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2025 Gender Pay Gap Report



Protecting the public from serious and organised crime

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Executive Summary

The National Crime Agency (NCA) has prepared this report as part of the legal requirement for public authorities to publish their gender pay gap on an annual basis. NCA had a total headcount of 5975 as of 31 March 2025.

The NCA is committed to building a fair and inclusive workplace where all officers can progress and thrive. This report forms part of the Civil Service Gender Pay Gap Reporting (GPG) and complies with central methodology and guidance. Calculations are aligned to Civil Service GPG statistics for the period below.

The report presents the Agency's gender pay gap reporting for the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025, drawing on ordinary pay, bonus pay and representation across pay quartiles and grades. The analysis provides insight into the key factors that influence pay disparities and outlines a targeted plan for 2026.

I am really pleased to introduce the National Crime Agency's 2025 Gender Pay Gap Report. Transparency on pay and progression is essential to building a fair, inclusive organisation, and this report provides a clear picture of where we have made progress and where challenges remain. It shows a welcome reduction in our overall gender pay gap this year, reflecting sustained effort to improve representation and opportunity. However, the data also reinforces the need to focus on senior female representation, female representation within Investigations Command and overall pay reform. We remain committed to addressing these issues through targeted action, robust data, and sustained leadership focus, so that women within the NCA can progress and thrive on equal terms.

Wendy Clark, Director General Capabilities NCA

1. Introduction

Organisational Context

The NCA Strategy 2023–2028 identifies a workforce that is diverse in background, thought and experience as essential to effectively tackling serious and organised crime. Achieving this diversity is therefore critical to delivering our mission.

The gender pay gap is one of the key indicators we use to assess progress against this ambition. It provides insight into how men and women are represented across the organisation and highlights areas where action is needed.

This report presents the Agency's gender pay gap figures for the reporting period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, alongside analysis of the underlying drivers and trends.

Under the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017, employers with 250 or more employees are required to publish annual gender pay gap data. This includes:

- Differences in mean and median hourly pay between men and women
- Differences in mean and median bonus pay
- The proportion of men and women receiving bonuses
- The distribution of men and women across pay quartiles

In addition, the Employment Rights Act 2025 introduces further provisions to strengthen transparency and accountability. From April 2026, employers with 250 or more employees will be encouraged to publish Equality Action Plans alongside their gender pay gap reports, with these plans expected to become mandatory from Spring 2027 (subject to secondary legislation).

Together, these requirements support a clearer understanding of pay disparities and reinforce our commitment to addressing them through evidence-based action.

2. What is a Gender Pay Gap?

2.1. The gender pay gap shows the difference in the average pay between all men and women in a workforce. It is different to equal pay which is about the pay differences between men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs or work of equal value. It is unlawful to pay people unequally.

2.2. In order to calculate the gender pay gap we use the mean and median:

- Mean: The difference between the average hourly earnings (excluding overtime) of men and women.
- Median: Is the difference between the midpoints in the ranges of hourly earnings of men and women.

- 2.3. The Agency's mean gender pay gap (GPG) for 2025 is 7.60%, representing a significant reduction from 11.17% in 2024. The median gender pay gap has decreased slightly to 8.10%, compared with 8.66% in 2024 (see Table 1). These improvements indicate positive movement, particularly in reducing overall pay disparity.
- 2.4. It is important to note that this year's figures are not directly comparable with those reported in previous years due to a methodological improvement. Historically, the NCA calculated the gender pay gap using actual earnings, which included individuals receiving reduced pay—for example, those on maternity, paternity, or shared parental leave, as well as those on half-pay or nil-pay arrangements. This approach did not fully reflect underlying pay differences.
- 2.5. For 2025, following improvements to our HR data systems and analytical capability, we are now able to calculate the gender pay gap using gross pay and excluding individuals on reduced pay, in line with Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance¹. This provides a more accurate and fair representation of pay differences across the workforce.

