

GENERAL ARMING OF POLICE



INTRODUCTION

- In this section, we report on attitudes to arming police with firearms and tasers.
- As was the case in 2008 and 2010, context is provided in terms of the self reported incidence of situations where members have been threatened, attacked or injured while on duty. We also, again, ask members to state their opinion on whether or not there have been situations in the past year that they feel would have been better resolved if they had had access to a firearm.
- We also report on the level of support among the general public for arming police with firearms and compare this with the level identified in 2008 and 2010.

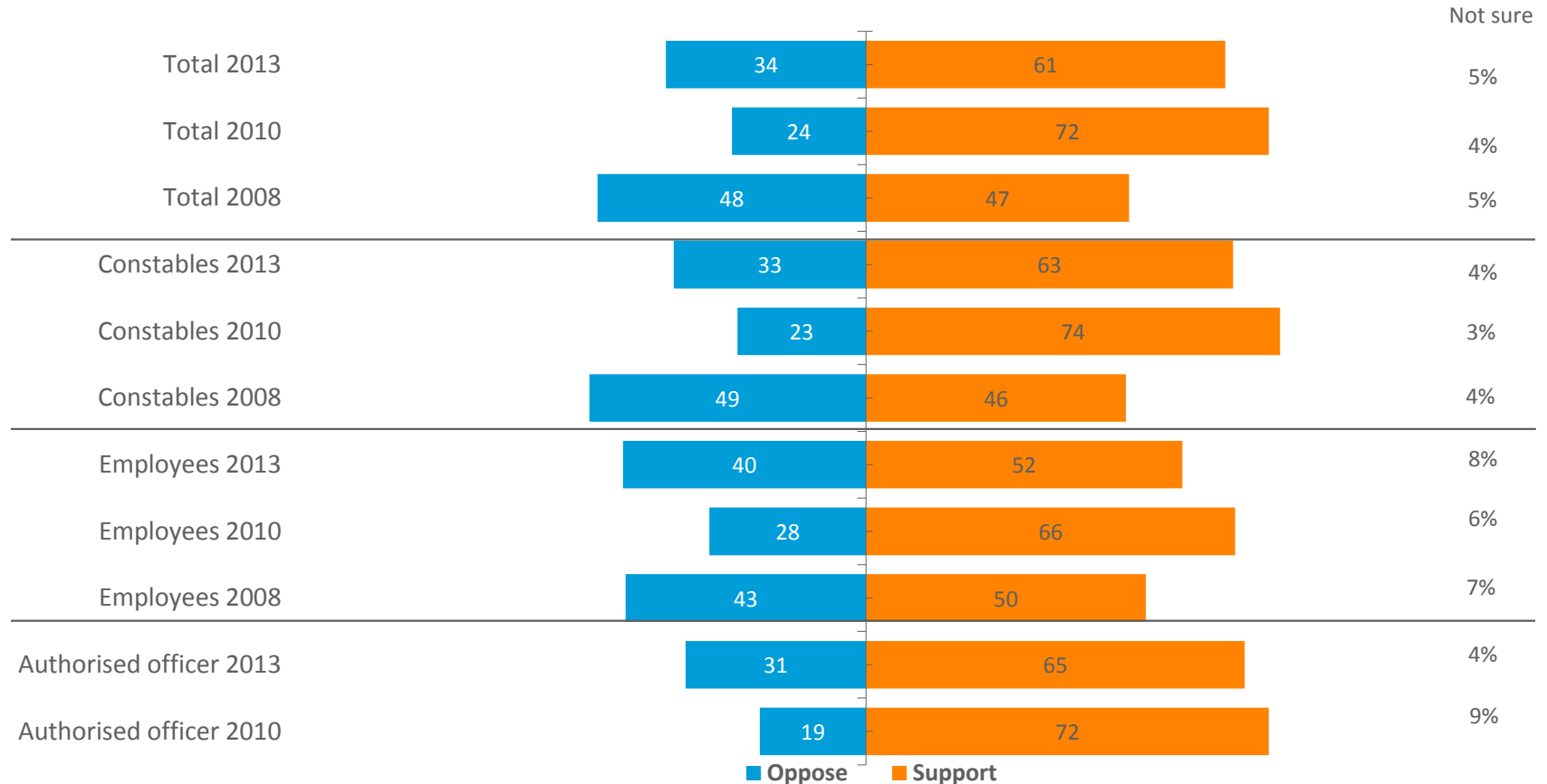


EXECUTIVE INSIGHTS

- The number of constables who report being threatened with a firearm in the past year has decreased, as has the number who report they have been attacked by an offender. However, the number of injuries caused by attacks has not decreased to the same extent. This perhaps, indicates a higher level of violence towards officers as there are as many injuries occurring, yet less incidents/attacks involving weapons.
- Support for general arming of Police with firearms has decreased among all types of Police employees. Six in every ten continue to support the concept (close to three quarters supported it in 2010). The level of support among members is now more closely aligned to the support from the general public, with just over half of those surveyed in the general public supportive of general arming.
- In 2013 a higher proportion of the general public were in a position to take a stance on the general arming debate. In 2010 14% were not sure whether they supported or opposed general arming. This has now halved, with just 7% unsure.
- There continues to be almost universal support for the general issue of tasers.

