

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Safety and Assurance Annual Performance Report 2024-2025



Contents



1. Introduction

Chief Officer and Board Chair; Head of Safety and Assurance; and Key Achievements

Introduction

We are pleased to present the Annual Safety and Assurance Performance Report for 2024-2025, which reaffirms the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's (SFRS) unwavering commitment to the safety of our people. This report provides a comprehensive overview of our performance, governance, and continuous improvement activities, reflecting the strategic integration of our safety value as a foundational principle across all levels of our Service.

Throughout the reporting year, we have continued to embed a culture of safety and assurance within our operational and corporate functions. From strategic planning to frontline delivery, our approach has been guided by evidence-based decision-making, robust risk management, and a clear focus on protecting our workforce and the communities we serve.

A key milestone through 2024/25 has been the successful implementation of our Standard

Operating Procedure (SOP) and Management Arrangement (MA) for Fire Contaminants, developed in collaboration with representative bodies and external experts in this field. This initiative represents a significant advancement in occupational health protection and demonstrates our commitment to applying scientific rigor and best practice in managing emerging risks to ensure we safeguard our people.

Looking ahead, the SFRS will continue to evolve through structured organisational learning, the enhancement of assurance frameworks, with a proactive focus on the safety, health, and wellbeing of our people. This report therefore not only reflects on our achievements and challenges but also sets a clear trajectory for future improvements in safety, assurance and wellbeing across the Service.

The SFRS Board and Strategic Leadership Team wish to formally acknowledge and thank all staff for their professionalism, resilience, and dedication throughout the year. Your continued efforts in upholding safety standards and protecting one another are deeply appreciated and central to our collective success.



Stuart Stevens
SFRS Chief Officer



Dr Kirsty Darwent
Chair of SFRS Board

Overview

As we reflect on the 2024–25 reporting year, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to every member of the SFRS. Your continued commitment to being safe and well has been the driving force behind the progress we have achieved. Whether responding to incidents, supporting operational delivery, or leading teams, your professionalism and resilience have contributed significantly to a safer, more effective working environment.

I wish to also extend my thanks to our fellow UK Fire & Rescue Services for providing their data which has assisted with our benchmarking exercises and very much look forward to working more closely with the National Fire Chiefs Council to identify learning and improvement initiatives that will improve safety across the sector.

Over the course of 2024-25, the SA function has delivered meaningful improvements across several key areas. Notably, we achieved a 38% reduction

in RIDDOR-reportable injuries, as direct outcome of enhanced safety awareness and proactive engagement with risk mitigation measures. The introduction of the Fire Contaminants MA and SOPs marked a major advancement in occupational health, while improvements to hazard and near-miss reporting systems have strengthened our ability to learn and adapt.

Structured debriefs, thematic audits and case studies have been instrumental towards embedding lessons learned and promoting our culture of continual improvement across the Service. Our governance arrangements continue to meet statutory obligations, supported by an environment that empowers individuals to take ownership of safety. Enhancements to reporting formats have improved clarity and usability, and our Health and Safety Improvement Plans achieved a record 98% completion rate, reflecting our ongoing collective commitment to improve safety and organisational learning.

We remain focused on further strengthening our Safety and Assurance Management System (SAMS). Alignment with ISO 45001, standard for occupational health and safety management system



Jim Holden

Head of Safety and Assurance

has progressed, and improvements to Provision and Use of Work Equipment (PUWER) and risk assessment processes have been implemented. Safety training programs either through specific courses and as part of our Training for Operational Competence, continue to be undertaken by operational personnel to equip them with the knowledge and understanding required to operate safely and confidently.

Thank you once again for your dedication and for playing a vital role in protecting each other and the communities we serve. Your contributions continue to shape a safer, healthier, and more resilient SFRS.

Key Highlights for 2024/25



Planning

The Manual Handling e-learning course has

been revised. In addition, a new Assessors Training Course has been introduced, providing enhanced content and guidance to support the effective management of manual handling assessments.



Operations

Advanced offsite water rescue training has been delivered,

supported by comprehensive safety documentation to ensure best practice and operational readiness. The Document Conversion Project (DCP) continues to provide vital support in updating: Risk Assessments (RA), Safe Systems of Work (SSOW), and Operational Procedures.



Directorates

RA's, SSOW, and Technical Assessments have

been reviewed and published across the SFRS. Additionally, 3 Health and Safety Directorate Handbooks have been reviewed and published, enhancing compliance and safety.



Training

Training RA and SSOW have been reviewed to ensure

alignment with current operational practices and to address emerging risks. Development of new RAs and SSOW for new equipment, techniques, and procedures ensuring continued relevance, safety, and operational effectiveness.



Event and Investigation

A total of 693 events were reported and

investigated, including 3 significant event investigations. Additionally, a focused analysis of training-related burn injuries and Pneumatic Rescue Equipment (PRE) was conducted to identify root causes and to reduce the risk of reoccurrence.



Safety Assurance

A Support Review was conducted on Safety and

Assurance Improvement Groups (SAIGs) and Self-Compliance Management Arrangements. The findings highlighted areas of best practice and provided recommendations for improvement.



Operational Assurance

Operational Assurance (OA)

have researched and published 5 Frontline Updates, following shared learning from National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), supporting organisational learning.



Business Support

The Annual and Quarterly reporting processes have been

modernised, resulting in improved clarity of reporting outputs and stronger alignment with strategic objectives. These enhancements support decision-making and ensure that reporting reflects organisational priorities effectively.



2. Performance

Key Performance Indicators; Benchmarking; and SA Indicators

Key Performance Indicators

RIDDOR Reportable Events

In 2024/25 a total of 10 events were reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under RIDDOR Regulations. When compared to the previous reporting year, there has been a 38% decrease (16 to 10).

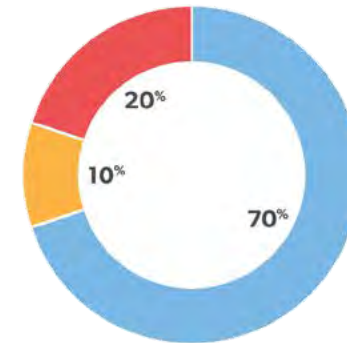
Following the Asbestos Thematic Audit, several improvements were implemented to strengthen asbestos safety and compliance. These included a comprehensive review of the Asbestos Generic Risk Assessment (GRA) and updates to the Training for

Operational Competence (TFOC) Asbestos training module to reflect current best practices. Notably, only one RIDDOR-reportable asbestos-related incident was recorded during the 2024–25.

The most common cause of over 7-day injuries was slips, trips, and falls, accounting for 20% (2 of 10).

An example of a RIDDOR reportable event included:

- While detaching trailer from Land Rover, boat shifted unexpectedly, trapping the firefighter’s thumb between the trailer and spare wheel, resulting in hospital treatment.