Table 1: Gender Pay Gap Results

Gender Pay Gap		2025	2024	2023 ²
Mean Gender Pay Gap – Ordinary Pay		7.60%	11.17%	9.46%
Median Gender Pay Gap – Ordinary Pay		8.10%	8.66%	8.68%
Mean Gender Pay Gap – Bonus Pay in the 12 Months ending 31 st March		7.83%	5.61%	0.76%
Median Gender Pay Gap – Bonus Pay in the 12 Months ending 31 st March		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Proportion of male officers and female officers paid a bonus in the 12 months ending 31 st March	Male	40.92%	39.93%	15.86%
	Female	48.65%	50.02%	18.32%

- 2.6. The data shows that while the overall pay gap has reduced, differences remain across both ordinary and bonus pay. The mean bonus pay gap has increased to 7.83%, while the median remains at 0.00%, indicating that although typical bonus payments are equal, higher-value bonuses continue to influence the average gap.
- 2.7. The proportion of officers receiving bonuses remains higher among women than men, with 48.65% of female officers receiving a bonus compared to 40.92% of male officers. This suggests that access to bonus payments is broadly equitable; however, differences in bonus values continue to affect overall outcomes.
- 2.8. As with most organisations, the gender pay gap is driven by a number of different factors within the workforce. The primary drivers are the distribution of men and

¹ This level of data is available from 2025 so we are unable to recalculate the GPG from previous years.

² During 2023 we implemented our reward voucher process, which is why our proportion of officers paid a bonus is lower, future years saw an increase in bonus payments due to the reward vouchers.

women across the pay levels and grades, with men more likely to be in higher-paid roles and women more likely to be in lower-paid roles. This is reflected in the pay quartile data (Table 2), where male representation remains higher in the upper quartiles and percentage of women at each grade (Table 3).

2.9. As a Civil Service department, the NCA operates within the framework of public sector pay policy and complies with Civil Service Pay Guidance. Pay levels are also informed by recommendations from the Agency’s independent Pay Review Body.

2.10. The overall Civil Service gender pay gap as of 31st March 2025 was 6.9% (mean), with a bonus gap of 7.83% (mean).

3. Overall Gender Pay Gap – Key Findings

3.1. Women represent 47% of the Agency’s workforce, the highest level since the NCA’s creation in 2013. This reflects continued progress in overall representation. There have also been positive shifts in pay distribution: the proportion of female officers in the upper pay quartile has increased by 6.2%, while representation in the lower quartile has decreased by 3.2% (see Table 2). These changes have contributed to the reduction in the overall gender pay gap.

3.2. Despite this progress, differences remain. Men continue to be overrepresented in higher pay quartiles, which remains a primary driver of the gender pay gap. While female representation in upper pay quartiles has improved steadily over the past three years, the rate of change is gradual and the imbalance persists. This limits the pace at which the overall pay gap can close. Increasing female representation in this quartile is therefore critical to achieving further reduction of the pay gap.

Table 2: Proportion of all Male and Female NCA officers in each Pay Quartile – Standard Pay Range

Pay Quartiles	2025		2024		2023	
	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %
First (lower) Quartile	58.80%	41.20%	62.00%	38.00%	60.6%	39.4%
Second Quartile	49.70%	50.30%	48.90%	51.10%	48.6%	51.4%
Third Quartile	42.00%	58.00%	38.70%	61.30%	38.5%	61.5%
Fourth (upper) Quartile	39.20%	60.80%	33.00%	67.00%	32.8%	67.2%

Representation by Grade

3.3. Female representation continues to vary across grades (see Table 3). While women are well represented at Grade 5, they are overrepresented at Grade 6 and remain underrepresented at more senior levels, particularly within the Senior Civil Service and Grade 1 roles. This underrepresentation at senior grades is a significant contributor to pay disparity, as these roles are more highly paid.

Table 3: Percentage of women at each grade

NCA Grade Band	% of women in grade (2025)	% of women in grade (2024)	% of women in grade (2023)
Senior Civil Servants	36.17%	39.13%	42.86%
NCA Grade 1	36.11%	32.14%	27.03%
NCA Grade 2	42.03%	41.04%	37.06%
NCA Grade 3	41.22%	39.79%	38.74%
NCA Grade 4	44.39%	43.47%	41.29%
NCA Grade 5	53.14%	51.39%	50.92%
NCA Grade 6	62.38%	61.04%	63.72%

Operational Workforce and Command Structure

3.4. Operational commands make up the majority of the NCA workforce, and gender representation is broadly balanced across most areas. However, a key exception is the Investigations command, where women comprise 39% of the workforce. As this command includes a significant number of higher-paid operational roles, lower female representation in this area continues to influence the overall pay gap.

