



# Health, Safety & Environment

2nd Quarter report: 01<sup>st</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015

Health and Safety Report: 027

Philip Smith BSc(Hons) GradIOSH EnvDipNebosh

14/10/2015

## Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	2
1.1. Aims .....	2
1.2. Objectives.....	2
2. Main body.....	3
2.1. Courses.....	3
2.2. Incident statistics .....	3
2.2.1. Role specific .....	3
2.2.2. Activity.....	4
2.2.3. Injury/incident type.....	6
2.2.4. RIDDOR reportable events.....	7
2.2.5. Near miss reporting .....	9
2.2.6. Vehicle collision .....	10
3. Additional Health, Safety & Environment information .....	12
3.1. Environmental update.....	12
3.2. Inside Government conference.....	12
3.3. Tips and advice .....	12

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Aims**

This report will provide the reader with information in relation to the Health, Safety & Environment (HS&E) performance of the Service for the first quarter of the fiscal year 2015/16.

### **1.2. Objectives**

The data within this report will be compared with the same quarter (2<sup>nd</sup>), but from the previous year. The reason for this is that similar conditions are likely to be expected e.g. winter and cold spells will present a higher chance of 'slips' due to ice/snow.

The update will give focus on the following aspects:

1. Courses
2. Incident statistics
3. On-going health, safety and environmental issues

## 2. Main body

### 2.1. Courses

The management of Health and Safety is fundamental to the Services continual successful performance in the field.

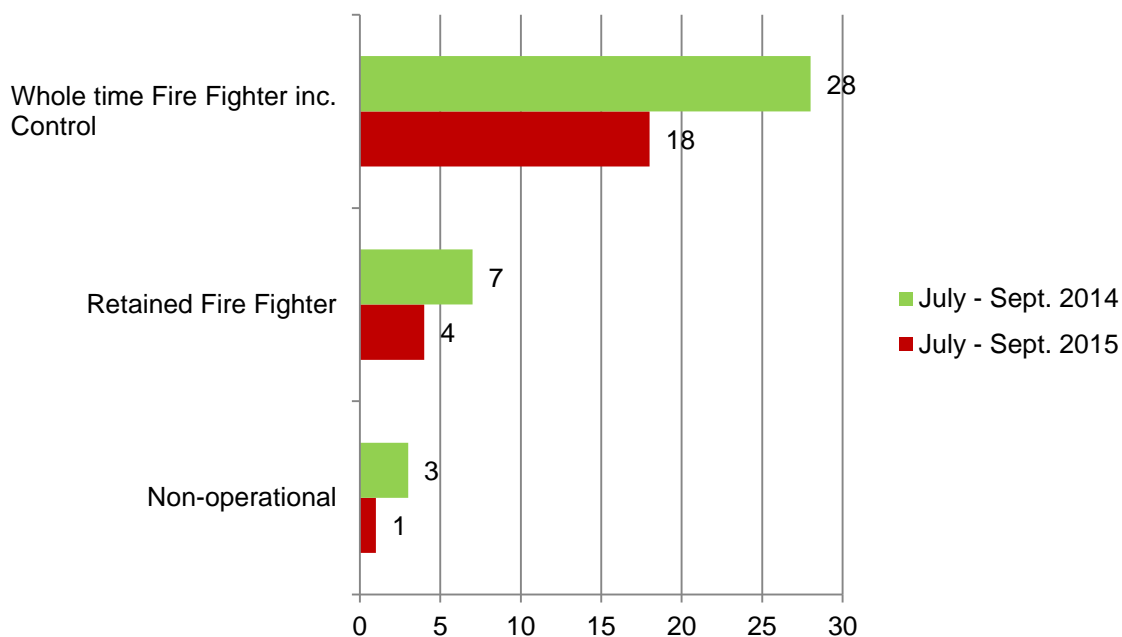
In order to ensure that this carries on, the Service is committed to providing suitable health and safety courses for its personnel.

### 2.2. Incident statistics

The following incident statistics for this quarter are compared to the previous year's quarter. Comparing incident data from the previous year's quarter will allow environmental variables to be factored in therefore giving a more representative comparison.