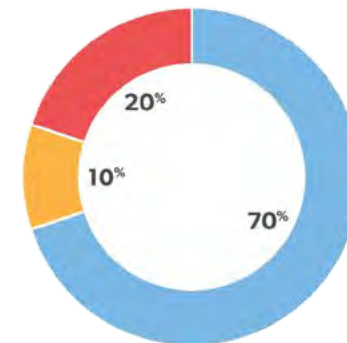


By Activity

Operational

Non-Operational

Training



Type of RIDDOR

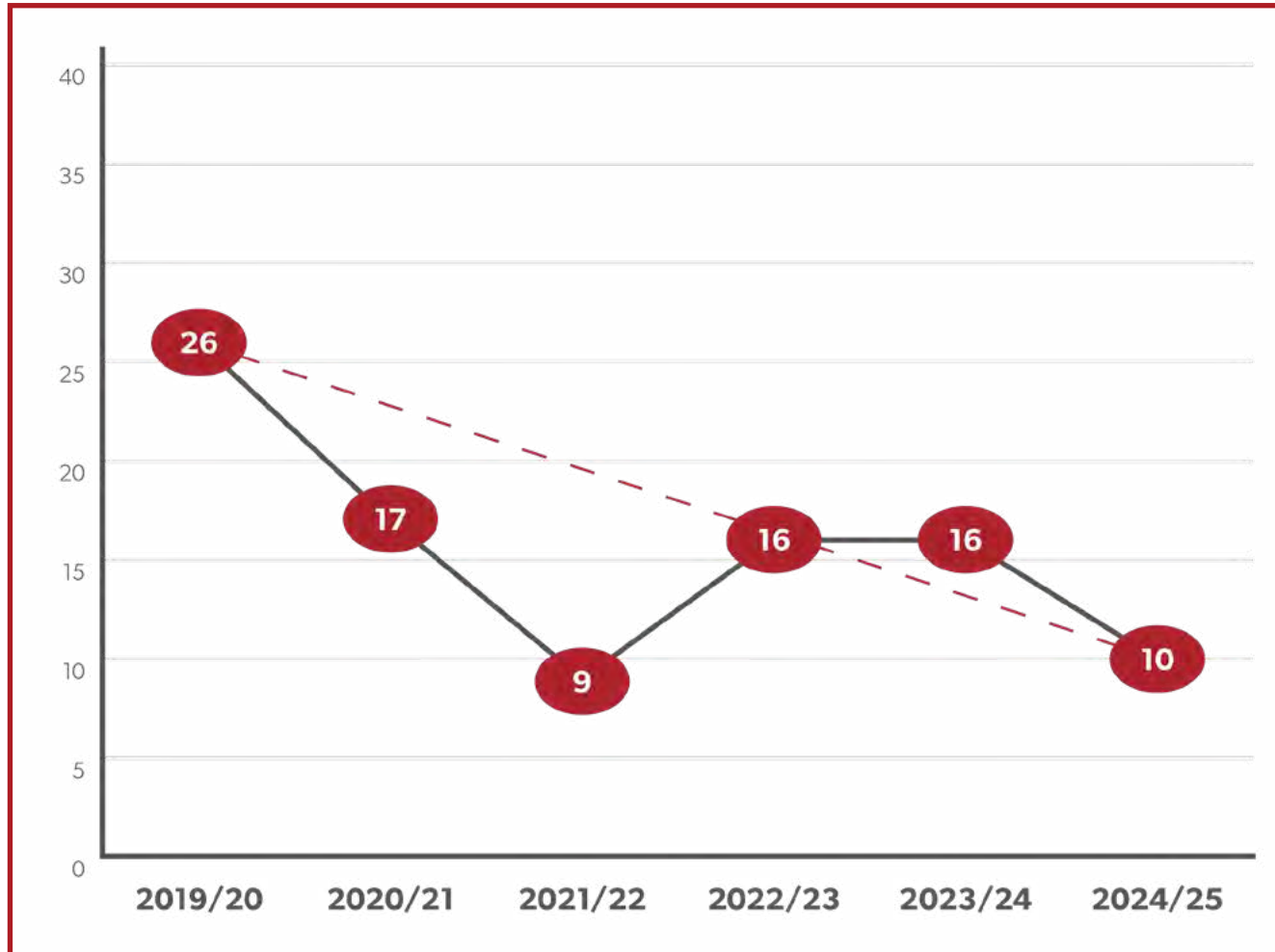
Over 7 Day Injuries

Dangerous Occurrence

Specified Injuries

Key Performance Indicators

RIDDOR Reportable Events



KPI 52: RIDDOR Reportable Events

Purpose:

Demonstrates how many notifications there has been to the HSE which may include death, specified injury, over 7 day injury, non-worker taken to hospital for treatment, dangerous occurrence or an occupational disease. Please note COVID-19 RIDDORs are excluded to provide a true trend.

We will:

Continue to monitor and analyse incident trends to proactively reduce the risk of RIDDOR-reportable events, ensuring that lessons are identified and acted upon.

The SFRS remains committed to safeguarding the welfare of all personnel following workplace accidents or injuries, with timely referral to appropriate support services where needed.

Key Performance Indicators

Accident and Injuries (excluding RIDDOR)

In 2024/25 there was a total of 173 (2 of which involved Contractors) Accidents and Injuries recorded. When compared to the previous reporting year, there has been an 8% (188 to 173) decrease, of these:

The slight upward trend over the four-year period may be attributed to the lower incident reporting observed during the COVID-19 period, with similar rates reported prior to COVID-19

Examples of Accident/Injuries include:

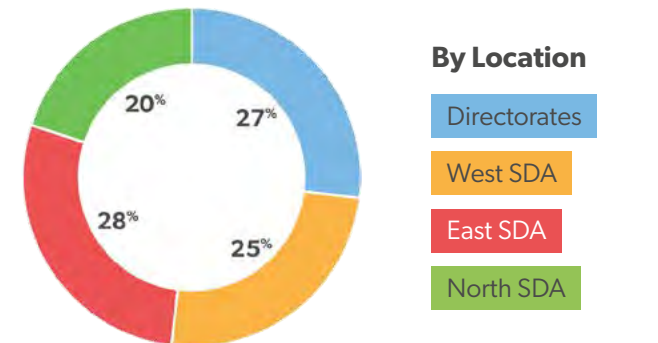
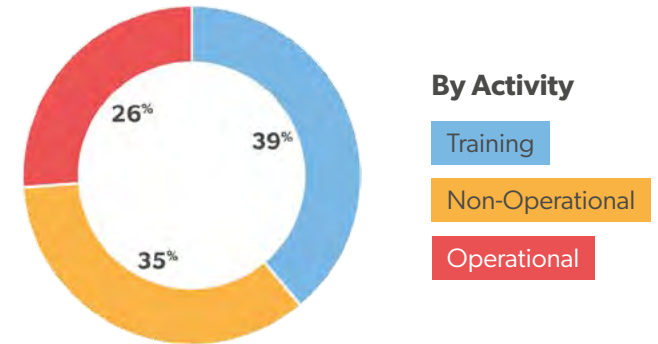
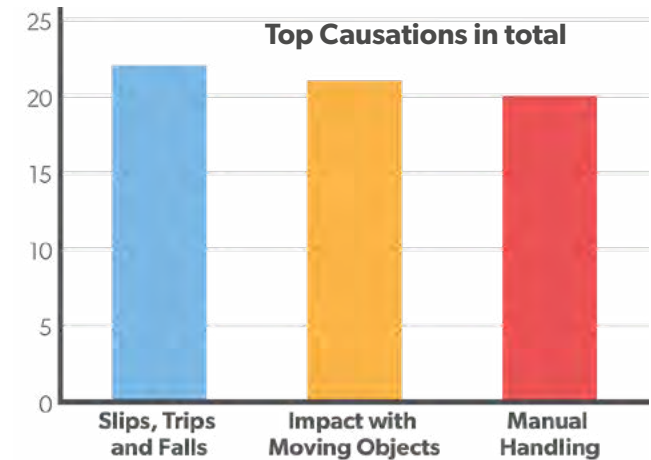
- Firefighter misjudged step while dismounting appliance resulting in familiarisation with SSOW and aware of personal behaviours; and
- While removing a standpipe from its securing bracket on the appliance, a firefighter's hand was punctured by an exposed sharp edge on the bracket. This highlighted that greater

awareness is required during routine checks and maintenance to identify and report hazards.

Local Safety and Assurance Improvement Groups identify local trends and highlight any required actions. When there are national implications, these are escalated to the Safety and Assurance Sub-Group for review.

