Oscar Kilo

Policing through a pandemic: the impact of technology on wellbeing

SURVEY ANALYSIS

24 July 2020
590 respondents as of July 24, 2020
Mostly UK, Police Officers and Staff

**What is your job role?**

- **Officer**: 47%
- **Staff**: 49%
- Contractor / Criminalist / Trustee of a police charity / Force Medical Adviser (Dr) / Police counselor / Chaplain / Support staff / Nurse / IT Security Support / Public servant - policy, legislation / Support Staff third party / Occupational Health Advisor: 3%
- Other (please specify): 1%

**Where do you work?**

- UK: 97%
- Other countries: Guernsey / Gibraltar / Australia / Canada / USA / Ireland / Norway / Portugal / Netherlands / France
Policing through a pandemic: a mostly positive experience, helped by tech

Has the COVID pandemic affected the way you work?
Answered: 586 Skipped: 2

- Yes, for the better: 50%
- Yes, for the worse: 35%
- No change: 15%

How has technology helped you since the beginning of the pandemic?

- It helped me keep doing a good job despite pandemic constraints: 37%
- It helped the team I belong to remain productive: 16%
- It created opportunities for innovation in my work: 12%
- I didn't particularly rely on technology: 12%
- Technology didn't help, it felt more like an additional burden: 9%
- It made me feel connected with others: 13%
Which technology did you use?

What is mentioned

- Laptop
- Videoconferencing: Teams, Skype, Cisco, Zoom
- Database
- File transfer
- VDI access
- Connection, WIFI
- Printer
- Phone, email
- RSA token
- Lync
- MDTs
- Electronic signature
- Electronic statements
- Oscar Kilo website, webinars, Mindfit Cop app
- Online crime reporting
- Headspace app
- Online surveys
- Podcasts
- Voice technology
- Backup Buddy UK app

What is NOT mentioned

- More apps
- Tablet
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Facebook
- Instagram
- TikTok
- Portable computer & handheld device enabling to record witness statements without having to return to the office
- Forms available on handheld device
- Automation of repetitive tasks
- Low contact screening systems
- Digital evidence management system to store and share our CCTV evidence in a central place
- Fingerprint technology
- Remote dispatching tech
- Crowd control tech
The negative experience of tech

"Technology didn't help, it felt more like an additional burden" and "I didn't particularly rely on technology" (with negative comments): 13% of respondents. Police officers & staff alike

- **Insufficient support**: from tech experts or from leadership
- **Tech-mediated contact less efficient** than face-to-face
- **Additional work**: more meetings, more tech issues to handle, slower work, new work (counting, stats...), less resources b/c colleagues redeployed, longer work hours
- **Tech hurdles**: slow, not user-friendly, no interoperability esp. with external partners, connection issues, not enough tech for everyone, screen fatigue
- **Environment hurdles**: changes in legislation & processes, bureaucracy, lack of PPE (now resolved), courts having to be suspended...
- **Work from home stress**: special conditions not well taken into account, material conditions not great, young children to care for, feeling that "I live at work"
- **Excluded me**: I didn't have access to tech / work-from-home [Staff & officers alike], sometimes unfairly
- **Felt unsafe**: I had to go to the office
The positive experience of tech

"Technology helped me keep doing a good job despite pandemic constraints / helped the team I belong to remain productive / made me feel connected with others / created opportunities for innovation in my work”

Tech was a very positive or mostly positive thing for 79% of respondents (467); Officers and Staff alike

Out of them, 27% had seen a degradation of their work experience due to Covid

- **Work from home => Improved quality of life**: less commute, more time with family, felt safe, time to relax / exercise, saved ££
- **Adequate tools**: laptop, MS Teams… *[But uneven]*. Some were already equipped, others had a rough fist ~3 weeks
- **More effective**: more focused, more productive, better access to information, quieter work environment, more innovative
- **In control of my work**: I log off when I want, organise my work as I wish
- **Good support**, either received or provided to others
- **Greener**: less pollution, better for the planet
What else you said

“Not commuting in and out of the office has saved me 2.5 hours a day, I used this time to produce work”

“I'm now stress free! :) No more having to wake up at 5:30am being forced to use the car and polluting this beautiful planet!”

“Working in a police control room has been difficult at this time […]. What was one room and one team has become fragmented and split.”

“I don't like working from home - inadequate desk, chair and monitor.”

“Homeschooling whilst working full time has been an absolute nightmare. Children can be distracting whilst trying to work”

“Working at home has felt like living in work and has had an impact on my mental health. The lack of social interaction with work colleagues has been challenging.”