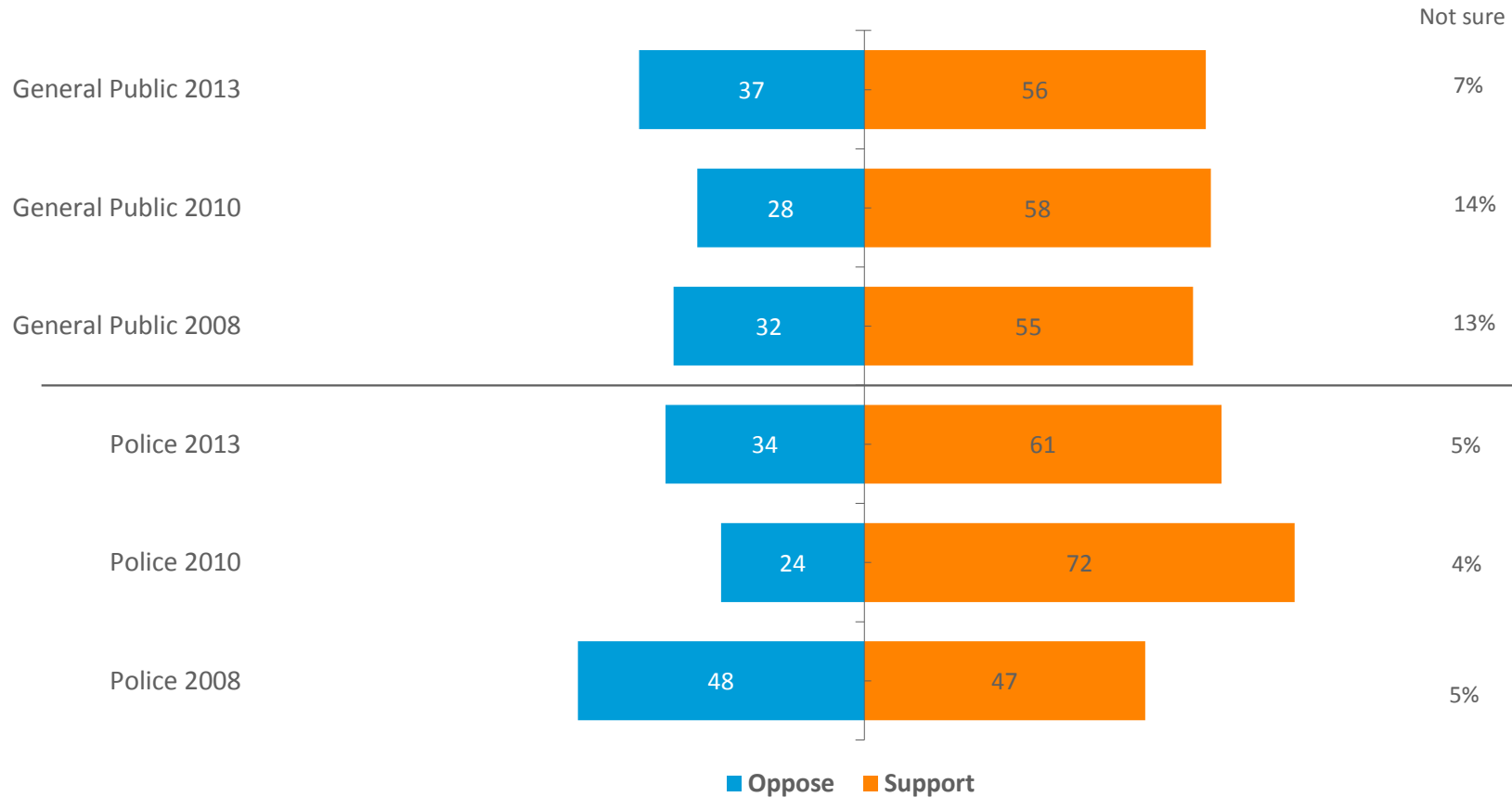
SUPPORT FOR GENERAL ARMING OF POLICE

Support for general arming of police with firearms has decreased compared with 2010, however remains higher than the level seen back in 2008. Support has decreased among all types of police employees although to a lesser extent among Authorised Officers.



WHAT LEVEL OF SUPPORT IS THERE AMONG GENERAL PUBLIC?

There is support for general arming of police with firearms from just over half of the general public surveyed. An increased number also feel more knowledgeable on this issue or are at least in a position to take a stance (only 7% indicating they are not sure compared with 14% in 2010).



SUB GROUP ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT FOR GENERAL ARMING

MEMBERS

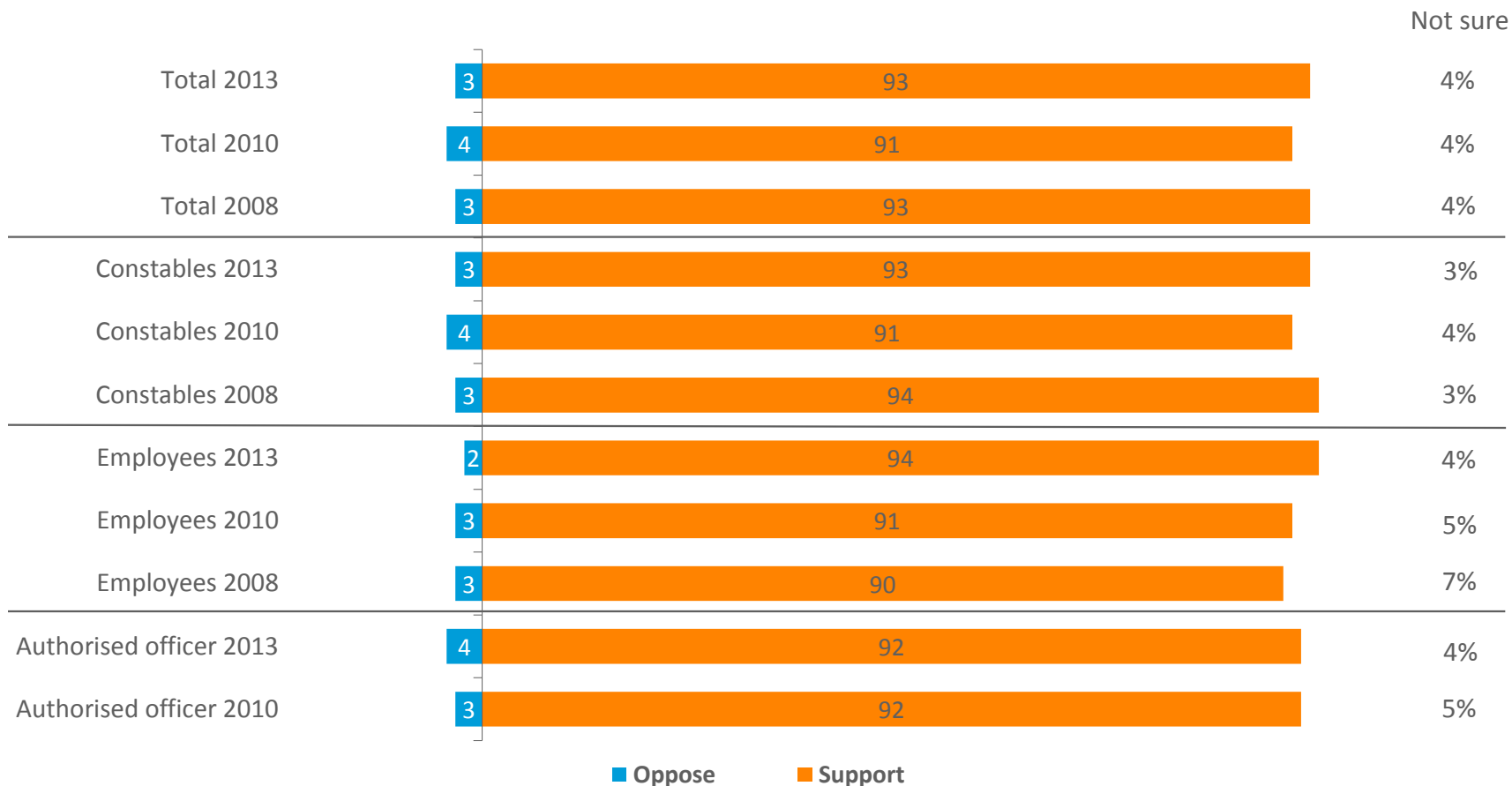
- Support of the general arming with firearms is similar to the 2010 result whereby Road Policing (72%) and GDB frontline staff (69%) are significantly more likely to support the general arming with firearms compared to the average among all members of 61%.
- As seen in 2010 members who have been in the NZ Police for five to nine years are also significantly more likely to support general arming (67 % cf. average of 61% among all members).
- Members who work in rural areas are significantly more likely to support general arming (66% cf. 61% average among all members). This result is consistent with the 2010 result (77% cf. 72%).
- Opposition to the general arming of police with firearms continues to be seen among administration, planning and support staff (43% cf. 34% average among all members).
- This is also the case with members who have been in the NZ Police for more than 20 years (42% cf. 34% average among all members).
- The greatest opposition to general arming comes from members with the rank of inspector or above (64% cf. 34% average among all members).