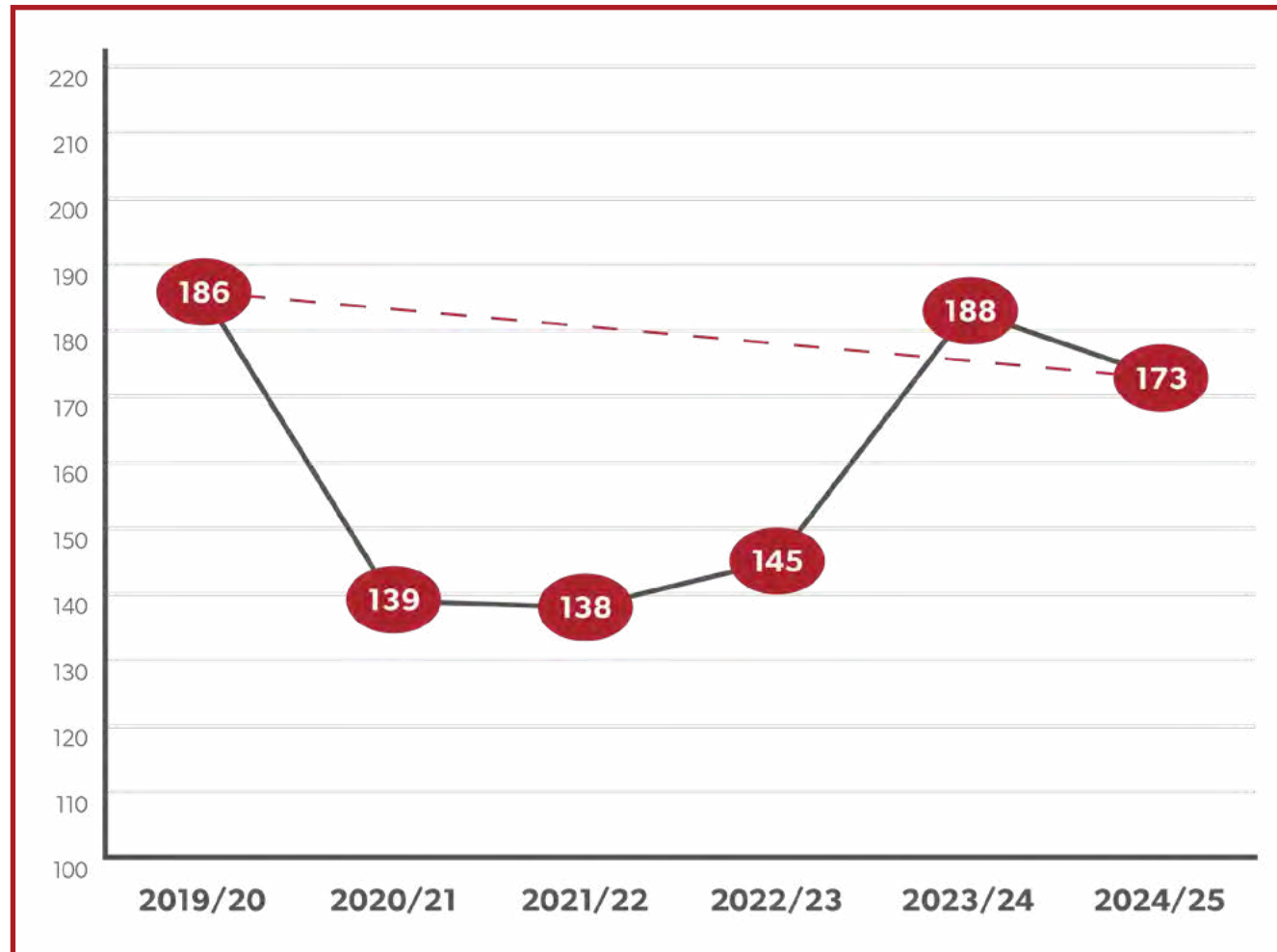
In the coming year, SA will review key areas to strengthen safety performance and learning. A particular focus will be placed on understanding the personal behaviours and decision-making processes that contribute to events. This includes examining the human factors behind events and identifying opportunities for early intervention and behavioural support.

This work will be progressed and supported throughout 2025, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to promote a culture of accountability, learning, and continuous improvement.



Key Performance Indicators

Accident and Injuries (excluding RIDDOR)



KPI 53: Accident and Injuries (excluding RIDDOR)

Purpose:

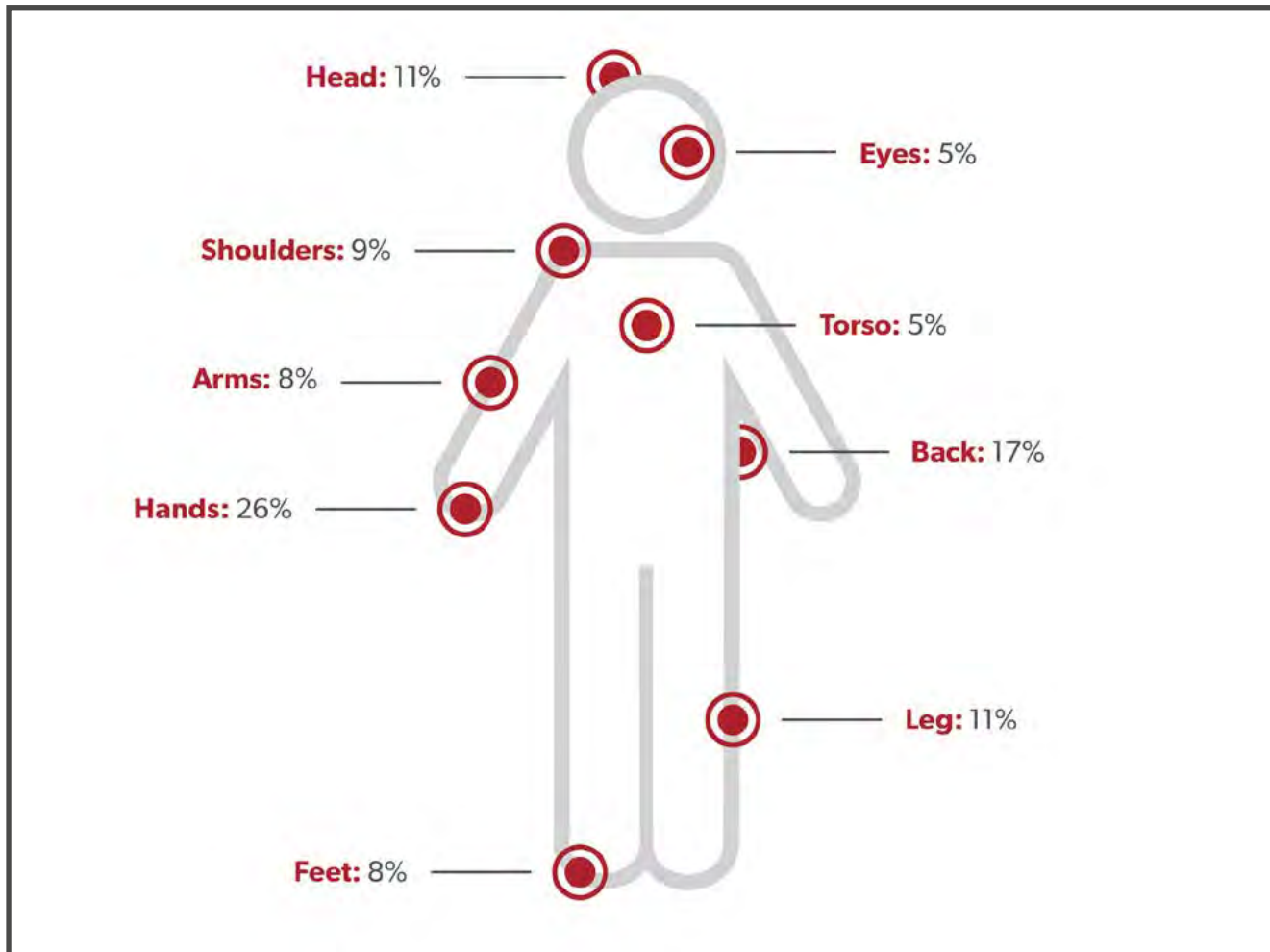
Demonstrates total accidents and injuries to occur through workplace accidents.