Dual Pay Structures

3.5. The NCA operates dual pay structures, which also influence pay outcomes:

- Standard pay range (no progression mechanism)
- Spot rate framework (skills-based progression for operational roles)

3.6. The spot rate framework is designed to ensure consistency by placing officers with equivalent skills on the same pay point. However, disparities arise due to representation. The number of male officers on spot rate pay (1,420) is significantly higher than female officers (990). As these roles are often associated with higher earnings, this imbalance is a key contributor to the gender pay gap. New entrants to the spot rate framework typically start at lower pay points (SR1) and progress as they demonstrate competence. As a result, recruitment and intake patterns can temporarily lower average salaries, particularly where there are higher proportions of new joiners.

3.7. Encouragingly, the gender pay gap within the spot rate framework has improved (see Table 4), reflecting increased female representation in senior operational roles. A full breakdown of the Spot Rate Framework by gender is presented at Table 5 in Annex A.

Table 4: Gender pay gap (ordinary pay) within spot rate roles

Spot Rate Framework – Gender Pay Gap	2025	2024	2023
Mean	6.36%	11.31%	8.87%
Median	1.64%	8.41%	7.56%

Pay Progression and Workforce Distribution

3.8. Analysis of pay distribution shows that within the standard pay range, the majority of officers at the upper end of pay bands are male. A key structural factor is that 71% of officers remain at the grade minimum, reflecting the absence of a formal progression mechanism within this framework.

3.9. Within the spot rate framework, representation remains male-dominated across all grades. Although the number of female officers in senior spot rate roles has increased, representation declines at higher grades, particularly at Grade 2, where women account for 25.44% of roles. This continues to influence overall pay outcomes.

3.10. The standard pay range quartiles by grade and gender and the spot rate pay points by grade and gender are set out at Annex A (Tables 6 and 7).

Impact of Pay Awards

3.11. The 5% pay award in 2024/25, following a 7% award in 2023/24, has contributed to maintaining the gap. Percentage-based increases tend to amplify existing pay differences, as higher earners receive larger absolute increases.

Recruitment and Pipeline

3.12. Recruitment patterns also influence the pay gap, particularly in specialist and operational roles requiring prior experience. These roles tend to attract more male candidates, contributing to higher starting salaries and widening the gap.

3.13. Current recruitment analysis shows an overall 6.28% pay gap between male and female new entrants. While Civil Service transfers show a negative pay gap (-3.43%), indicating slightly higher female pay on entry, external hires from policing and the private sector show a significantly higher gap (9.95%).

3.14. Positive progress is being made through the NCA Officer Development Programme (ODP), where 59% of the 2024/25 intake is female. As these officers progress through

the programme and into higher-paid roles, this is expected to support future reductions in the gender pay gap.

Pay Reform

3.15. The Agency is progressing a programme of pay and contract reform, aimed at addressing structural issues within the current pay frameworks. Reducing gender and other pay gaps is a key objective of this work.

4. Bonus Pay Analysis

4.1. The bonus pay gap reflects differences in the average bonus payments received by male and female officers, including honorariums, reward vouchers, and performance awards. For 2025, the mean bonus pay gap has increased to 7.83%, compared with 5.61% in 2024, while the median bonus gap remains at 0.00%. This indicates that, although typical bonus payments are broadly equal, higher-value awards continue to influence the overall average.

4.2. Encouragingly, the proportion of officers receiving performance awards is balanced. Officers rated as 'Exceeded' received a non-consolidated payment of £425, with awards distributed evenly between men and women (530 male and 538 female recipients). Notably, the proportion of female recipients exceeds their overall workforce representation (47%), indicating equitable access to this element of reward.

4.3. The Agency continues to strengthen its ability to monitor and assess reward outcomes following improvements to pay-related policies and data collection. In particular, the removal of pro-rating for part-time officers has ensured greater consistency and fairness in performance award payments.

Other Forms of Reward

4.4. In addition to performance awards, the Agency uses several mechanisms to recognise and reward contribution:

- Honorarium payments for exceptional performance
- Reward vouchers (£25 each, up to five per year) for short-term achievements and behaviours aligned with NCA values

4.5. The data shows a mixed pattern:

- Female officers are more likely to receive reward vouchers
- Male officers are more likely to receive honorarium payments, which are typically higher in value (£250–£1,000)

4.6. This difference in the type and value of rewards contributes to the overall mean bonus pay gap. The Honorarium Scheme was paused from July 2024 to October 2025,

limiting the available data for the full reporting period. As a result, current data should be interpreted with some caution and may not represent a trend.

Employee Experience and Engagement

- 4.7. The introduction of reward vouchers has been positively received across the Agency, providing a more immediate and accessible way to recognise contributions. This is reflected in the 2025 People Survey, which showed a 9% increase in satisfaction with pay and benefits, with particularly strong improvements reported by female officers.

