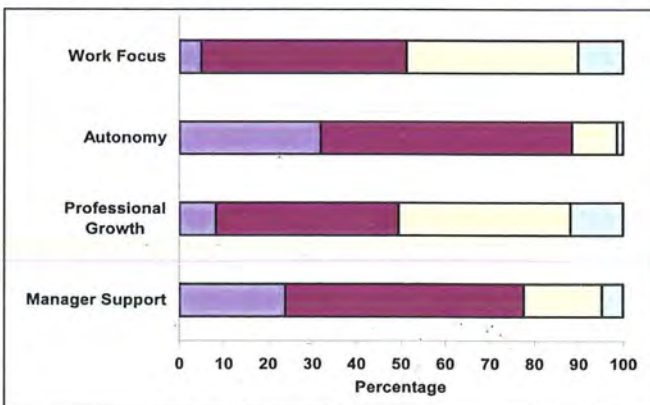
### OVERALL



### EARLY CAREER



### ESTABLISHED CAREER



**Work Focus** - Around half of all respondents feel that a reasonable amount of paper work is required of them, and they have adequate time and opportunity to discuss work-related issues with colleagues.

**Autonomy** - Nearly all respondents are satisfied with the level of autonomy they enjoy and are rarely given instructions that conflict with their professional judgement.

**Professional Growth** - Favourable and unfavourable views are equally divided about feedback on their performance, coaching and the interest taken in their professional growth by their line managers.

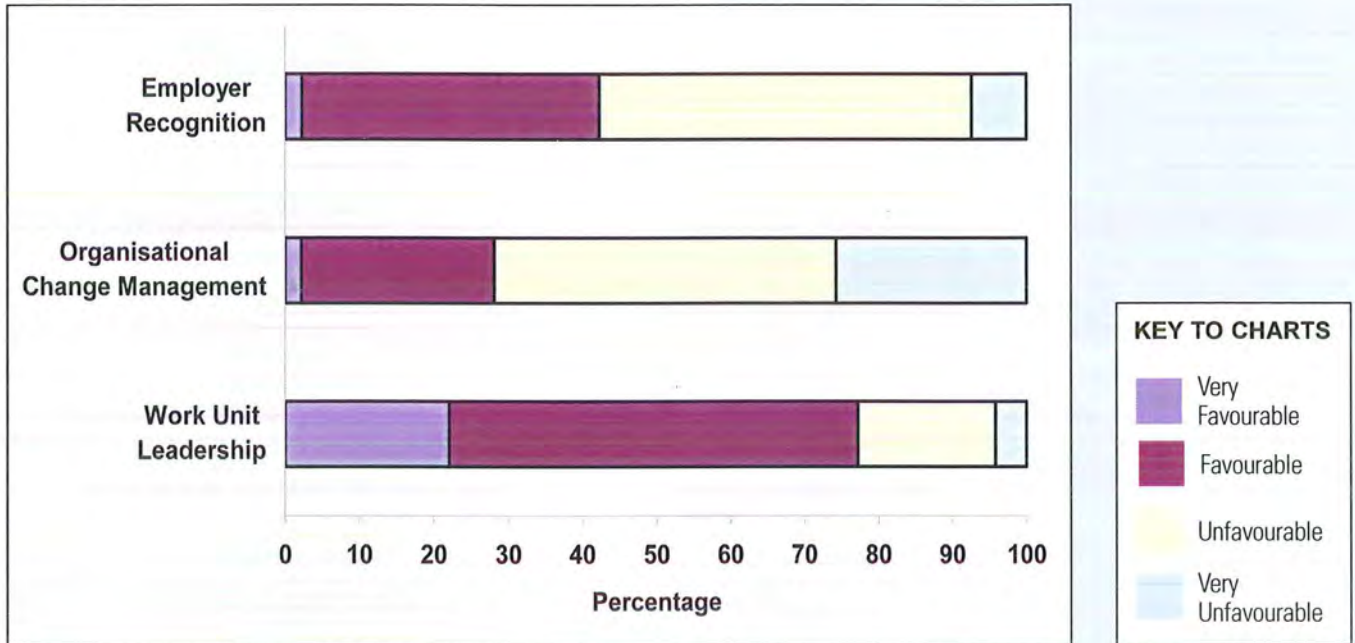
**Manager Support** - There is widespread satisfaction among respondents with the way line managers negotiate objectives, encourage teamwork and provide information.

**Overall** - Most teachers who responded to the survey enjoy the autonomy of the classroom and the support of their line managers. Further, the opportunities teachers have to discuss work-related issues with colleagues are adequate. Respondents have mixed feelings about the amount of paper work required of them, and their line manager's responses to their professional growth.