We will:

Maintain a consistent approach to promptly investigating all accidents and implementing proportionate corrective actions to reduce the likelihood of recurrence and enhance overall safety performance.

Key Performance Indicators

Accident and Injuries (excluding RIDDOR)



The SFRS Musculoskeletal (MSK) Injury Reduction Group is supported by Health and Wellbeing to ensure all personnel receive the necessary assistance following an injury.

Body Map

Percentages for Accident/Injuries.

- Please note there may be multiple injuries per accident.

Key Performance Indicators

Verbal Attacks on SFRS Staff

In 2024-25 there was a total of 19 verbal attacks to SFRS personnel reported. When compared to the previous reporting year, this has remained numerically consistent.

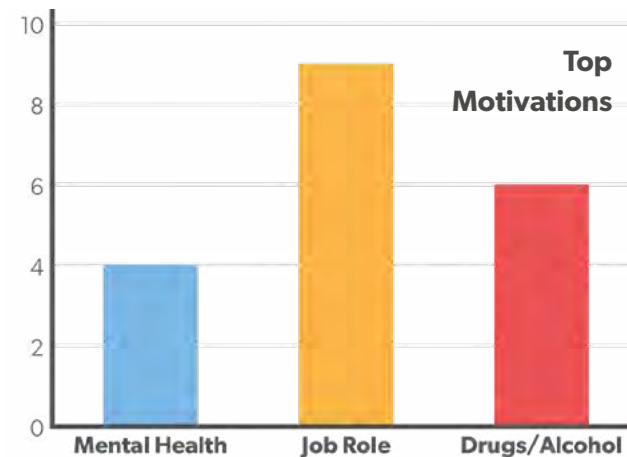
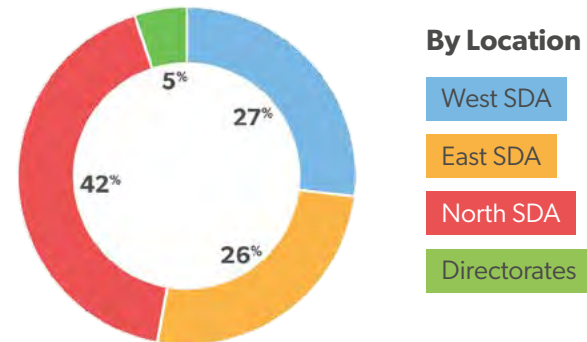
63% (12 of 19) events were reported during operational activities. 37% (7 of 19) during non-operational activities.

14 verbal attacks were from individual persons towards staff, the remaining 5 were group acts.

Police were requested for 11 of the 19 verbal assaults of which 1 was considered as reportable under the Emergency Workers (Scotland) Act 2005.

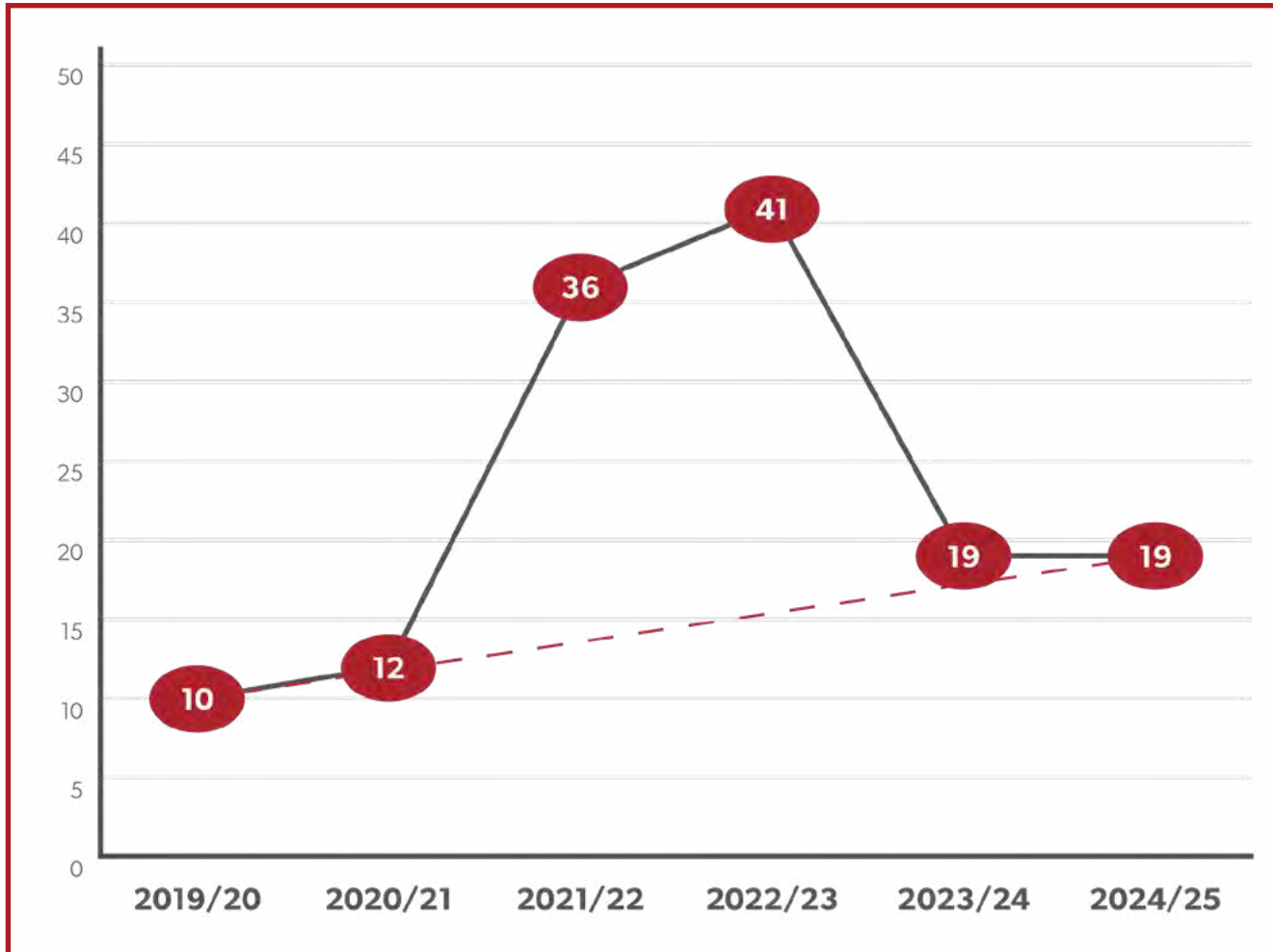
Outcomes taken from SFRS investigations include:

- Local areas liaising with Community Action Team (CAT) to ensure adult protection forms are submitted.
- CAT have regular communication to Anti-Social Team, Community Wardens and Police Scotland
- Strengthen ties with Police Scotland counterpart to extend close working around know addresses of history of anti social behaviour towards SFRS personnel
- Enhanced Welfare checks of crew – Completed soon after AOV was known



Key Performance Indicators

Verbal Attacks on SFRS Staff



KPI 50: Verbal Attacks

Purpose:

Demonstrates how many verbal attacks have occurred to SFRS personnel by members of the public.