GENERAL PUBLIC

- Those who are aged between 40 to 54 years old are more likely to oppose general arming (46% cf. average of 37%)

SUPPORT FOR GENERAL ISSUE OF TASERS

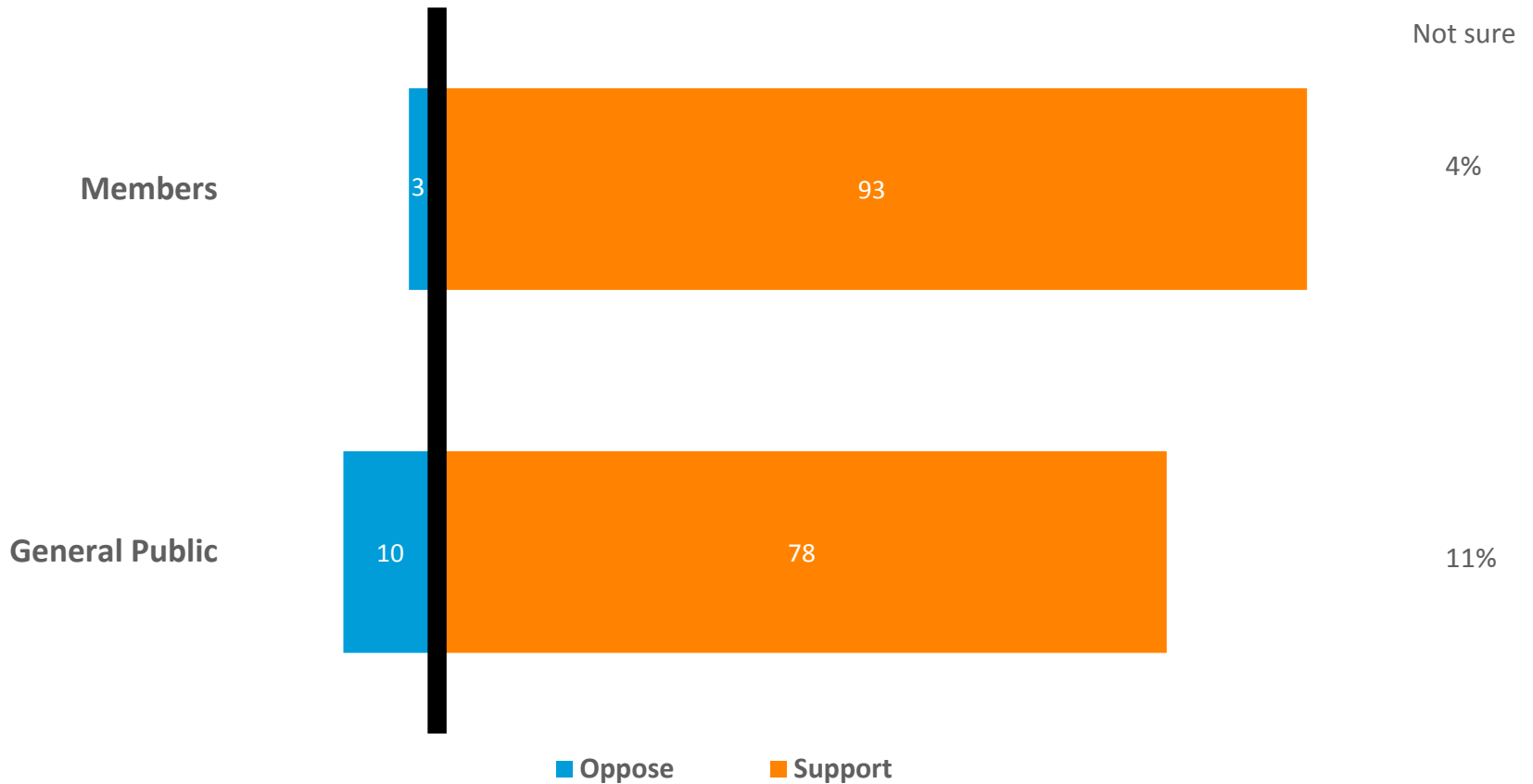
Support for the issuing of tasers to Police remains high across all types of employee.



Base: All Respondents (2008 n=5,526, 2010 n=6,306, 2013 n=3,997)
Q16. Do you support or oppose the general issuing of Tasers to Police?

GENERAL PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR TASERS

Support for the issuing of tasers to Police is higher amongst members than among the general public



SUB GROUP ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT FOR TASERS

Members

- Frontline GDB are more likely to support the general issue of tasers (96% cf. average of 93% among all members).
- Members who have been in the Police for less than 10 years are also more likely to be supportive (96%). As are members based in Auckland and North Shore (97% and 96%, respectively).

GENERAL PUBLIC

- Those who are significantly more likely to be in support of issuing police with tasers are aged 55 years and older (86% compared to the average of 78%)