#### 2.2.1. Role specific

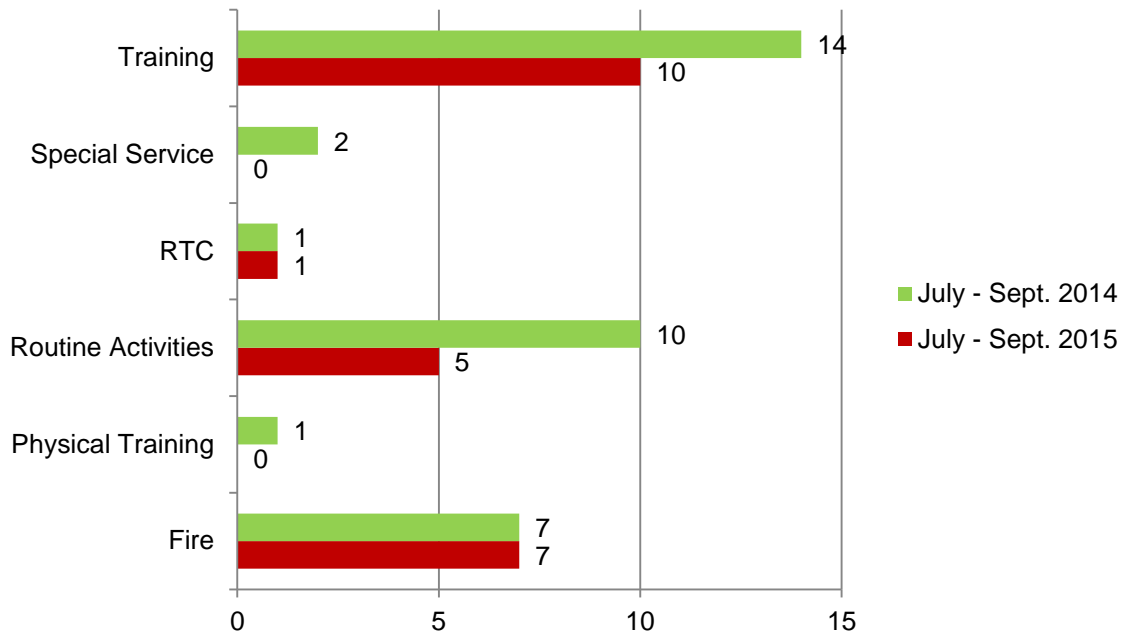
The graph below identifies the role of those involved with undesired events for the quarter.



The Service has seen an overall reduction in the number of injuries recorded in this quarter compared to the same quarter from the previous year.

### 2.2.2. Activity

The following information identifies during which activity unwanted events have occurred.



Whilst injuries during *Training* activities have reduced when compared to the same quarter in the previous year it is still the most common activity related to injury whilst at work.

Of those recorded, injuries included:

- Three instances of fire fighters coming into contact with a submerged object during water rescue training at Tees Barrage.
- Two instances of diarrhoea and vomiting following water rescue training at Tees Barrage.
- One instance of ear ache following water rescue training at Tees Barrage.
- One instance of diarrhoea and vomiting following water rescue training at Severn Lakes (Crowle)
- One instance of a strained back when undertaking bariatric training on station.
- One instance of a strained back when undertaking road traffic collision training.
- One instance of a retained recruit attempting to catch a length of hose when it fell whilst being lowered from a height.

The HS&E Section continue to liaise with the Training Section to monitor incidents. Additionally, the Service is working in conjunction with the FBU to monitor the prevalence of diarrhoea and sickness following attendance of water rescue training at Tees Barrage.

*Routine Activities* have reduced by five when compared to the same quarter in the previous year. Injuries reported during *Routine Activities* include:

- One individual strained their back whilst carrying equipment to the operational training complex at Service HQ.
- One individual bumped their head whilst picking up a piece of equipment.
- One individual slipped in the shower that caused the shower door to shatter resulting in the individual being cut by the glass.
- One individual bumped their head whilst walking through a door opening.
- One individual got soap from a soap dispenser in their eyes.

Personnel are constantly reminded to take care of themselves and be aware of their surroundings.

The HS&E team have visited the site with the shattered shower door and recommended that the type of door that was also fitted on two other showers in the premises be changed to a sliding door to mitigate a similar occurrence.

There has been one instance where an individual has been injured whilst attending an *RTC* involving a motorcycle in a ditch, however, the information that was submitted to HS&E is sparse and the team have requested additional information be provided during the investigation stage.