We will:

Promote a respectful working environment by implementing measures to reduce verbal abuse towards staff, including targeted prevention strategies, staff support, and community engagement.

Key Performance Indicators

Physical Attacks on SFRS Staff

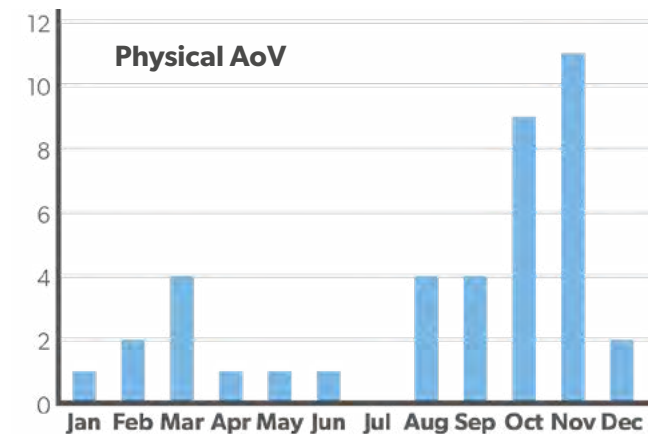
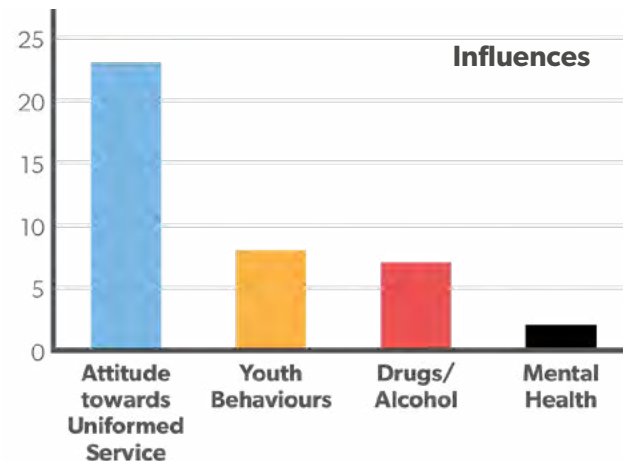
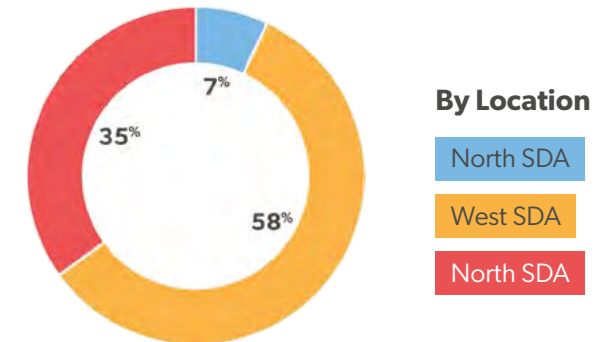
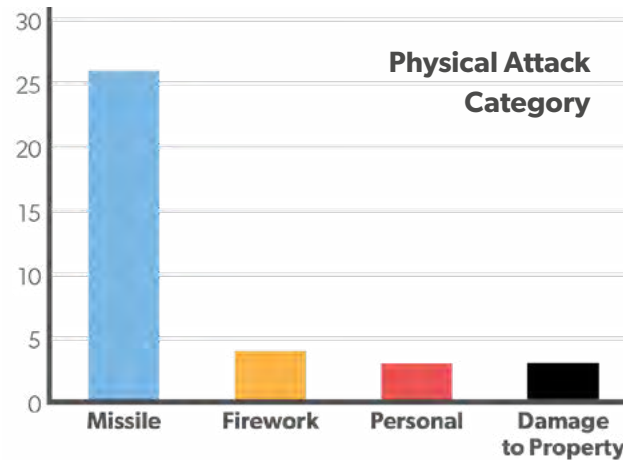
In 2024/25 there was a total of 40 physical attacks to SFRS personnel reported, when compared to the previous reporting year, a 2% decrease is noted (41 to 40).

There has been a decrease in Physical Acts of Violence (AOV) in the West Service Delivery Area (SDA) by 8% (25 to 23). However, an increase is shown in the North SDA by 200% (1 to 3) and in the East SDA by 8% (13 to 14).

98% (39 of 40) events were reported during operational activities. 2% (1 of 40) occurred during non-operational activities. Unfortunately, 1 event included a reported perforated eardrum injury as a result of fireworks.

25 physical attacks were through group acts, the remaining 15 were from individual persons.

Police were requested for 30 of the 40 physical assaults, 1 of which was considered as reportable under the Emergency Workers (Scotland) Act 2005.



Key Performance Indicators

Physical Attacks on SFRS Staff

Outcomes from SFRS Investigations include:

- De-brief of this incident undertaken with all station personnel and awareness was carried out on local and civil disturbances SOP.
- A full engagement programme was carried out with all schools in the local authority area.
- Operations Control to place warning to crews of possible aggressive behaviour on turnout systems.
- Police automatically requested for mobilisation in areas where violence was higher.