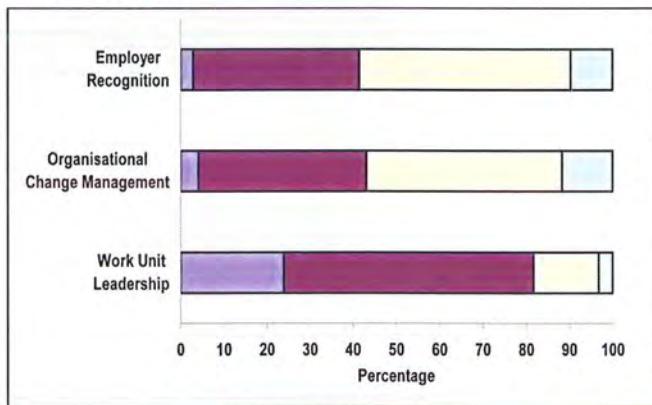


## EMPLOYER RECOGNITION, ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT, WORK UNIT LEADERSHIP

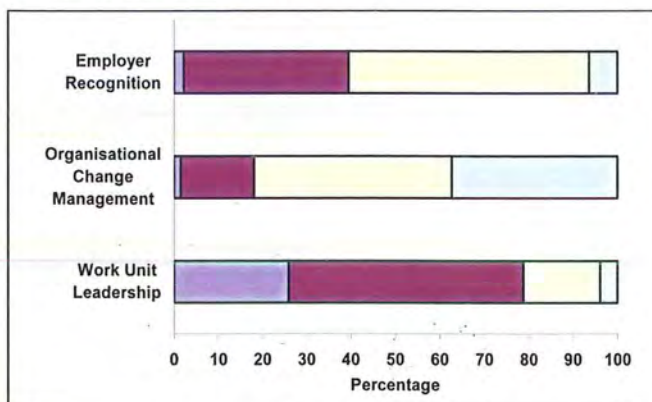
### OVERALL



### EARLY CAREER



### ESTABLISHED CAREER



**Employer Recognition** - Just over half of respondents hold unfavourable views about job security, salaries and the recognition of outstanding work by their employing organisation.

**Organisational Change Management** - More than 80% of long-serving respondents think that change is not well managed by their employing organisation. The ratings of early career respondents are not as harsh, but the majority are critical of what has been done, the outcomes of change and the resources made available.

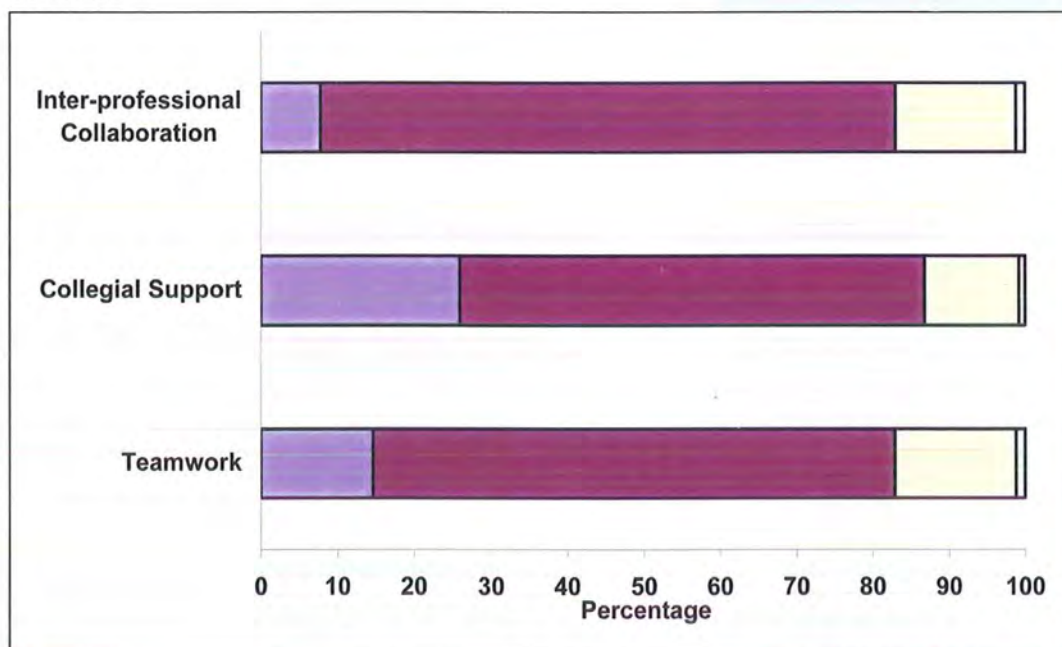
**Work Unit Leadership** - About 80% of respondents feel that principals set clear directions, include staff in decision making, foster collaboration and recognise good individual performance.

**Overall** - Teachers who responded to the survey mainly hold favourable views about the management of their immediate work environment. Less favourable attitudes are evident toward their employing organisation.

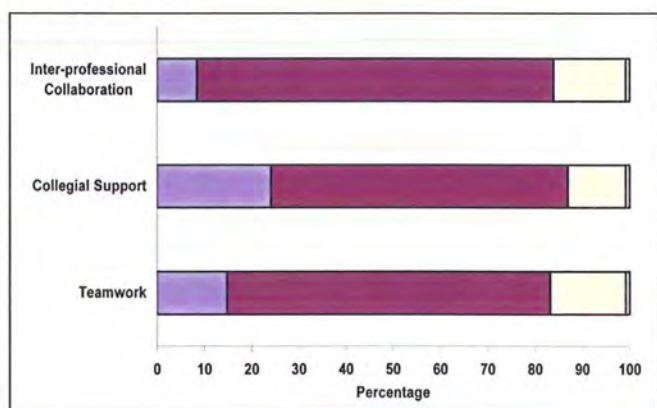


## INTER-PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION, COLLEGIAL SUPPORT, TEAMWORK

### OVERALL



### EARLY CAREER



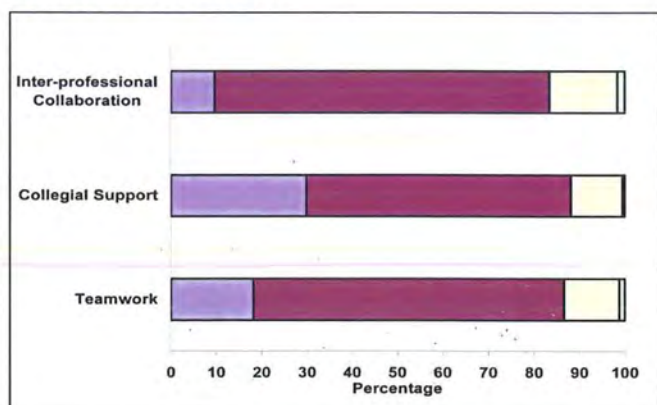
**Inter-professional Collaboration** - A large majority of respondents hold favourable attitudes toward their dealings with other professionals involved with schools.