Injuries sustained whilst at a *Fire* have remained at seven for this quarter. Injuries recorded are as follows:

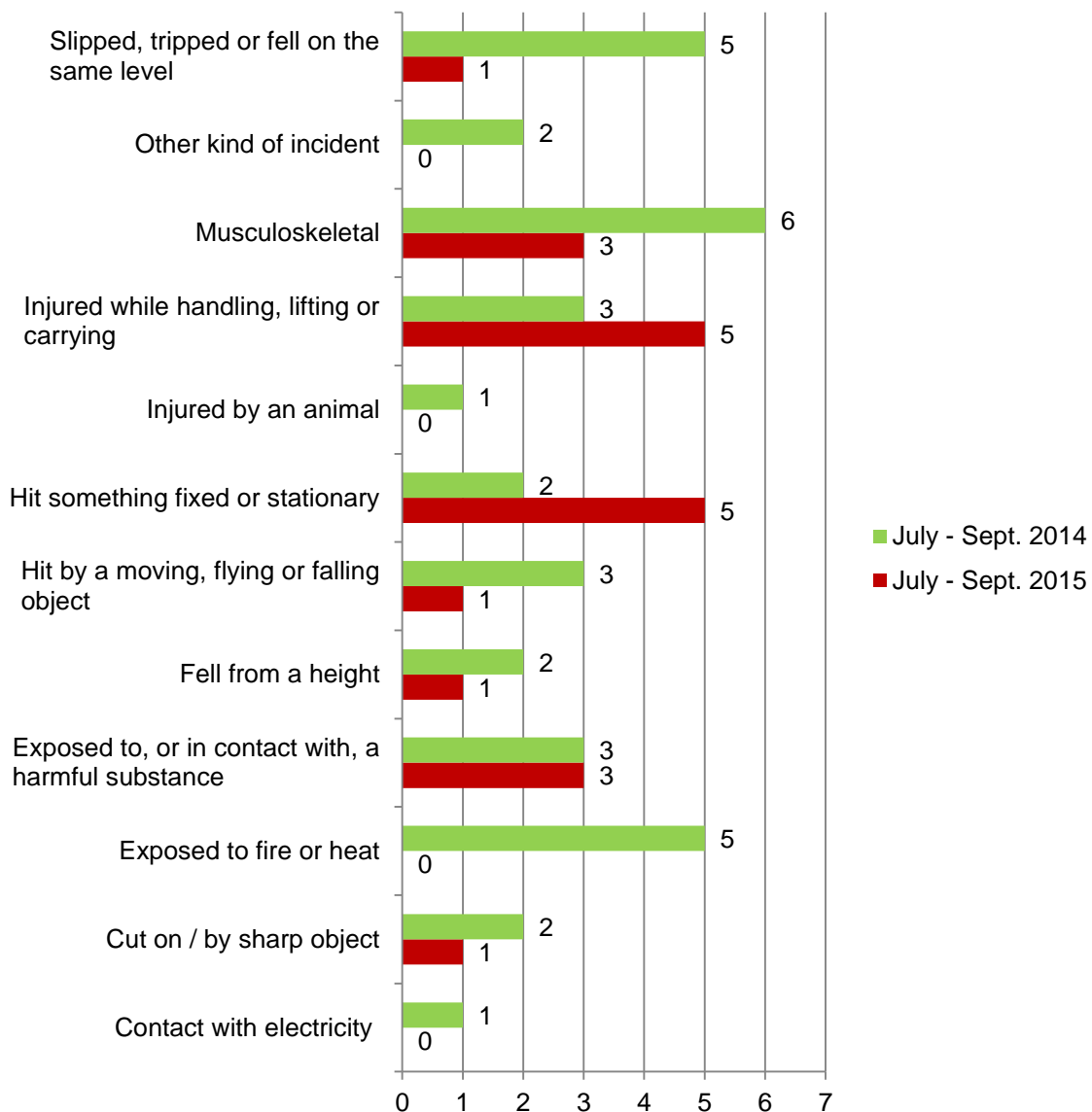
- Three separate incidents of personnel injuring their backs whilst trying to release their breathing apparatus sets from the brackets within the fire engine.
- One fire fighter injured their leg whilst running hose out at an incident and 'cockling' over.
- One fire fighter over extended their leg injuring their knee when digging out a fire hydrant at an incident.
- One fire fighter was exposed to a biological hazard (potentially urine and faeces) when replacing a bollard into the ground at the scene of a car fire.
- One fire fighter slipped off a short extension ladder whilst attending a fire at a recycling plant.