Ongoing Monitoring

- 4.8. The Agency will continue to monitor bonus outcomes closely, particularly as the Honorarium Scheme returns to a full year of operation. Further analysis will focus on:

- The distribution and value of honorarium payments
- Any emerging patterns or disparities between men and women
- Ensuring consistency and fairness across all reward mechanisms

- 4.9. Where any disproportionate outcomes are identified, action will be taken to address them.

5. Targeted Action Plan to Reduce and Close the Gender Pay Gap

5.1 Increase Female Representation in Senior Management

Objective: Improve progression of female officers into senior roles.

Key Actions:

- Develop and implement a pilot mentoring project 'Pathway to SCS' for female officers at G1 and G2 to support career development and progression to SCS roles.
- Ensure all senior role vacancies are advertised with flexible working options (unless operationally unfeasible).
- Increase uptake of job-share arrangements through promotion of the Job-Share Hub and manager awareness raising.

Measures of Success:

- Delivery of the 'Pathway to SCS' mentoring pilot.
- Year-on-year increase in female representation at Grades 1-3.
- Improved promotion rates for women across Grades 3-6.

5.2 Strengthen Recruitment & Retention in Operational Roles

Objective: Address under-representation of women in operational and specialist roles.

Key Actions:

- Review role requirements to remove unnecessary barriers.
- Enhance visibility of female role models in operational leadership.
- Introduce targeted outreach campaigns to increase female applications to specialist roles (e.g. firearms units) by 20%.
- Targeted surveys to evaluate cultural change.

Measures of Success:

- Increased proportion of female applicants and hires in operational roles.
- Improved retention rates of female officers in operational commands.

5.3. Reduce Gender-Based Pay Disparities

Objective: Deliver measurable reduction in the gender pay gap.

Key Actions:

- Progress the Agency case for pay and contract reform to address anomalies in the pay structures and positively impact the gender pay gap.
- Continue to support staff groups including the Gender Equality Group (GEG) with Deputy Director/Director Sponsorship.
- Promote non-pay benefits to improve retention of mid-career female officers.

Measures of Success:

- Annual reduction in mean and median gender pay gap.
- Improved retention rates for women aged 35+.

5.4. Improve Data, Insight & Accountability

Objective: Strengthen evidence-based decision making.

Key Actions:

- Enhance workforce data analytics to track progression, retention, and programme impact by gender.
- Publish annual progress updates with transparent reporting.

Measures of Success:

- Improved data completeness and reporting accuracy.
- Demonstrable link between interventions and outcomes.

6. Declaration

I confirm that data reported by the National Crime Agency is accurate and has been calculated in line with the requirements and methodology set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 for mandatory gender pay gap reporting.

NCA Director General Capabilities: Wendy Clark

Annex A

Table 5: Spot Rate framework by Gender

Pay Grade	Point	2025			2024			Differences		
		Female	Male	Grand Total	Female	Male	Grand Total	Female	Male	Grand Total
NCA Grade 1	G1-1	4	6	10	7	7	14	-3	-1	-4
	G1-2	10	32	42	4	32	36	6	0	6
NCA Grade 1 Total		14	38	52	11	39	50	3	-1	2
NCA Grade 2	G2-1	20	35	55	11	25	36	9	10	19
	G2-2	23	91	114	18	81	99	5	10	15
NCA Grade 2 Total		43	126	169	29	106	135	14	20	34
NCA Grade 3	G3-1	5	8	13	4	8	12	1	0	1
	G3-2	1	3	4	0	4	4	1	-1	0
NCA Grade 3 Total		6	11	17	4	12	16	2	-1	1
NCA Grade 4	G4-1	101	153	254	86	154	240	15	-1	14
	G4-2	146	343	489	150	355	505	-4	-12	-16
	G4-3	1	12	13	1	14	15	0	-2	-2
NCA Grade 4 Total		248	508	756	237	523	760	11	-15	-4
NCA Grade 5	G5-1	162	135	297	128	96	224	34	39	73
	G5-2	169	172	341	194	202	396	-25	-30	-55
	G5-3	346	404	750	327	408	735	19	-4	15
	G5-4	2	26	28	2	25	27	0	1	1
NCA Grade 5 Total		679	737	1416	651	731	1382	28	6	34
Grand Total		990	1420	2410	932	1411	2343	58	9	67