**Collegial Support** - Nearly 90% of respondents regard their colleagues within a school as strongly supportive.

**Teamwork** - 80% of respondents consider their school achieves its objectives, shares information and responds well to any unusual demands

**Overall** - For most teachers who responded to the survey, their schools foster strong teamwork, and provide a cooperative workplace where there is professional respect and a willingness to lend a hand to colleagues.

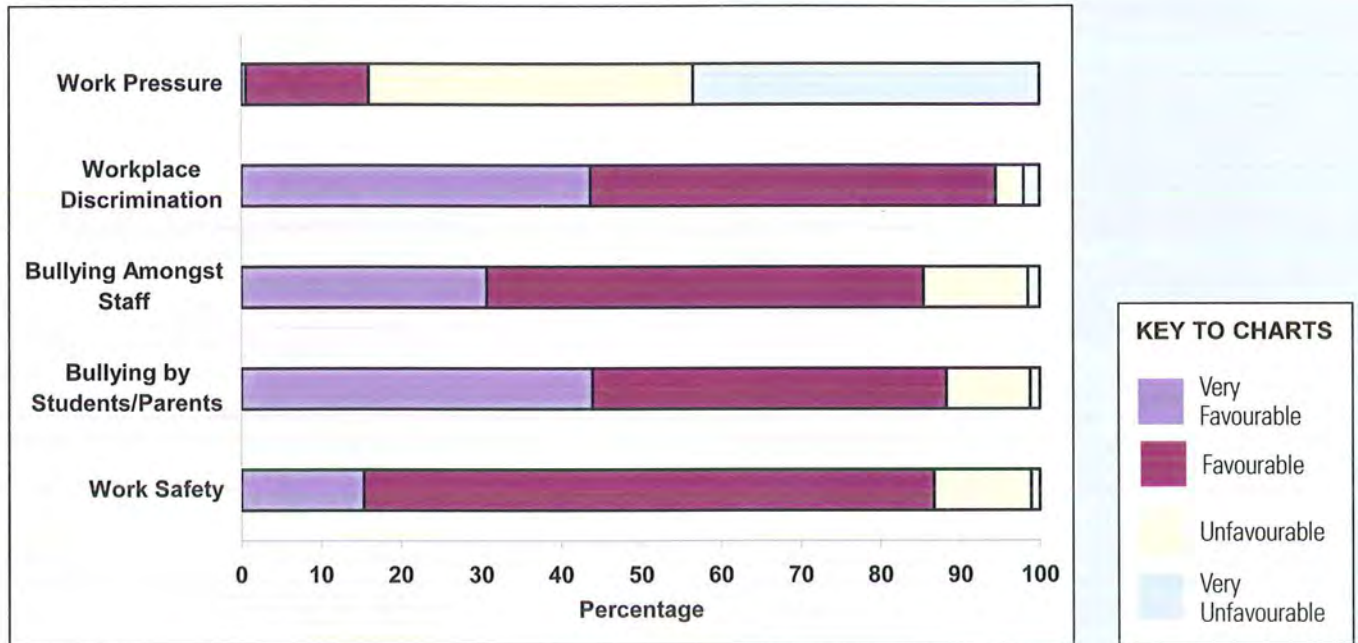
### ESTABLISHED CAREER



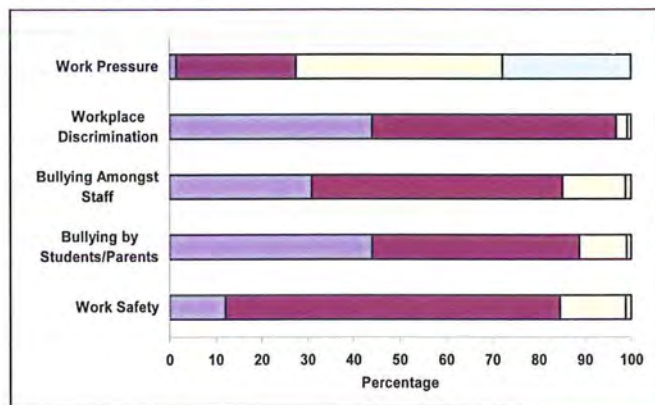


## WORK PRESSURE, WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION, BULLYING, WORK SAFETY

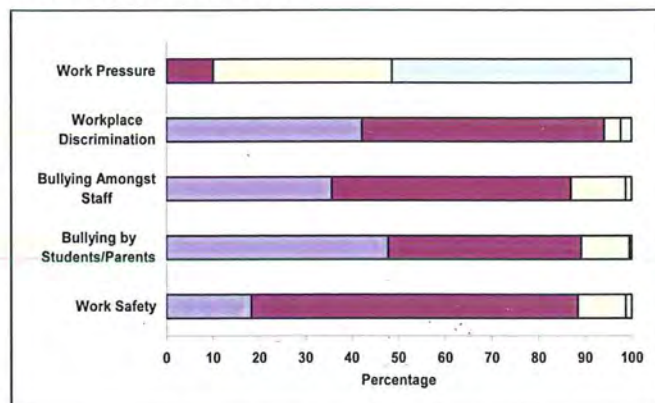
### OVERALL



### EARLY CAREER



### ESTABLISHED CAREER



**Work Pressure** - More than 80% of respondents report constant pressure and difficulties in coping with the workload. This seems to be more of an issue for long-serving respondents.