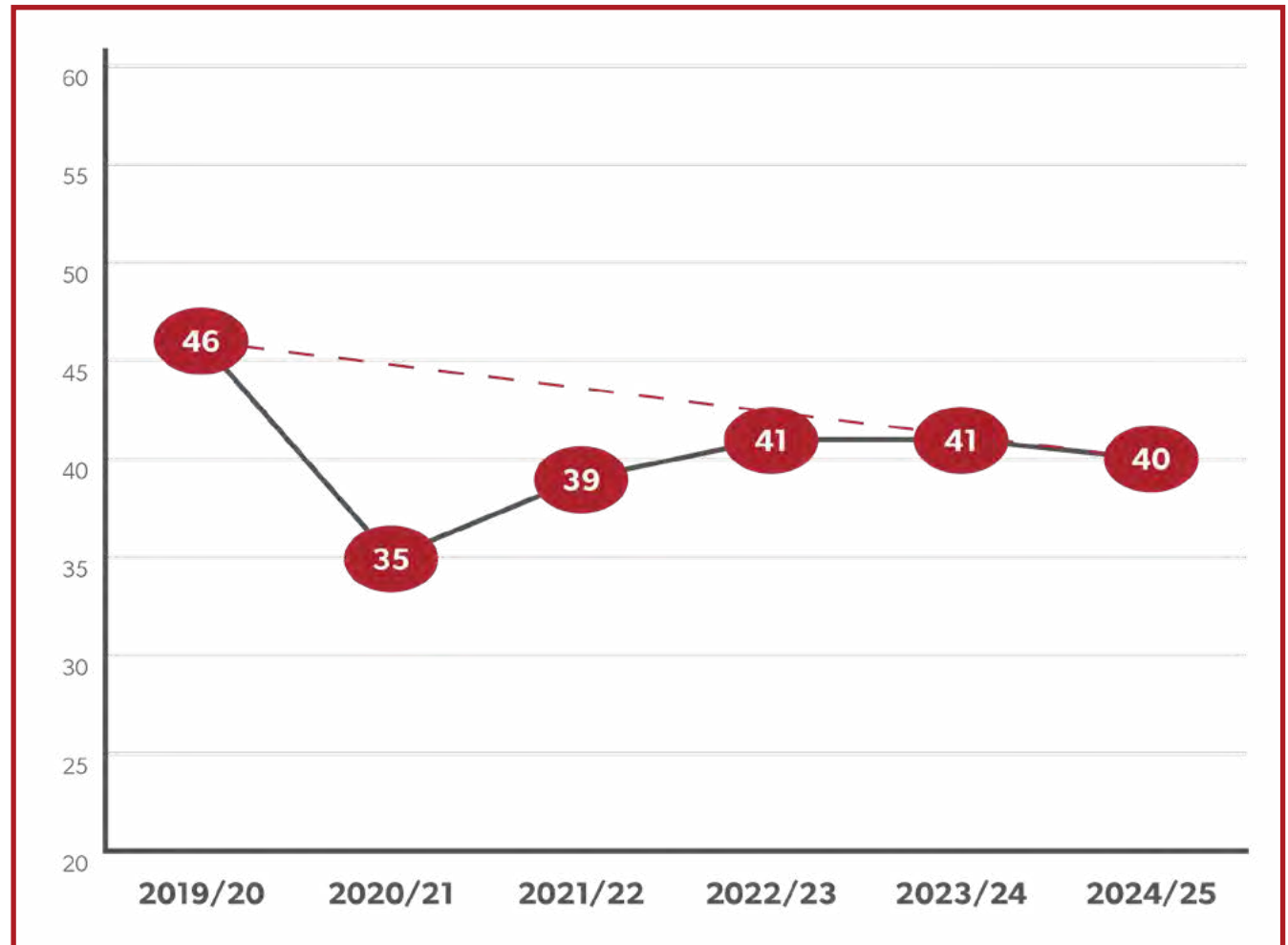
KPI 51: Physical Attacks

Purpose:

Demonstrates how many physical attacks have occurred to SFRS personnel by members of the public.

We will:

Continue to work with Police Scotland to ensure AoV are reported, perpetrators are prosecuted under the Emergency Workers (Scotland) Act 2005 and SFRS communicate any learning between LSO Areas and Functions to reduce the risk of physical attacks to SFRS staff.



Key Performance Indicators

Near Miss (NM)

In 2024/25 there was a total of 176 Near Misses (NM) reported. When compared to the previous reporting year, there has been a 35% decrease (270 to 176).

The 3 most common causes of near misses reported were;

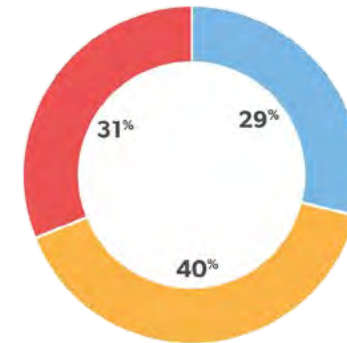
- Other 31% (58 of 176) e.g. Weather, Pest Control and Food Preparation;
- Breathing Apparatus (BA) 25% (44 of 176); and
- Appliance and pumps 20% (35 of 176).

When considering the number of NM in relation to the number of Accidents/Injuries including

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) events we see a ratio of 1.05, which is a decline (1:13) when compared to the previous reporting year.

NM reporting remains a key area of focus and continues to be actively promoted as a proactive safety behaviour. SA will work collaboratively with representative bodies to further encourage and support the reporting of NMs across the organisation.

To reinforce this message, NM awareness posters were made available to stations, and OA has published a frontline update highlighting the critical importance of NM reporting in maintaining a safe working environment.

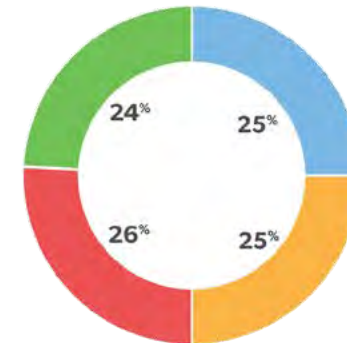


By Activity

Operational

Non-Operational

Training



By Location

North SDA

West SDA

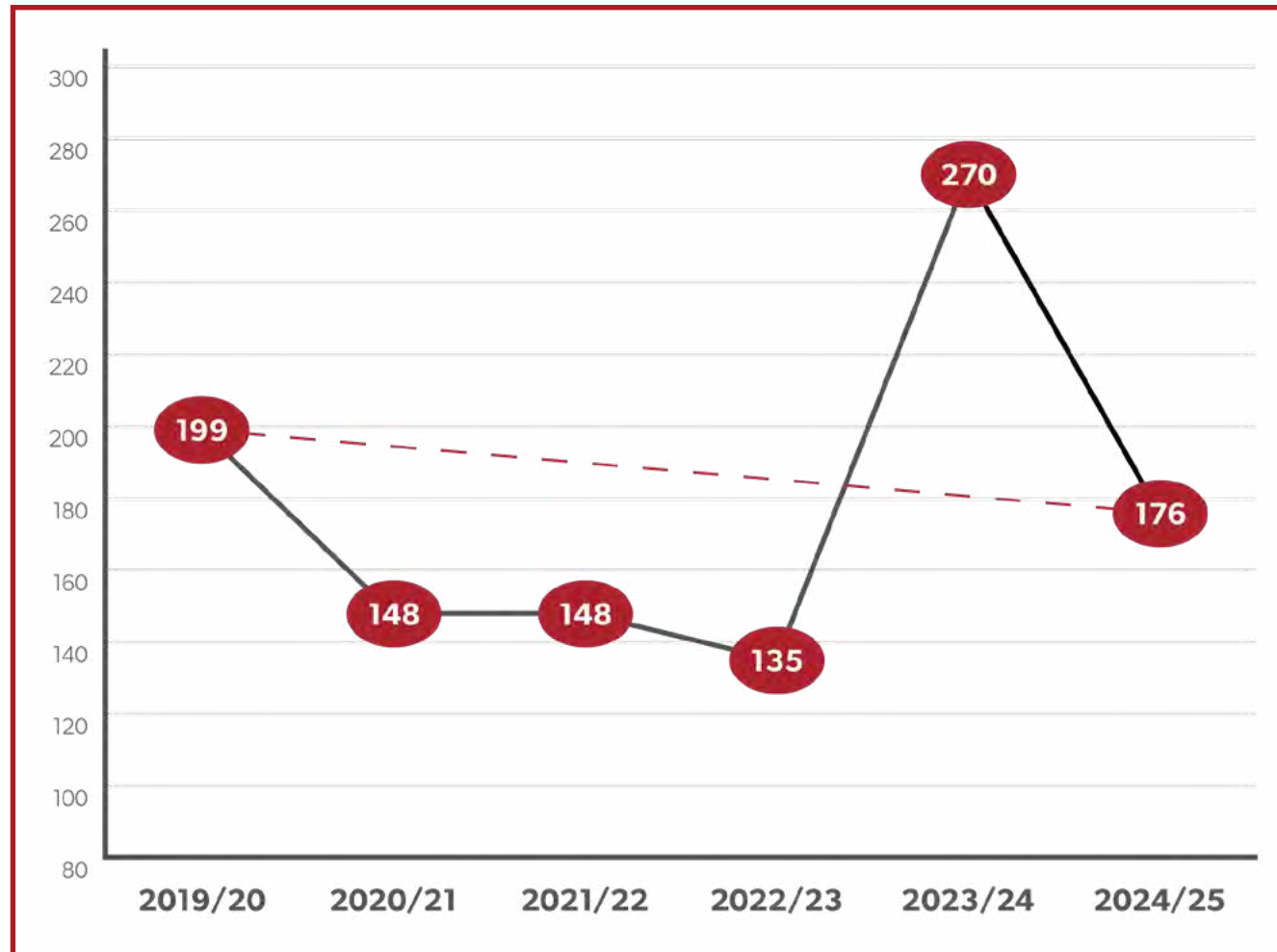
East SDA

Directorates



Key Performance Indicators

Near Miss (NM)



KPI 54: Near Miss

Purpose:

Total recorded number of NM events that had the potential to lead to an accident or ill health.

