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**NATIONAL SURVEY OF THE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF POLICE
AND EMERGENCY SERVICES PERSONNEL: PILOT SURVEY**

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) has been given a great opportunity to make a significant contribution to identifying the prevalence of mental health conditions among emergency service personnel to better inform support provision to employees and volunteers nationally.

DFES, along with nearly all Australian police and emergency service agencies have been asked to take part in *Answering the call* – a national survey of mental health and wellbeing of emergency service personnel being funded by *beyondblue*. More than 20, 000 employees, volunteers and former employees in police, ambulance, fire and rescue and state emergency services across Australia will be randomly selected to participate.

The survey forms part of *beyondblue's* National Mental Health and Wellbeing Study of Police and Emergency Services, which aims to investigate the prevalence of mental health conditions, suicide, stigma and help-seeking behaviour among emergency service personnel. The information gathered will establish important national baseline measures, identify the issues affecting the mental health of emergency services personnel and the best ways to provide support.

An initial pilot survey will commence in the immediate future followed by a main survey to be conducted at a later date. The pilot survey will seek feedback from a smaller number of participants from emergency service organisations across Australia so that any essential improvements identified can be made before the main survey commences. Participation in the survey is completely voluntary and confidential, with information being held securely and managed by Roy Morgan Research and the University of Western Australia.

Given the emotionally and physically demanding environment that DFES personnel operate in, this is a timely and significant opportunity to provide information from our employees and volunteers that will assist in improving knowledge and service provision in relation to the mental health and wellbeing of our people. A random selection of DFES employees and volunteers will receive emails over the next few weeks inviting participation in the pilot survey. I have every confidence that our personnel will make valuable contributions to this important research.

For further information or queries, please contact Farhana Siddique (farhana.siddique@dfes.wa.gov.au).

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