**Workplace Discrimination** - Almost no respondents feel they are discriminated against because of age, ethnicity, race or family responsibilities.

**Bullying Amongst Staff and/or by Students/Parents** - Most respondents think that bullying attempts by parents, students or other staff will not be tolerated in their schools, and will be dealt with appropriately if it occurs.

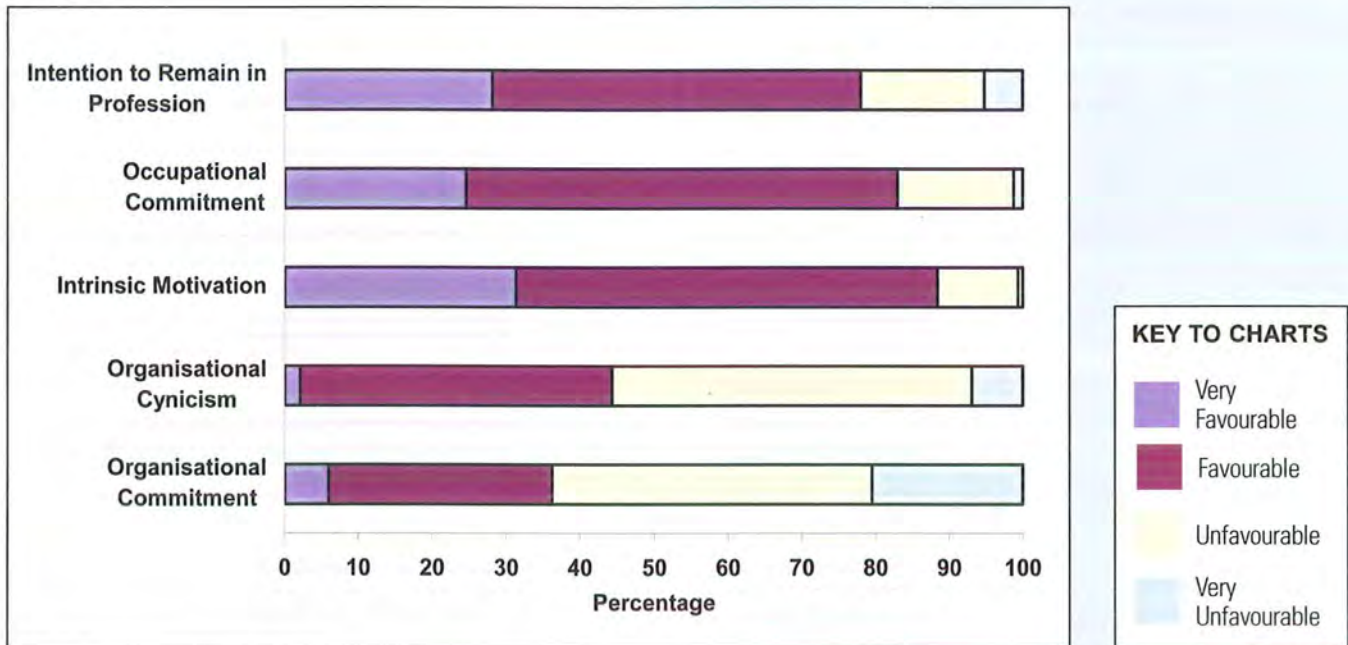
**Work Safety** - A large majority of respondents are happy with arrangements in their schools for reporting potential safety hazards and always taking a 'safety first' approach.

**Overall** - Teachers who responded to the survey have few concerns about bullying, discrimination or workplace safety. However, a majority did report feeling there is constant pressure to keeping working and difficulties in keeping up with their workload. This is more evident among long-serving teachers.

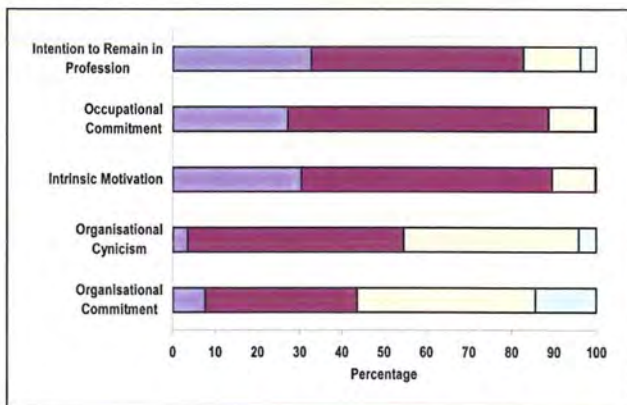


## INTENTION TO REMAIN IN PROFESSION, OCCUPATIONAL COMMITMENT, INTRINSIC MOTIVATION, ORGANISATIONAL CYNICISM, ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

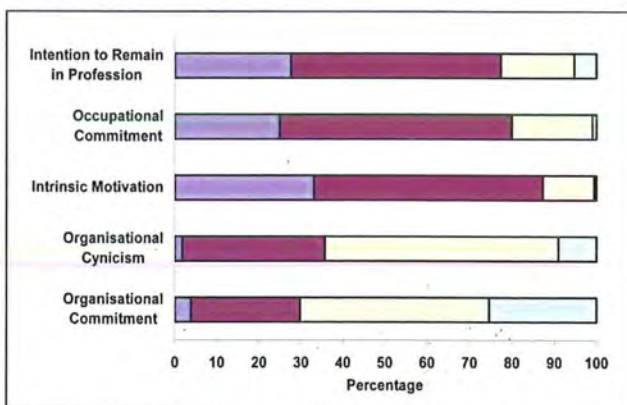
### OVERALL



### EARLY CAREER



### ESTABLISHED CAREER



**Intention to Remain in the Profession** - Nearly 80% of respondents have no plans to leave the teaching profession within the next year.

