

HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUARTERLY REPORT
2nd QUARTER 2018/19
July – September 2018

SUMMARY

1. This is the 2nd Quarter 2018/19 report on Health, Safety and Environment. Appendix 1 provides a summary of the statistical data.
2. During the reporting period there were 29 incidents recorded (Figs 1 & 2) that resulted in some form of personal injury or ill-health. This is identical to the same period last year and is marginally lower than the five-year rolling average for quarter two of 29.6 (Fig 3).
3. Twenty-three of the 29 injuries/ill-health episodes were reported by operational staff. Eleven were fulltime, ten were on-call and two were flexible duty staff. This makes up 79% of the total for the quarter. This is usual considering the proportionate makeup of our workforce and the nature of the activities carried out by operational staff i.e. more potential hazards encountered. It is less than last year's quarter 2 which was made up of 83% (24 out of 29) operational staff.
4. Non-operational staff reports increased from two to four largely due to minor incidents such as knocking into furniture, however one incident relates to a dog bite during a safe and well visit (the dog was from a different property).
5. As can be seen from (Fig 3), the number of accidents for quarter 2 is only slightly lower than the five-year rolling average (29.6). However, it should be noted that the total for this year has fallen significantly from the 2014 highest figure of 35; a reduction of almost 17%.
6. Once again, training activities make up the highest number of the total injuries reported which is the same as quarter 1 for this year and quarter two for the previous year with 11 of the 29 reports (38%). Positively though, this proportion has reduced as the percentage of the total for last year's quarter two was 55% (15 out of 29). Every other activity type has shown an increase in comparison to last year's quarter. These are Physical Training, Routine Activities, Fire and Special Service.
7. Another similarity with last year's quarter two is the number of RIDDOR reports (Fig 5) which is again two. Both these injuries resulting in sickness absence over seven days were sustained during Physical Training.
8. Pleasingly we have once again seen a rise in proactive near miss reporting in comparison to last year's quarter two, this time by more than 72% (Fig 6). Also, for the sixth consecutive quarter, the number of near miss reports (50) outnumbers the number of accident reports (29).

RECOMMENDATIONS

9. That Members take assurance from the Service's proactive management of Health, Safety and Environmental outcomes.

BACKGROUND

10. Eight of the eleven reported injuries or ill-health during training activities (73%) were sustained by on-call duty staff. Five of these individuals were trainees or transferees participating in an initial recruit or transfer to full-time training course and in the majority were minor injuries reported by the instructors in line with best practice. The most significant resulted in blistering of the knuckles during compartment fire behaviour training. Two were caused after becoming ill following attendance at water rescue training at Tees Barrage. None were deemed significant enough to be reportable under RIDDOR or cause individual sickness of more than 3 days. The three injuries to fulltime staff were all minor and did not result in any sickness absence.
11. The two most common categories of injury types, “injured while lifting or carrying” and “musculoskeletal” are closely linked and together make up for nine of the 31 reported causes of injury (29%). Of these, eight were reported by operational staff, two of which while undertaking physical training activities. The only non-operational person to suffer an injury of this type was a cleaner who struck their ankle on a chair whilst moving it. The remaining spread of injury types is fairly evenly distributed amongst the other eight categories (Fig 4).
12. Of the five injuries that were sustained during fire activities, none were as a result of exposure to fire or heat. Three were minor events; a slip whilst mounting an appliance, soreness following use of a door breaker and potential smoke inhalation which recorded “no apparent symptoms”. The remaining two involved a laceration from broken glass in performing a rescue and a pulled hamstring whilst running to a vehicle during an incident.
13. During this quarter, there have been two RIDDOR reportable injuries, the same as quarter two for last year. Both were due to injuries all resulting in more than seven days consecutive sickness sustained to fulltime firefighters during Physical Training carried out on station. One was a broken wrist and the other a deep laceration to the shin. Control measures implemented to prevent future similar events include a review of risk assessments and provision of alternative equipment. The Service strives to reduce accidents and subsequent RIDDOR events to an aspirational target of zero.
14. On a positive note, near miss reports (Fig 6) have increased from 29 to 50 in comparison with the same quarter for last year; an increase of more than 72%. This figure is higher than the number of reported accidents for the sixth quarter in succession which suggests the safety culture within HFRS continues to improve allowing for proactive identification of potential issues before injuries or ill-health conditions arise. It is acknowledged that there is a fine balance between proactive reporting and using the near miss reporting as means to raise wider concerns. Ongoing training and quality assurance within this area will seek to ensure near miss reports are appropriate and meet the necessary criteria.
15. The H, S & E team continue to undertake research in several areas reflecting the Services positive approach. These include:
 - Occupational cancer risks – A joint working and consultation group involving the FBU and various different roles across the Service meets bi-monthly to promote best practice and develop control measures to reduce firefighter exposure to contaminants. The group has identified four key areas warranting separate consideration; these are cross-contamination issues arising on station, traveling to and from incidents, decontamination following incidents and realistic fire training activities.

- Manual handling and musculoskeletal injuries – In response to the steady rise in the number reported, a new policy has been created and a raft of risk assessments are available online to encompass general tasks commonly carried out. External “train the trainer” courses from a recognised provider have been booked for January 2019, with a view to the fitness and wellbeing advisors rolling out training in the following three months to personnel in operational and identified support roles.
- Humberside Police – Collaborative work to support the force to meet their health and safety obligations whilst exploring a business case with the view of moving towards a joint service led by HFRS.
- Sustainability and environmental management – The team have prepared a briefing note for senior managers following extensive research with partner organisations such as the Police to ascertain whether the principles adopted are fit for HFRS and preferable to the current ISO14001 accreditation we work to.
- Operational learning – Serious accidents and near misses are comprehensively investigated with resultant recommendations shared across the Service to constantly drive improvements in service delivery. Also, recommendations arising from national incidents of note are analysed as to their relevance and potential application within HFRS. For example, work is currently ongoing to address the recommendations arising from the significant incident at Beverley Road last year including provision of extra thermal imaging capacity on every appliance to enable external thermal scanning.
- The Blue Light Pledge for positive mental health – Significant work continues to be undertaken to develop the pledge in conjunction with MIND; coordinated by the Health and Wellbeing Steering Group which is chaired by the Director of Human Resources. Blue light champions have been trained across all areas of the Service and the names of these individuals recently circulated to all staff.
- Behavioural Safety training – The Service continues to promote positive safety culture through delivery of behavioural safety training. A development program facilitated by the HS&E team is already well established and continues to be rolled out to supervisory and middle managers across the Service.
- New format debriefing procedure as used by the National College of Policing. To develop how we learn lessons and enable improvement following significant incidents, this nationally accepted model of debriefing is being adopted. Four individuals have initially been trained as facilitators with a view of more being developed in the future.
- Collaborative work with Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service to research innovative areas around firefighter tracking within buildings and provision of protective equipment.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

16. The monitoring of Health, Safety and Environmental information is a key part of the Strategic Plan to:
- Maintain a positive health and safety environment, compliant with legislation and provide operational assurance.
 - Implement measures to ensure environmental sustainability.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

17. None.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

18. Compliance with Health & Safety/Environmental legislation is a legal requirement.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS

19. None.

CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

20. None.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

21. Compliance with Health & Safety/Environmental legislation is a legal requirement. This report provides the opportunity for an additional level of scrutiny around Health & Safety/Environmental issues.

COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

22. None.

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION AND/OR COLLABORATION

23. None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

24. Health and Safety Policy Statement.

RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

25. That Members take assurance from the Service's proactive management of Health, Safety and Environmental outcomes.

S TOPHAM

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