“I used to get an average of 6 hours sleep, now I get 8 hours and I feel energised to do lots of work and help people. I love working from home! :)”

“It made me consider my personal safety more”

“The pandemic has meant that policing has had to embrace the use of modern technology and agile working far quicker than it would ever have been implemented”

“We have had to work at 50% capacity as been directed to send staff home to work without the technology”

“I have found the quietness of being at home a great help and have been able to concentrate better which has helped productivity.”

“My meetings have tripled, so I can spend 10 hours a day online in meetings”

“I have loved the video chats and it has been fun and it’s nice to see everyone’s faces”
How do you think technology could improve police wellbeing?

(13% of respondents think it can NOT)

**SAFETY**
- Limit exposure to the virus
- Improve conditions to manage one's own health issues
- Enable safer access to the public
- Traffic congestion, road risks
- Competition for meeting rooms
- Reduce extraneous stresses

**Satisfaction**
- Much less commuting, travelling
- Make remote work possible
- Flexibility
- Greater ownership of work time
- Agile work
- More communication
- More accountability
- More possibilities for Learning & development
- More quality time w/ witness & victims
- Go paperless
- Possibility to innovate more

**Connection**
- To family
  - Care for family in stressful times
  - Better quality of life
  - Access to hierarchy without the need to travel
  - More human connection
  - Online peer support
  - Keep police in touch with vulnerable people
  - Up-to-date information
  - Line support
  - Diversity of formats (podcasts, etc.)
  - Online services for mental health, Oscar Kilo
  - In the privacy of one's home
  - Possibility to seek help anonymously

- To colleagues
- To the public
- Reduce Stress
- Improve quality of work
- Better teamwork
- Achieve more, faster
- Good for the planet
- Reduce costs
- Reduce fatigue
- For staff w/ caring needs or disabilities
- For everyone
Technology can only improve police wellbeing IF...

- Tech comes with relevant support / guidance
- Tech is reliable
- Tech is for everyone, not just a few
- Systems are interoperable
- Tech is used for actual policing, not for additional bureaucracy
- Tech is part of a wider effort to improve policing
- Face-to-face contacts remain
- Tech / screen overload is properly addressed
- New work practices are adopted: more asynchronous, less / shorter calls, personal time protected...

- Tech’s purpose makes sense
- End users are consulted
- Culture evolves to + experimentation, + cross-level dialogue, blame-free
- Home environment is suitable for work
- Leaders lead (trust, support, enable)

- Beware pitfalls of remote supervision
- Beware the formation of silos
Police wellbeing: emerging practices

"In addition to initiatives provided by your organisation, what wellbeing / supportive activities, if any, have you or your teams been doing to address any stresses and strains related to the pandemic?"

- **Individual (11%)**: exercised / educated myself…
- **Collective, informal (33%)**: camaraderie / WhatsApp group, Team bonding…
- **Collective, teamwork (44%)**: hierarchical drive for more connection & information, leadership check-in, team calls…
- **Collective activities (28%)** specifically focused on wellbeing & support

- **No activity**: no time / unsupportive management / we didn’t need any
- **Meaningless activities**: tick-the-box / counterproductive
- **Less support than before**: more work / activities removed

60% shared new well-being practices

40% haven’t seen or done any

Total > 100% because multiple answers possible

351 real-life examples!
What you said about Oscar Kilo

“I have been using Oscar Kilo Mindfit Cop. Some excellent hints, tips and recognition reassuring me that I am not alone. I need to keep up with the process as some days are good and others not so. Possible future Oscar Kilo Podcasts would be great to listen to and feel that I am still connected with tutors and get updates on how to deal with anxiety”

“Oscar Kilo Individual Resilience Session was very good. It became available and I accessed this at a time when I was feeling demoralised.”

“I enjoyed connecting with the Oscar Kilo wellbeing virtual sessions, speaking with other officers and staff, some of whom were working in different countries- it was interesting to see that despite the differences in location, many of us were feeling similar emotions and were able to share this within the sessions.”

“We used one of the OSCAR Kilo wellbeing vans for many weeks - to reach out to operational staff”
What you said about Oscar Kilo

“I have found Oscar Kilo to be an invaluable resource for supporting staff with emotional wellbeing issues. Signposting individuals to this resource gives them control to make informed decisions.”

“I have encouraged all of my team to take part in the Oscar Kilo MindFit cop programme”

“We have had the Oscar Kilo Wellbeing van since the beginning of Lockdown which has been around the patch multiple times per week staffed by our Blue light Inspector/Blue Light co-ordinator offering refreshments and an opportunity to talk in confidence.”

“We should allow more open and honest discussions, through maybe an Oscar kilo teams for each force or force areas etc. Let’s work together”