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## **Paramedics, psychologists and undertakers in top 10 fastest growing UK occupations – but sharp contraction for hospital porters, traffic wardens and debt collectors**

Analysis of available official employment statistics, published today by The Jobs Economist consultancy, identifies the UK's currently fastest expanding and fastest contracting occupations. The analysis compares this year's annual snapshot of data for UK employment by occupation in Q2 2013 released last week by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) with equivalent consistent ONS data for Q2 2011:

- The top 10 fastest expanding occupations are paramedics (up 102% to 32,000 between Q2 2011 and Q2 2013), psychologists (up 52% to 38,000), graphic designers (up 47% to 86,000), company secretaries (up 47% to 50,000), police community support officers (up 47% to 22,000), production managers and directors in mining and quarrying (also up 47% to 22,000), undertakers, mortuary and crematorium associates (up 40% to 21,000), conference and exhibitions managers and organisers (up 39% to 64,000), chemicals and related process operatives (up 39% to 57,000) and planning, process and production technicians (up 37% to 22%). All these increases are much greater than the average increase in total UK employment of 2% in the corresponding period.
- The 10 fastest contracting occupations are ambulance staff (excluding paramedics, down 52%, to 12,000), pipe fitters (down 50% to 7,000), plasterers (down 44% to

13,000), parking and civil enforcement officers (down 43% to 13,000), debt, rent and other cash collectors (down 40% to 25,000), agricultural machinery drivers (down 40% to 6,000), hospital porters (down 39% to 11,000), precision instrument makers and repairers (down 37% to 20,000), typists and related keyboard operators (down 36% to 35,000), tailors and dressmakers (down 35% to 9,000).

- Other noteworthy fast expanding and contracting occupations just outside the top and bottom 10 include midwives (up 31% to 46,000), architects (up 29% to 58,000), fitness instructors (up 25% to 55,000), estate agents and auctioneers (up 22% to 50,000), advertising and public relations directors (down 31% to 18,000), pharmacists (down 27% to 45,000), aircraft pilots and flight engineers (down 27% to 16,000), library clerks and assistants (down 26% to 28,000), and travel agents (down 22% to 31,000).
- The number of people employed as Managers, Directors and Senior Officials has risen by 224,000 to above 3 million (an increase of 7.8%). The share of this occupational group in total UK employment (10.5%) is now broadly equivalent to the number of people employed in skilled manual trades.
- Many of the top 10 fastest expanding occupations require a high level of professional or technical qualifications, with others also requiring a significant amount of 'softer' personal skill. Most, though not all, can be described as 'knowledge occupations.' By contrast, most of the fastest contracting occupations are either skilled or semi-skilled manual occupations or low skilled occupations.
- Some of these occupational changes may be interrelated. For example, while the number of people employed as paramedics has more than doubled since 2011 the number of non-paramedic ambulance staff has fallen by half, perhaps indicating a change in staffing regimes and skill requirements. Similarly, police community support officers are the fourth fastest expanding occupation in the past two years during which time the number of police officers (sergeants and below) has fallen by 11% to 153,000. Public spending cuts may also explain a fall of almost 40% in the number of people employed as hospital porters and that of other occupations just

outside the 10 fastest contracting occupations (for example, probation officers, down 33% to 8,000).

**Dr John Philpott, Director of The Jobs Economist**, comments:

“The pattern of occupational contraction and expansion reflects a combination of short and longer-term shifts in the UK’s employment structure. The currently fastest growing occupations range from those that serve the mind (psychologists and conference organizers) to those that in rather different ways serve the body (paramedics and undertakers). Together the expansion of these occupations highlights the degree to which both knowledge and ‘the personal touch’ are key skill requirements in today’s labour market. But interestingly, our heavily debt ridden and traffic congested society at present seems content to employ fewer debt collectors and traffic wardens.”

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Notes to Editors:

**John Philpott is available for interview**

A copy of ***The UK’s fastest expanding and contracting occupations 2011-2013***, is available on request

The Jobs Economist is an independent consultancy specializing in analysis of employment and pay trends and related public policy issues

**Enquiries**

**Tel: 07907 211150**

Email: [john.philpott@thejobseconomist.org](mailto:john.philpott@thejobseconomist.org)

[www.thejobseconomist.org](http://www.thejobseconomist.org)