- People of New Zealand ethnicity are more likely to support the issuing of Police with tasers (83% compared to the average of 78%)

NUMBER OF INCIDENTS WHERE TREATENED WITH WEAPON (IN LAST YEAR)

The number of constables who reported being threatened with a firearm in the last year (7%) has decreased compared with 2010 (10%). There are also indications that Authorised Officers are more likely to be threatened with weapons at a greater rate than in 2010.

2013	Firearm			Any other weapon		
	Constables (%)	Employees (%)	Authorised Officer (%)	Constables (%)	Employees (%)	Authorised Officer (%)
None	92	100	98	56	98	82
Once	5	0	0	14	1	4
Twice	1	0	0	14	0	8
Three times	0	0	0	5	0	0
More than three times	1	0	2	11	0	6

7%

Base: All respondents (n=3,997)

2010	Firearm			Any other weapon		
	Constables (%)	Employees (%)	Authorised Officer (%)	Constables (%)	Employees (%)	Authorised Officer (%)
None	90	100	98	53	98	89
Once	7	0	0	13	1	3
Twice	1	0	0	14	0	2
Three times	0	0	0	6	0	0
More than three times	1	0	2	14	0	6

10%

Base: All respondents (n=6,306)

Note: Due to rounding total number threatened while on duty may not add to 100%
Q17. How many times in the last year have you been threatened while on duty with...?