**Occupational Commitment** - Pride in being a teacher and enthusiasm for the work is high for all respondents, especially so for those with less than five years experience.

**Intrinsic Motivation** - About 90% of respondents, whether new or long-serving, have a high level of personal involvement in their work and find it stimulating.

**Organisational Cynicism** - More than half of all respondents feel their employing organisation expects one thing of employees but rewards another, and may criticise its policies and practices to people outside of the organisation. Early career teachers who responded to the survey appear to be less cynical about their employers than their long-serving colleagues.

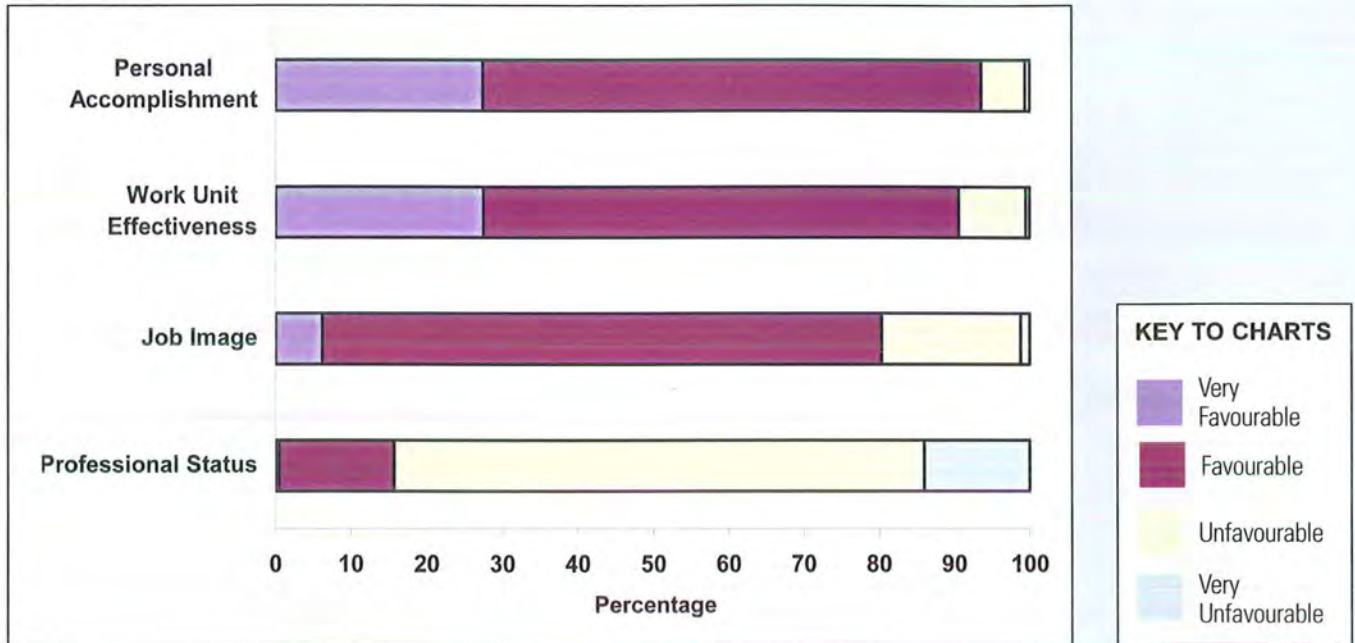
**Organisational Commitment** - The attachment of respondents to their employing organisation is low. More than two thirds of long-serving teachers report little attachment to their employing organisation.

**Overall** - Most teachers who responded to the survey, whether new or long-serving, are strongly motivated, committed to their profession and unlikely to look for different work. Positive feelings toward the employing organisation are weaker.