The HS&E team along with the Emergency Preparedness and Response team are investigating the three incidents involving the breathing apparatus. The investigation highlighted an issue with the current design of the back-plate and a solution has been identified and is currently being implemented across the Service.

Investigations are currently underway to determine the likely cause of the incidents and any recommended actions thereafter.

### 2.2.3. Injury/incident type

The following bar chart identifies the most common cause of injuries to personnel within the Service.



*NB – The reader is advised that the figures in the table above may not calculate to the number of incidents recorded, this is due to individuals being able to select multiple injury types when completing the initial incident record.*

The most prevalent causes of injury will be broken down below.

*Injured while handling, lifting or carrying* incidents include:

- One instance of a fire fighter injuring their lower back when attending an RTC.
- One instance of a fire fighter injuring their back during bariatric training.
- One instance of lower back injury during RTC training.
- Two separate instances of injuries to the back and shoulder when trying to remove their breathing apparatus sets from the fire engine.

*Hit something fixed or stationary* includes:

- Three separate instances of fire fighters coming into contact with submerged objects when undertaking water rescue training.
- One instance of an individual bumping their head on a fire engine door.
- One instance of a fire fighter bumping their head when walking through a doorway.

*Musculoskeletal*

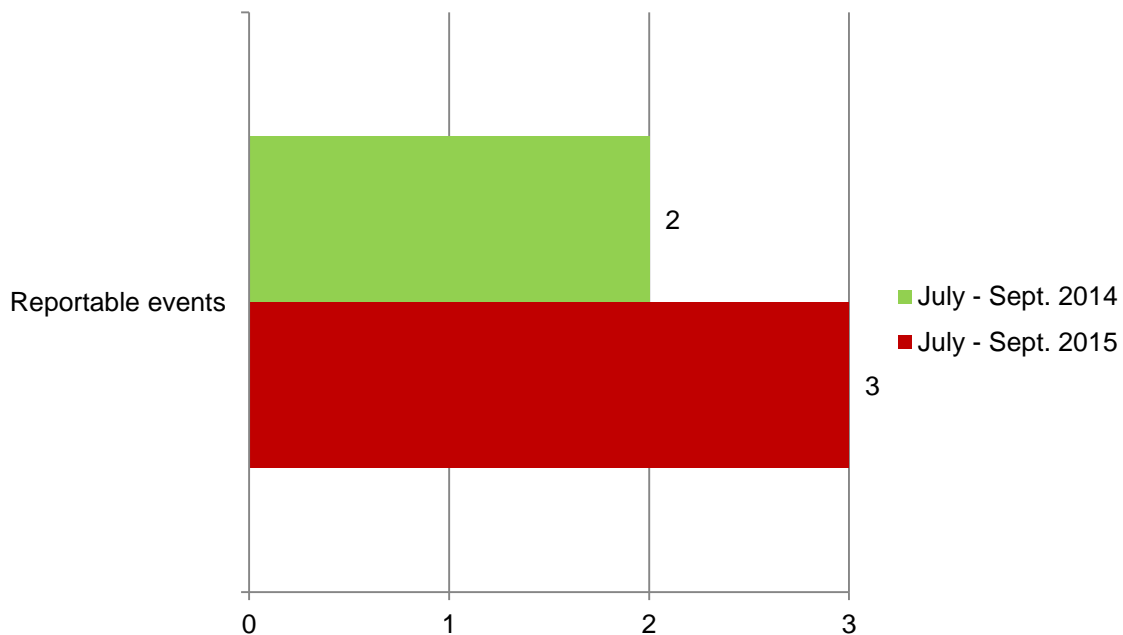
- Injury to right knee whilst digging out a fire hydrant.
- Injury to lower back whilst setting up a training session.
- Injury whilst releasing a breathing apparatus set.

*Exposed to, or in contact with, a harmful substance*

- Two instances of diarrhoea and sickness following water rescue training.
- One instance of a potential exposure a biological hazard (faeces).

Scrutinising the data identifies that there is a trend related to the action of releasing the breathing apparatus sets and resultant bad backs (one of which was RIDDOR reportable), and another trend relating to fire fighters coming into contact with submerged objects during water rescue training.