SUB GROUP ANALYSIS OF INCIDENTS WHERE THREATENED WITH WEAPON

Threatened with firearms

- Constables are significantly more likely to have been threatened with a firearm (7% cf. 6% average)

Threatened with weapon other than firearm

- Constables are significantly more likely to have been threatened with weapons other than firearms (44% cf. 35% average among all members).

ARE INCIDENTS INVOLVING WEAPONS REPORTED?

Close to two thirds of members claimed to have reported the incidents where they were threatened with a weapon while one third have been threatened on at least one occasion but did not report it. This is consistent with the research carried out in 2008 and 2010.

	2008 %	2010 %	2013 %
Yes	64	66	65
No	36	34	35

SUB GROUP ANALYSIS OF REPORTING INCIDENTS

- GDB frontline staff (71%) and senior sergeants (86%) are more likely to have reported all incidents where they have been threatened with a weapon compared to the average among all members of 65%
- Those who are working in the Southern district are also more likely to have reported all incidents where they have been threatened with a weapon (77% cf. 65%)
- Incidents going unreported is more likely among those who are Pacific Island ethnicity (52% not reporting cf. 35% average).

INCIDENTS INVOLVING ATTACKS BY OFFENDERS

The number of constables who reported being attacked by an offender (39%) has also decreased compared with 2010 (46%). Interestingly, the number of constables who have been injured by an offender has not decreased to the same extent, indicating that an offender is more likely to cause injury compared with three years ago. There is also an indication that Authorised Officers are injured more often.

2013	Attacked by an offender			Injured by an offender		
	Constables (%)	Employees (%)	Authorised Officer (%)	Constables (%)	Employees (%)	Authorised Officer (%)
None	61	99	63	82	99	80
Once	17	0	14	13	1	16
Twice	11	0	8	4	0	2
Three times	4	0	6	1	0	2
More than three times	7	0	10	1	0	0
	39%		38%	19%	1%	20%

Base: All respondents (n=3,997)

2010	Attacked by an offender			Injured by an offender		
	Constables (%)	Employees (%)	Authorised Officer (%)	Constables (%)	Employees (%)	Authorised Officer (%)
None	54	99	83	79	100	89
Once	17	0	3	14	0	8
Twice	14	0	5	5	0	3
Three times	6	0	0	1	0	0
More than three times	8	0	9	1	0	0
	46%	1%	17%	21%	11%	

Base: All respondents (n=6,306)

Note: Due to rounding total number threatened while on duty may not add to 100%

Q19. In the past year, on how many occasions have you been in a situation while on duty where you have personally been:

SUB GROUP ANALYSIS OF ATTACKS BY OFFENDERS

- Constables are more likely to have been attacked and/or injured by an offender (39% attacked and 19% injured cf. averages of 31% and 14% among all members respectively).

INCIDENTS THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN RESOLVED WITH FIREARM

Around two in every ten constables (21%) have been involved in an incident in the past year that they believe would have been better resolved if they were carrying a firearm. This is consistent with the level seen back in 2008, after increasing in 2010.

	2008 (%)	2010 (%)	2013 (%)
Yes	20	28	21
No	58	52	55
Not applicable/not been in this situation	22	19	23

SUB GROUP ANALYSIS OF INCIDENTS WHERE FIREARM WOULD RESOLVE

- GDB frontline staff continue to be more likely to have been involved in an incident in the past year which they believe would have been better resolved if a firearm was present (33%).
- Members who have been in NZ Police less than 5 years (30%) and between five to nine years (32%) are more likely to have been involved in an incident where the presence of a firearm would have resolved the problem better, compared to the average among all members of (21%)