

**Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee
27 November 2017**

**Report by the Director of Service
Support**

**HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUARTERLY REPORT
2nd QUARTER 2017/18
July – September 2017**

REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the 2nd Quarter 2017/18 report on Health, Safety and Environment. Appendix 1 provides a summary of the statistical data.

During the reporting period there were 28 incidents recorded (Figs 2 & 3) that resulted in some form of personal injury compared to 31 for the same period last year. Due to the makeup of the workforce, the highest number of accidents were incurred by Full-time Fire Fighters and Control staff (19).

The total number of reported accidents for the quarter has decreased slightly, by just under 10%, compared to the same quarter for last year (Fig 3) and is below the five year rolling average figure for the same period (30). This shows the long term accident trend continues to fall. Activity areas showing an increase are Training and Special Service. Injuries related to Fire and Physical training remain the same. Routine Activities and RTC show a reduction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Committee considers this report and makes any recommendations to the Fire Authority as necessary.

BACKGROUND

2. Eleven of the 15 reported injuries during training activities were sustained at water rescue training conducted by qualified instructors at an offsite venue used to provide realistic practical simulation. Five of these were as a result of personnel striking submerged obstacles used to create directional flow, three were attributed to sickness due to water ingestion, two were musculoskeletal issues and one a laceration.
3. Of the five injuries sustained during Fire Activities, three were of a minor nature sustained on the fire-ground that did not result in any sickness absence. Two were as a result of responding to the initial call of which one resulted in sickness absence due to a musculoskeletal issue. The number of injuries occurring during Routine Activities had reduced significantly in comparison to the previous year's 2nd Quarter from 15 to five (66%).
4. "Hit something fixed or stationary" and "Musculoskeletal" are the two biggest contributing causes of accidents with six injuries reported for each. (Fig 4).
5. During this quarter, there have been two RIDDOR events compared to zero for the same quarter last year (Fig 5). The Service strives to reduce accidents and subsequent RIDDOR events to an aspirational target of zero. Both of these RIDDOR events occurred during central water rescue training. One was an unexplained knee injury occurring as an individual bent down and the other a serious cut requiring stitches due to contact with a safety knife integral to the personal flotation device. Central training records indicate that since practical water rescue training began, individuals have completed a related course 1930 times and only 4 incidents of this type have ever been recorded. This equates to 0.2% and as such indicates that although potentially serious, these injuries are still extremely rare.
6. On a positive note, near miss reports (Fig 6) have increased by almost ten times from three to 29 (1000%) in comparison with the same quarter for last year. This confirms that real progress continues to be made by the H, S & E team in educating personnel and positively improving the safety culture of HFRS.
7. The H, S & E team continue to undertake research in several areas reflecting the Services positive approach to H & S. These include:
 - Occupational cancer risks – In conjunction with the FBU, the Service is looking into the potential risk posed by contaminated PPE. This complements national research being undertaken by the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) of which the Service contributes.
 - Accident investigation training – secured from leading external provider for November 2107 with further dates planned for 2018.
 - Safe working limits for work at height PPE – proactive identification and control of related activities for all individuals above the prescribed weight limit.
 - Operational learning following on from fatalities in other FRSs – In light of a number of national reports/post-accident investigations received by the Service a review of current practices/procedures has been undertaken with a view to driving ongoing improvement.

- The Blue Light Pledge for positive mental health – Members are aware that significant work has been undertaken to develop the pledge in conjunction with MIND. This was signed by the previous Chief Fire Officer, Dene Sanders, and an action plan developed to raise awareness of mental health, reduce stigma and improve support mechanisms across the Service. This plan is monitored and managed by the Mental Health Steering Group.
- Sticky Blood – following the research conducted by the University of Edinburgh, work is ongoing to reduce the risks arising from exposure to extreme temperatures, with a number of control measures already in place.
- Behavioural Safety training – A longer term aspiration of the Service is to develop a positive behavioural safety culture throughout the Service. Work to implement a change program is underway.

8. Details of the Service's Health, Safety and Environmental outcomes for this Quarter 2016/17 are contained in Appendix 1.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

9. The monitoring of Health, Safety and Environmental information is a key part of the management of Strategic Objective 5 – “continuing to develop a committed, skilled and safe workforce.” This also links with the Service's vision of “Safer Firefighters, Safer Communities”.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

10. None.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11. None.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS

12. None.

CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

13. None.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

14. This report provides the opportunity for an additional level of scrutiny of Health and Safety information.

COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

15. None.

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION AND/OR COLLABORATION

16. None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

17. Health and Safety Policy Statement SP 10_1.

RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

18. That the Committee considers this report and makes any recommendations to the Fire Authority as necessary.

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