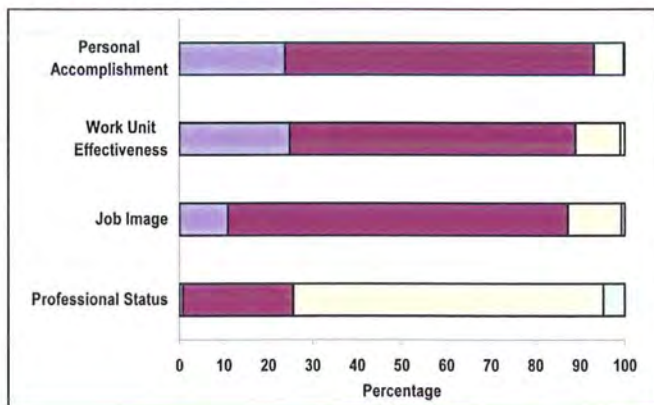


## PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT, WORK UNIT EFFECTIVENESS, JOB IMAGE, PROFESSIONAL STATUS

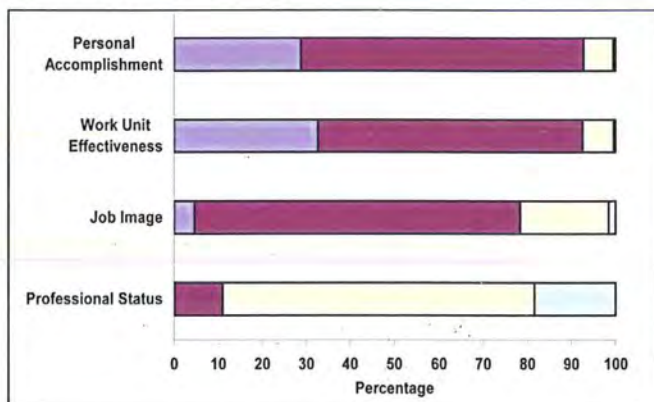
### OVERALL



### EARLY CAREER



### ESTABLISHED CAREER



**Personal Accomplishment** - Nearly all respondents believe they make a beneficial difference to the lives of other people. The sense of personal accomplishment is as strong in long-serving staff as those near the start of their careers.

**Work Unit Effectiveness** - About 90% of respondents feel they play an important role in their school and that staff teach to a high standard and strive to do even better.

**Job Image** - Almost 90% of early career respondents and just under 80% of long-serving respondents feel they have the reputation of being approachable, helpful, trustworthy and dedicated in the eyes of the wider community.

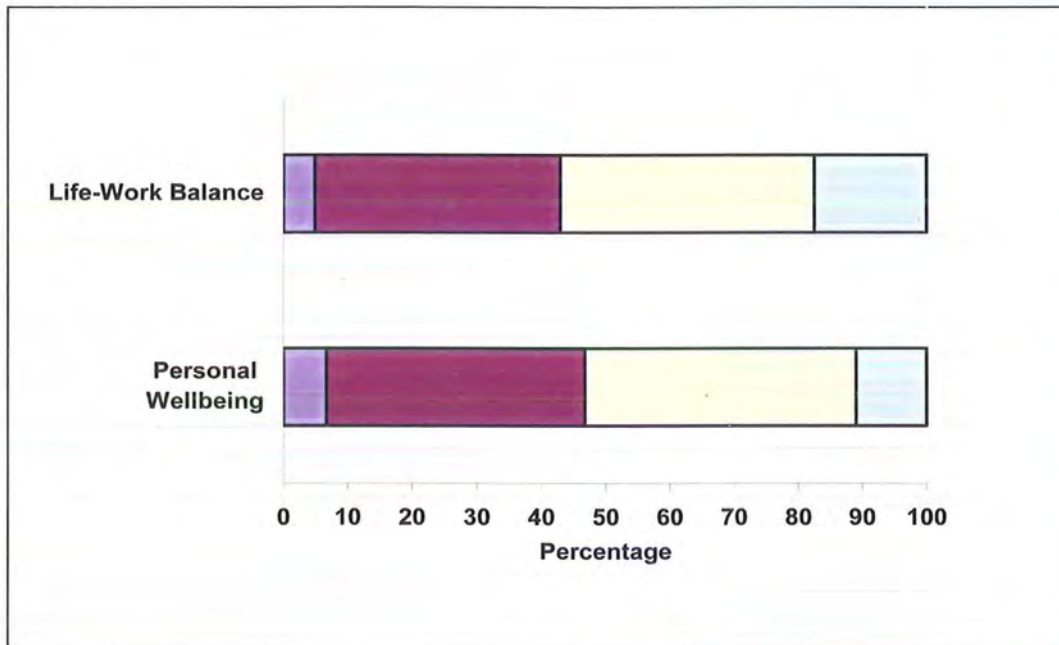
**Professional Status** - Respondents have unfavourable views of the status and prestige of their profession. Less than 10% of long serving respondents think that being a teacher compares well with other careers or that parents would support a child's choice to be a teacher.

**Overall** - Teachers who responded to the survey are confident about the value of their work, but they see their profession as low in status and one which may not be highly regarded by young people or their parents at the time when careers are being chosen.