#### 2.2.4. RIDDOR reportable events



The Service has had three RIDDOR reportable events in this quarter.

One event involved a fire fighter jarring their back when trying to remove their breathing apparatus (BA) set from the bracket on the fire engine. To mitigate this the HS&E Team have liaised with the Emergency



Preparedness and Response Team and identified that the problem can be rectified easily by altering the existing brackets position. The work to alter the brackets is already underway.

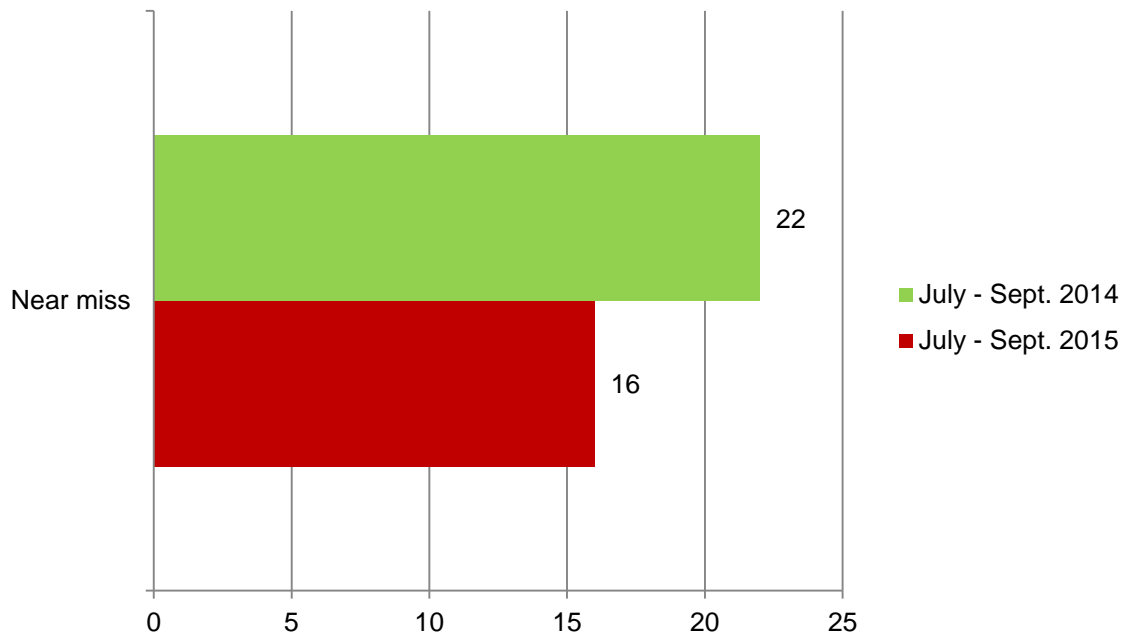
The second event involved an individual undertaking road traffic collision (RTC) development training and felt a twinge in their back when removing a car door.

The third event occurred when a fire fighter slipped from a short extension ladder and fell to the ground. The individual was taken to hospital after feeling pain in their right elbow.

Investigations are currently underway to determine the likely cause of the incidents and any recommended actions thereafter.

### 2.2.5. Near miss reporting

The Service is continuing to see an increase in the number of near miss events recorded by personnel.