We will:

Foster a proactive safety culture by actively encouraging the reporting of near miss events, emphasising the value of early identification and shared learning.

Safety and Assurance (SA) will engage with other UK Fire Services to benchmark best practices in near miss reporting and will share lessons learned across the organisation.

Key Performance Indicators

Near Miss (NM)

These examples of reported near miss events highlight the importance of recording events, to learn and prevent the risk of recurrence.

Breathing Apparatus (BA) Defect

“While a BA team were deployed at an operational incident a hissing noise was heard to come from the BA set. This was identified to be in the area of the cylinder valve assembly. The BA team returned to the bridgehead and removed their sets. The impound procedure was then followed.”

Outcome: The impound inspection identified that the O-ring seal at the cylinder connector had become deformed through regular use causing a minor leak. Crews reminded of the importance of checking the integrity of the O-ring seal on every occasion that a BA cylinder is changed.

Rescue Sled Damage Risking Deflation

“Whilst training, crew noticed abrasions to the rescue sled caused by rubbing on the outboard motor during stowage. This could cause deflation or potentially burst the sled in operational use.”

Outcome: Method of securing RS5 was unsatisfactory, consideration to use of sling to secure RS5 to prevent slippage. Local communication to be issued regarding appropriate securing of RS5 to prevent reoccurrence and importance of robust periodic inspection processes including visual checks for damage.

Aerial Ladder Platform Power (ALP) Failure

“While at incident, personnel were within aerial appliance cage. Emergency generator failed, requiring manual climb down. ALP listed forward and had to be stabilized manually.”

Outcome: Fault of booms being stuck / unable to move was diagnosed by Fleet due to the vehicle battery being ran flat due to significant load on the battery without sufficient revs from engine. ALP Operators made aware of the impact on the road engine and the back up generator in the event of the vehicle battery being ran flat, and safety systems are disabled during the emergency bleed down procedure and that operators are required to manually check angles.

Pump Failure During Firefighting

“Hose reel jet pressure failed. Firefighters could not increase pressure, resulting in pump failure. No high pressure available during incident.”

Outcome: This defect was caused by chaffed wiring within the wiring loom. Inspection of this wiring is out with the remit of station personnel. It is vital that that water supplies are checked and deemed adequate before personnel are committed to a fire. Fleet to consider if there are any national trends reported.

Key Performance Indicators

Near Miss (NM)

Why is near miss reporting important?

Safety is one of our core values. Our number one priority is to work together for a safer Scotland. Therefore, safety must be at the core of everything we do. Near miss reporting is a proactive tool in our Health & Safety Management System, helping reduce the risk of injury and ill health.



By promoting a positive culture of near miss reporting we can change our way of thinking about near misses. Near misses are near accidents. We have an opportunity to prevent accidents and their associated harm through proactive monitoring and reporting. SFRS (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service) encourages every near miss to be reported, no matter how trivial it may seem. All near misses are investigated to identify root causes and any actions required, including lessons to be learned to reduce the risk of accidents occurring. Some benefits of effective near miss reporting are:

- **Provides opportunity to improve firefighter safety:** Near misses provide a significant opportunity to identify areas to improve, enhancing Health & Safety practices and arrangements.
- **Promotes vigilance:** Prevents complacency by continually evaluating processes and identifying opportunities for improvement.
- **Involves staff:** A positive near miss reporting culture allows employees to be involved in Health & Safety management and increases staff engagement.
- **Demonstrates Organisational commitment to safety:** Near miss reporting demonstrates SFRS's commitment to a culture of safety, which should be promoted to staff without fear of discipline or reprimand.
- **Allows identification of trends:** Near miss reporting facilitates collection of valuable data over time and allows identification of possible trends and potential risks.

During 2024/25 the SFRS implemented an additional reporting feature, hazard reporting. This is an anonymous reporting process to support the identification of unsafe conditions or behaviours.

The Safety and Assurance Improvement Groups (SAIGs) continue to promote the reporting of near misses and hazards among staff groups.

We will:

Continue to actively promote hazard reporting to drive increased participation, strengthen our positive safety culture, and help reduce the risk of injury through early identification and mitigation of potential hazards.

Key Performance Indicators

Vehicle Accidents

In 2024-25 there was a total of 204 Vehicle Accidents (VA). When compared to the previous reporting year, there has been a 5% decrease (214 to 204), of these;

The most common cause of VAs continues to “hit something fixed or stationary”, accounting for 70% (142 of 204).

Of the Low-Speed Manoeuvres, 49% (49 of 101) of VAs involved the use of Driving Assistants.

Example of VA events includes:

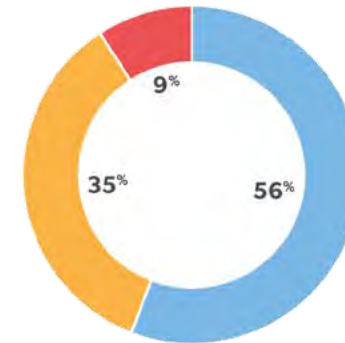
- Appliance lost traction on icy ramp and slid into a bollard while reversing; an inspection was carried out and raised with Fleet for further investigation and repair.
- Vehicle marshals were assisting a driver reserving the appliance when it struck a grit bin. Crews

were required to familiarise themselves with Hand Signals and Low Speed Manoeuvres training.

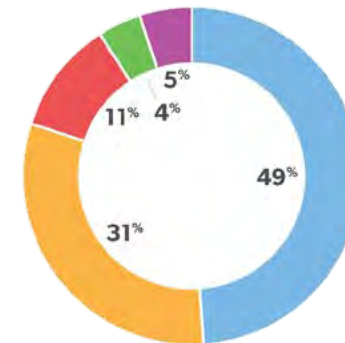
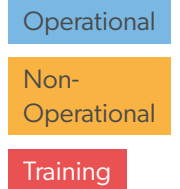
- During a water rescue response, a trailer’s jockey wheel detached in transit, damaging the lighting board. This was discovered during routine checks, this highlighted a requirement to complete a suitable dynamic risk assessment during adverse weather in accordance with the SFRS Drivers Handbook.

The Driver Safety Group continues to monitor trends and implement further controls and support to reduce the risk of vehicle accidents. Local Senior Officers (LSOs) continue to investigate and ensure actions are taken to prevent risk of reoccurrence.

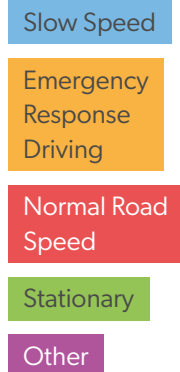
Following the implementation of the Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) policy, a 30% reduction in blue light VAs was identified over a 12-month period.