Table 6: Standard Pay Range quartiles by grade and gender

Pay Grade	Quartile	Percentages		Number of officers	
		Female	Male	Female	Male
Director General	4th Quartile	0.00%	100.00%	0	1
	3rd Quartile	0.00%	100.00%	0	2
Director General Total		0.00%	100.00%	0	3
Director	4th Quartile	20.00%	80.00%	1	4
	3rd Quartile	100.00%	0.00%	1	0
	2nd Quartile	50.00%	50.00%	1	1
Director Total		37.50%	62.50%	3	5
Deputy Director	Grade Maximum	25.00%	75.00%	1	3
	4th Quartile	75.00%	25.00%	3	1
	3rd Quartile	33.33%	66.67%	2	4
	2nd Quartile	43.75%	56.25%	7	9
	1st Quartile	0.00%	100.00%	0	1
Deputy Director Total		41.94%	58.06%	13	18
NCA Grade 1	4th Quartile	0.00%	100.00%	0	4
	3rd Quartile	16.67%	83.33%	1	5
	2nd Quartile	16.67%	83.33%	1	5
	1st Quartile	57.14%	42.86%	4	3
	Grade Minimum	50.00%	50.00%	26	26
NCA Grade 1 Total		42.67%	57.33%	32	43
NCA Grade 2	Grade Maximum	66.67%	33.33%	2	1
	4th Quartile	0.00%	100.00%	0	1
	3rd Quartile	16.67%	83.33%	1	5
	2nd Quartile	33.33%	66.67%	2	4
	1st Quartile	58.33%	41.67%	7	5
NCA Grade 2 Total		53.64%	46.36%	118	102
NCA Grade 3	Grade Maximum	0.00%	100.00%	0	6
	4th Quartile	25.00%	75.00%	2	6
	3rd Quartile	42.31%	57.69%	11	15
	2nd Quartile	25.71%	74.29%	18	52
	1st Quartile	24.71%	75.29%	21	64
	Grade Minimum	44.32%	55.68%	308	387
NCA Grade 3 Total		40.45%	59.55%	360	530
NCA Grade 4	Grade Maximum	20.51%	79.49%	8	31
	4th Quartile	27.50%	72.50%	11	29
	3rd Quartile	33.78%	66.22%	25	49
	2nd Quartile	49.46%	50.54%	46	47
	1st Quartile	45.24%	54.76%	38	46

	Grade Minimum	56.97%	43.03%	368	278
NCA Grade 4 Total		50.82%	49.18%	496	480
NCA Grade 5	Grade Maximum	28.57%	71.43%	2	5
	4th Quartile	37.50%	62.50%	27	45
	3rd Quartile	57.14%	42.86%	72	54
	2nd Quartile	52.27%	47.73%	46	42
	1st Quartile	62.12%	37.88%	41	25
	Grade Minimum	64.23%	35.77%	449	250
NCA Grade 5 Total		60.21%	39.79%	637	421
NCA Grade 6	Grade Maximum	35.71%	64.29%	5	9
	4th Quartile	79.17%	20.83%	19	5
	3rd Quartile	58.62%	41.38%	34	24
	2nd Quartile	69.23%	30.77%	9	4
	1st Quartile	66.67%	33.33%	8	4
	Grade Minimum	64.71%	35.29%	99	54
NCA Grade 6 Total		63.50%	36.50%	174	100

Table 7: Spot Rate pay points by grade and gender

Pay Grade	Spot Rate Pay Point	Percentages		Number of officers	
		Female	Male	Female	Male
NCA Grade 1	G1-2	23.81%	76.19%	10	32
	G1-1	40.00%	60.00%	4	6
NCA Grade 1 Total		26.92%	73.08%	14	38
NCA Grade 2	G2-2	20.18%	79.82%	23	91
	G2-1	36.36%	63.64%	20	35
NCA Grade 2 Total		25.44%	74.56%	43	126
NCA Grade 3	G3-2	25.00%	75.00%	1	3
	G3-1	38.46%	61.54%	5	8
NCA Grade 3 Total		35.29%	64.71%	6	11
NCA Grade 4	G4-3	7.69%	92.31%	1	12
	G4-2	29.86%	70.14%	146	343
	G4-1	39.76%	60.24%	101	153
NCA Grade 4 Total		32.80%	67.20%	248	508
NCA Grade 5	G5-4	7.14%	92.86%	2	26
	G5-3	46.13%	53.87%	346	404
	G5-2	49.56%	50.44%	169	172
	G5-1	54.55%	45.45%	162	135
NCA Grade 5 Total		47.95%	52.05%	679	737