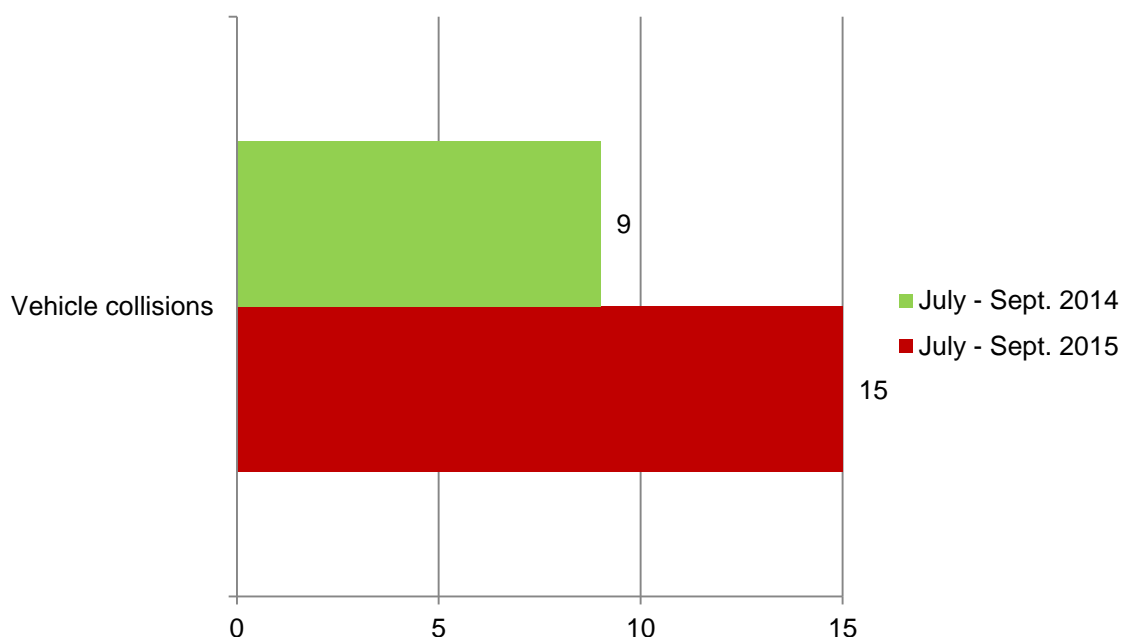


There has been a marked reduction in the number of near miss events recorded within this period.

The Health, Safety and Environment team will monitor the near miss reports closely to establish a reason why this has occurred.

An update will be given in the next quarter report.

### 2.2.6. Vehicle collision



The increase in the number of recorded vehicle incidents is a result of personnel being encouraged to report any kind of vehicle collision.

Working alongside the Fleet and Operational Management Team, the HS&E team plan to continue to identify trends and suitable recommendations following investigations but also to identify the estimated costs for such collisions.

Below is a breakdown of the recorded vehicle collisions:

- A Service car door was blown open by the wind and struck the car parked next to it, there was no damage to the Service vehicle but there was slight damage to the parked car.
- A Service car was struck by a bird which resulted in damage to the grill of the vehicle.
- The windscreen of a 'special' Service vehicle was cracked when a fire fighter reached inside with their helmet on. The fire fighter connected with the internal mirror which resulted in a crack behind the mirror.
- The driver of a Service vehicle misjudged a gate opening and scratched the side of the car as they tried to manoeuvre through the gap.
- A member of the public pulled out in front of a fire engine which was attending a fire call, the engine struck the car and then deflected into a parked car.
- Whilst undertaking a reversing manoeuvre during test conditions, a Service vehicle struck a vehicle which was parked behind them.
- A fire engine struck a bollard whilst the driver was manoeuvring the vehicle.
- A fire engine hit a hinge on a gateway when the driver tried to manoeuvre the vehicle through a tight gap.

- A Service vehicle hit a van which braked suddenly.
- Three incidents recorded did not contain an adequate description of the event to gather any useful information from them.
- A fire engine made contact with another Service vehicle when trying to manoeuvre between a tight space.
- A fire engine reversed into the bay doors once the crew had been stood down from an emergency call.
- One incident was recorded following damage sustained to one of the Services boats during a training activity.

The HS&E team will revisit the three incidents that did not yield sufficient information and individuals will be requested to provide the additional information

Once the information has been collated, the estimated cost of repair will be published in the quarterly reports.

### **3. Additional Health, Safety & Environment information**

#### **3.1. Environmental update**

There have been recent changes to the environmental standard ISO 14001.

Mike Brown has liaised with Steven Brightman, an external environmental consultant, to ensure that Service continues to maintain the standard it currently is accredited with.

#### **3.2. Inside Government conference**

Philip Smith has received an invitation to speak at the next Inside Government conference held in London on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

The presentation is “Delivering an Award Winning Health and Safety Management Approach to the Fire and Rescue Service” and will include elements of developing a behavioural safety programme to increase health and safety performance, enabling fire fighters to make health and safety decisions and creating a Service wide health and safety change management programme amongst other areas of topical interest.

The presentation is currently in development but will be available for review prior to the 26<sup>th</sup> January.

This is an excellent opportunity to share the current work being undertaken by the Service.

#### **3.3. Tips and advice**

The HS&E team were made aware that the fortnightly publication of ‘Tips and advice’ had not been circulated amongst CMT for some time.

This has now been rectified and regular communication of this periodical is re-established.