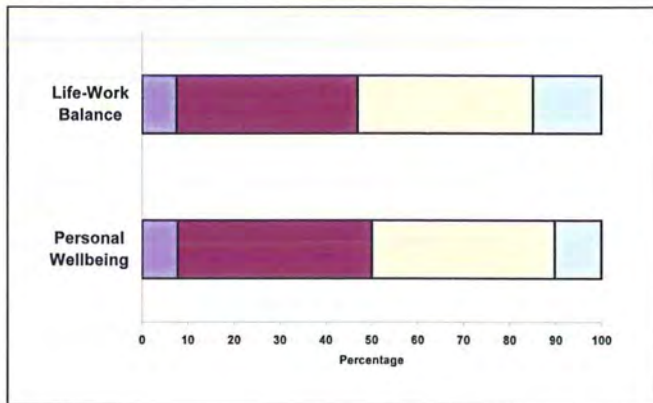


## LIFE-WORK BALANCE, PERSONAL WELLBEING

### OVERALL



### EARLY CAREER

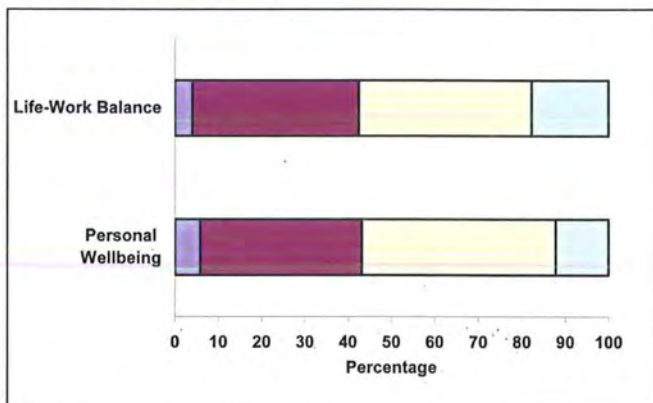


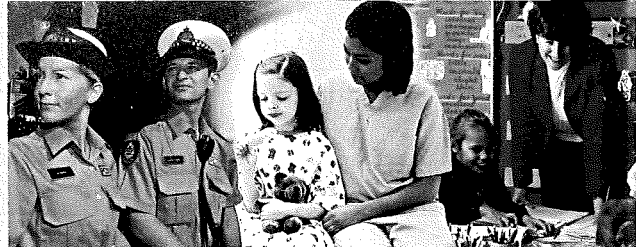
**Life-work Balance** - Establishing an appropriate balance between the demands of work and life outside of work appears to be problematic for long-serving respondents as well as those with in the early career stage in teaching.

**Personal Wellbeing** - There are similar numbers of teachers who do, or do not feel, their work drains them emotionally and affects their sleep.

**Overall** - An appropriate life-work balance does not appear to have been achieved for a majority of the teachers who responded to the survey. The demands of work are emotionally and physically draining for many teachers.

### ESTABLISHED CAREER





## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings of this survey indicate that, in general, respondents have more positive feelings about their jobs and work units than for the larger organisation of which they are a part. Further, long-serving individuals tend to give slightly lower ratings on wellbeing factors, where a length of service effect is noticeable for particular professions.

### WELLBEING RATINGS

#### WORK FOCUS, AUTONOMY, PROFESSIONAL GROWTH, MANAGER SUPPORT

- Of the three groups, teachers are most concerned about the amount of time spent on paperwork and administration that takes them away from their frontline work.
- The majority of survey respondents consider they are given sufficient direct control of their work, with managers supporting, rather than directing them.
- Attitudes to professional growth issues are generally not positive, especially among individuals with a long record of service.
- Most individuals are reasonably satisfied with the support and interest shown in them by their line managers.

#### EMPLOYER RECOGNITION, ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT, WORK UNIT LEADERSHIP

- Many respondents in all three professions report being dissatisfied with their salaries and a lack of recognition of outstanding service by their employing organisation.
- Employing organisations are perceived as lacking responsiveness to work unit issues, and change management is seen as problematic.
- The quality of leadership in work units is generally rated positively.

#### INTER-PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION, COLLEGIAL SUPPORT, TEAMWORK

- Respondents in all three professions provide largely favourable ratings regarding collaboration with other professionals, support from colleagues and teamwork.

#### WORK PRESSURE, WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION, BULLYING, WORK SAFETY

- A high proportion of survey respondents report finding it hard to cope with the continuous pressure of work.
- Police, nurses and teachers, in general, do not feel discriminated against on grounds of age, race, ethnicity or family responsibilities.
- The majority of respondents consider that the handling of work safety issues, bullying by clients or bullying among staff is addressed appropriately.

#### INTENTION TO REMAIN IN PROFESSION, OCCUPATIONAL COMMITMENT, INTRINSIC MOTIVATION, ORGANISATIONAL CYNICISM, ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

- Most police, nurses and teachers, whether new or long-serving, feel strongly motivated and committed towards their jobs, and most respondents were not thinking about leaving their profession or actively seeking a different type of job in the short term.
- The level of cynicism toward the organisations employing police, nurses and teachers is generally high. This is also reflected in the relatively low levels of attachment to these organisations.

#### PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT, EFFECTIVENESS, JOB IMAGE, PROFESSIONAL STATUS

- The large majority of police, nurses and teachers report strong feelings of personal accomplishment from doing important work to a high standard.
- Police, nurses and teachers mostly consider that they are seen as useful, trustworthy and dedicated.
- Many respondents feel that their profession does not enjoy the status it deserves and does not compare well with other job opportunities.

#### LIFE-WORK BALANCE, PERSONAL WELLBEING

- Many police, nurses and teachers appear to have difficulty achieving an appropriate life-work balance. They also report unfavourable feelings regarding their personal wellbeing.





## LENGTH OF SERVICE AND WELLBEING RATINGS

The differences in wellbeing ratings between individuals who have up to five years service, or at least 25 years service, are generally small, but there are exceptions.

- Long-serving staff in all three professions report less favourable ratings for the support given by managers than those who are newer to the profession.
- Those newer to the profession feel more positively about professional growth than those with 25 years or more of service.
- The extent to which individuals have the opportunity to focus on core work (as opposed to 'paper work', for example), increases with length of service for police, but decreases for teachers. The implication is that police are less burdened with paperwork and clerical duties when they remain in the force, while long-serving teachers receive a higher administrative workload.
- The management of change by the employing organisation is rated less favourably by long-serving staff in all three professions. Police and teachers with at least 25 years service think poorly of the way change is managed.
- The perceived pressure of work increases with length of service for police, nurses and teachers.
- Long-serving police and teachers feel more drained by their work than those in the early career stage.
- A relatively high level of cynicism toward employing organisations is evident, particularly among police and teachers. Cynicism about organisational policies and practices and whether staff are treated fairly, worsens with length of service for all three professions.
- Pride in the profession and enthusiasm about the work decreases slightly for all three professions but remains high for long-serving staff.
- Long-serving staff in all the professions hold less favourable views about their status and prestige and the attractiveness of their profession compared with other opportunities.

## SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN THE WELLBEING OF THE POLICING, NURSING AND TEACHING PROFESSIONS

Policing, nursing and teaching differ in the content of individual jobs, the size and operation of work units and employing organisations, and the policies and practices in force. The wellbeing factors we have surveyed will not be of equal importance to the three professions, or to people at different levels of experience or seniority. It is unreasonable to expect that all wellbeing factors can be improved for all people at the same time. Practices that may be beneficial for an organisation as a whole, may be unwelcome to some of its parts.

The wellbeing ratings of this research do not directly indicate what should be done. Instead, they offer an initial insight into issues that should be examined more closely. We cannot be certain of the precise causes of unfavourable responses from so many people doing different jobs in different conditions. However, we can highlight significant findings from the survey and set the wheels of thought in motion.

The following table summarises the similarities and differences in the ratings across the three professions. This information is based on the percentage of all respondents in the profession, giving 'very favourable' or 'favourable' responses.

The quartiles in which these percentages belong are colour-coded as follows:

Upper quartile	Greater than 75%
Mid-upper quartile	50% to 75%
Mid-lower quartile	25% to less than 50%
Lower quartile	Less than 25%

## 2005 Survey Report on the Wellbeing of the Professions: Policing, Nursing and Teaching



### PERCENT OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS IN EACH PROFESSION PROVIDING VERY FAVOURABLE OR FAVOURABLE RATINGS FOR EACH WELLBEING FACTOR

WELLBEING FACTOR	POLICE	NURSES	TEACHERS
Work Focus	72	66	53
Autonomy	75	83	89
Professional Growth	48	63	51
Manager Support	76	75	78
Employer Recognition	48	57	42
Change Management	23	53	28
Work Unit Leadership	60	64	77
Inter-professional Collaboration	85	72	83
Collegial Support	85	84	87
Teamwork	85	85	83
Work Pressure	34	34	16
Discrimination	93	96	95
Bullying among Staff	73	79	85
Bullying by Clients	-	86	88
Work Safety	73	93	87
Intention to Stay in Profession	73	77	78
Occupational Commitment	80	78	83
Intrinsic Motivation	74	73	88
Organisational Cynicism	33	66	44
Organisational Commitment	64	55	36
Personal Accomplishment	80	95	94
Work Unit Effectiveness	87	93	91
Job Image	76	98	80
Professional Status	31	40	16
Life-work Balance	53	71	43
Personal Wellbeing	57	53	47



## 2005 Survey Report on the Wellbeing of the Professions: Policing, Nursing and Teaching

### WELLBEING FACTORS WITH POSITIVE RATINGS

There are several highly positive findings about wellbeing in policing, nursing and teaching.

- Most police, nurses and teachers are strongly motivated and intend to continue working in their chosen profession. They are personally fulfilled by their work and the benefits they bring to the community. They also feel they are held in high regard for their approachability, trustworthiness and dedication.
- Workgroup cooperation received favourable ratings in all three professions. The roles of team members are understood and respected, and teams rise to the challenges of unusual demands. Colleagues can be relied on to lend a helping hand when asked.
- Most police, nurses and teachers feel they have an appropriate degree of direct control over their work. They are mainly positive about the encouragement, feedback and support given by their line managers.
- Feeling discriminated against, on the grounds of age, ethnicity, race or family responsibilities was not reported as a common problem. However it is important for those individuals who do feel discriminated against.
- Attempted bullying or intimidation by clients may happen in practice, but police, nurses and teachers feel they are well-supported if it occurs. Bullying by colleagues is not reported as a common problem, however, again it is important for those who do experience it.

### WELLBEING FACTORS WITH LOW OR MODERATE RATINGS

Other findings of the survey are less reassuring. When police, nurses and teachers look beyond their own jobs and work units, there are concerns.

- About two thirds of police, nurses and teachers are uncomfortable with the pressure of work. They report feeling emotionally drained, have difficulty in sleeping and often feel reluctant to face the demands of the working day. Many police, nurses and teachers also appear to have difficulty achieving an appropriate life-work balance.

- Individuals in all three professions regard their prestige, status and earnings as being lower than they deserve for the importance of their work. Many no longer see their profession as attractive compared with other careers. They feel that parents would be unlikely to encourage their children to enter policing, nursing or teaching.
- The management of change is widely viewed as problematic. An implication of the survey findings is that organisation-wide change is not perceived as fully considering the impact on individuals and work units, and is unlikely to be fully supported.
- A consequence of these unfavourable views is that while police, nurses and teachers feel attachment to their work and close colleagues, they appear to have less attachment to their employing organisations.
- Many respondents are sufficiently disenchanted with their organisation to speak critically of it to outsiders. Many appear to feel that rewards and recognition by their employing organisation do not match their personal contributions.

### IN CONCLUSION

The organisations contributing to this research have, by their participation, already shown strong interest in the wellbeing of their profession. We encourage them to build on what has been achieved to date, and to adopt wellbeing monitoring as an important and constructive element of future efforts in strengthening workplaces and these professions more generally. One of the main purposes of this research is to set benchmarks for the attitudes police, nurses and teachers hold about their occupation and workplace. It is too early to set meaningful targets for each factor. The measures presented here are a starting point for further work.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**

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