

Request reference: **3329/13**

- **Do people have to undertake a fitness test to enter the force?**

Yes

The Physical Competency Assessment (PCA) consists of a series of obstacles, which mimic the obstacles that an operational police officer may have to navigate in a foot chase. The circuit must be completed (3 laps) in 3 minutes 45 seconds or less.

The circuit covers a total distance of 300 metres. Each lap contains 8 activity stations, which must be completed sequentially, then moving on to the Push / Pull machine

After the circuit, candidates will be asked to complete an assessment of pushing and pulling. This device has been purpose built and scientifically validated to simulate struggling with an assailant. The assessment is of 20 seconds, where a minimum of 20kg of force (average) must be achieved over the time span.

The last recruitment physical assessment was conducted in June 2010

- **Do officers have to undertake regular fitness tests during time in the force? If so, how regular are these tests?**

All prospective applicants to join the Dog Section, Firearms Unit and the Operational Support Unit are required to successfully complete a fitness test as part of the selection process. All officers within these units are required to successfully complete a single fitness test annually thereafter.

Fitness tests within the Dog Section, Firearms Unit and the Operational Support Unit consist of the Multi Stage Fitness Test (MSFT). This is also commonly known as the 'Bleep Test' and involves running back and forth between two lines, 15m apart, in time with pre-recorded 'bleeps'. The time between the bleeps progressively reduces for each new level, and this provides a scientifically proven method of testing maximal cardio vascular fitness.

Dog Section officers are required to annually complete the test to level 6.3. Officers new to the Firearms Unit are required to complete the test to level 9.4, and experienced officers are required to complete it on an annual basis to level 10.5. Officers with the Operational Support Unit are annually required to complete the test to level 6.3, in line with public order capabilities. However, the fitness test on this unit has not been undertaken since 2011 due to awaiting national decisions regarding fitness levels. Additionally, prior to 2011, the Dog Section and Operational Support Unit fitness tests included a gym-based obstacle course, which replicated operational situations.

- **How many officers took that test in 2012? How many passed and how many failed?**
- **How many officers took the test in 2011? How many passed and how many failed?**
- **How many officers took the test in 2001? How many passed and how many failed?**

Across the Dog Section, Firearms Unit and the Operational Support Unit one officer has failed the annual fitness test during 2012 and two during 2011. Only probationary officers and officers applying to specialist departments were fitness tested in 2001.

In preparation for the Winsor recommended fitness test, we have tested across the Force 256 volunteers, 253 individuals passed with just - 3 not achieving the desired standard.

Please see 3329\_PIT re number of individuals who passed the Fitness Test.

- **What happens if an officer fails that test?**

Where subjects are unsuccessful at test, they are afforded the opportunity to formulate an appropriate development plan with PTI staff. This is subject to review by the officer's line managers in consultation with PTI staff and Occupational Health Unit if appropriate. If there are no underlying health concerns they will remain operational, otherwise the normal policy for medically restricted officers will apply.

They will be expected to retake the test within a reasonable timeframe. Should an officer fail to successfully complete the retest, then further consideration will be given to the officer's suitability to remain in their role.