Activity Type

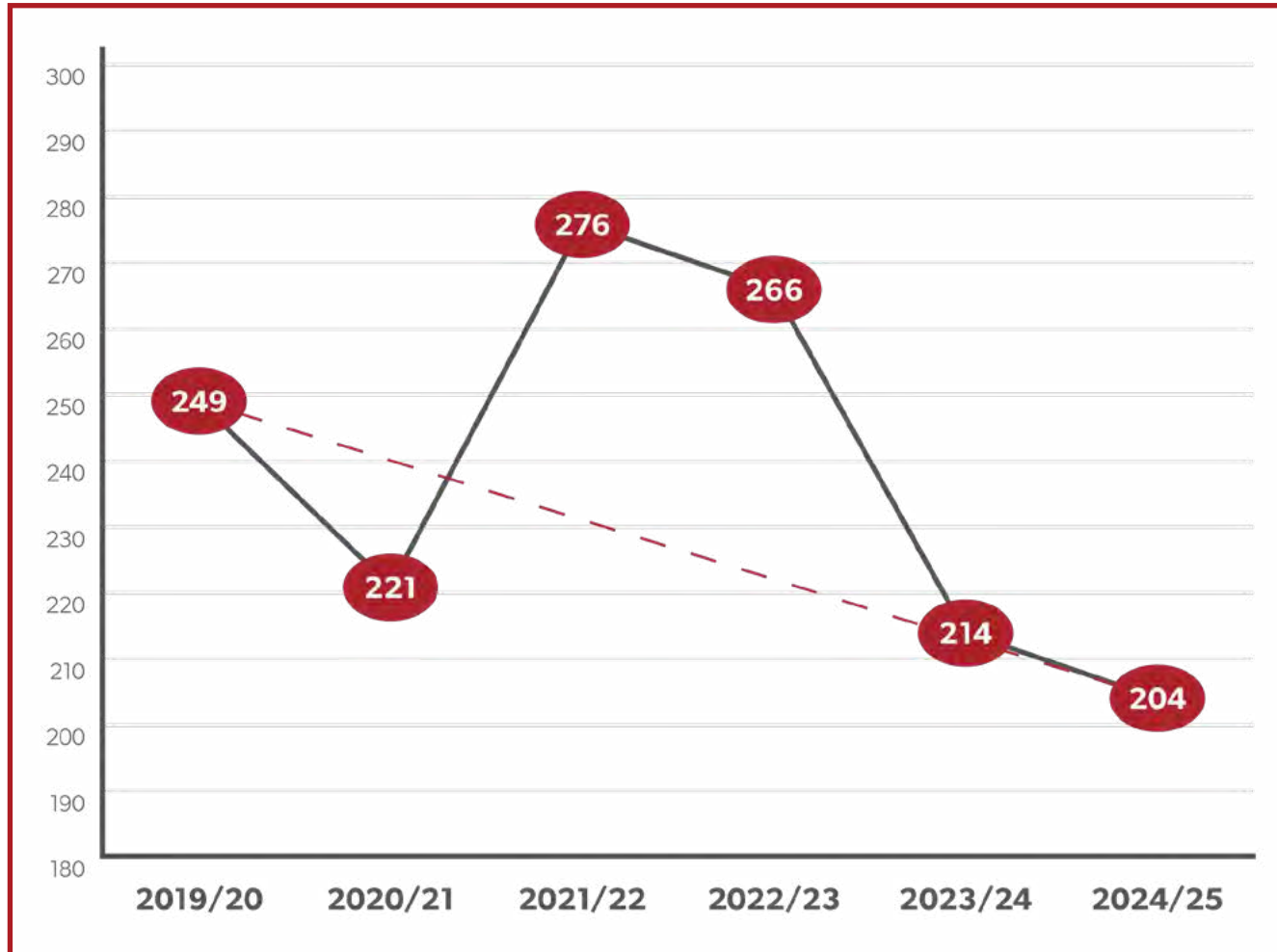


Vehicle Speeds



Key Performance Indicators

Vehicle Accidents



KPI 55: Vehicle Accidents

Purpose:

Total number of events that involved vehicle accidents.

We will:

Enhance the monitoring and reduction of vehicle accidents through data-driven analysis, targeted driver training, and continuous improvement of operational procedures.

Key Performance Indicators

Operational Assurance Audit Actions

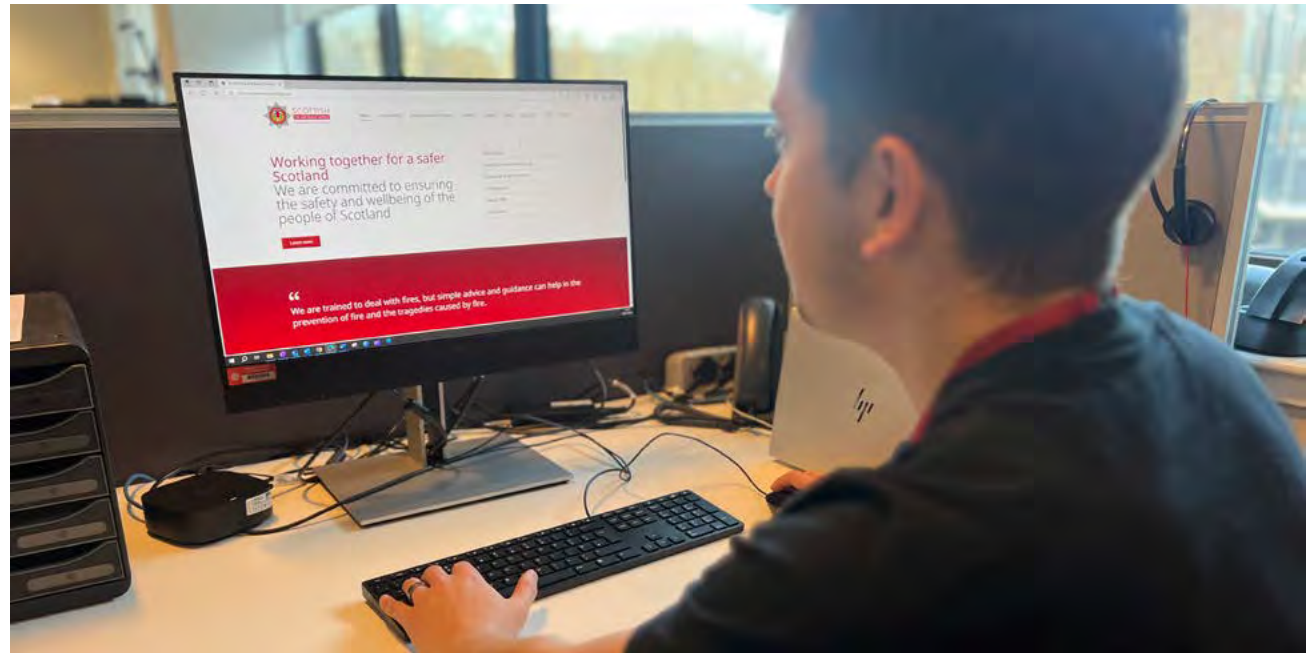
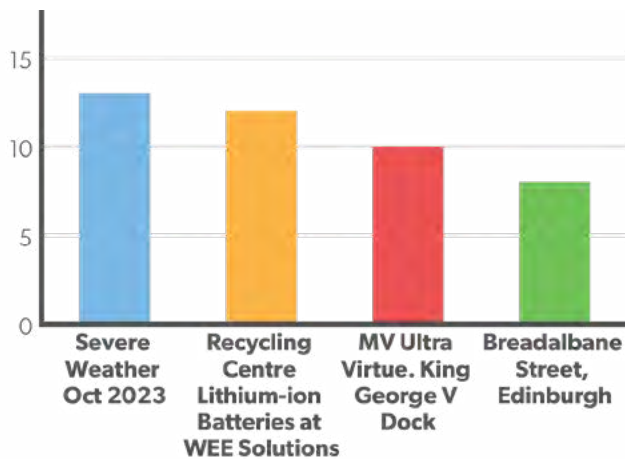
In 2024-25 there was a total of 4 structured debriefs carried out by the Operational Assurance team. Debriefs gather and analyse event information to recognise good practice and provide recommendations that support continuous learning and improvement.

These debriefs provide a structured opportunity to reflect on incidents, identify what went well, and highlight areas for development. By capturing insights from those directly involved, services can make informed decisions that enhance future performance and reduce risk. One critical outcome of debrief recommendations is the need to ensure that operational documentation, such as standard operating procedures (SOPs), training materials, and

response protocols to ensure they remain current and reflective of working practices.

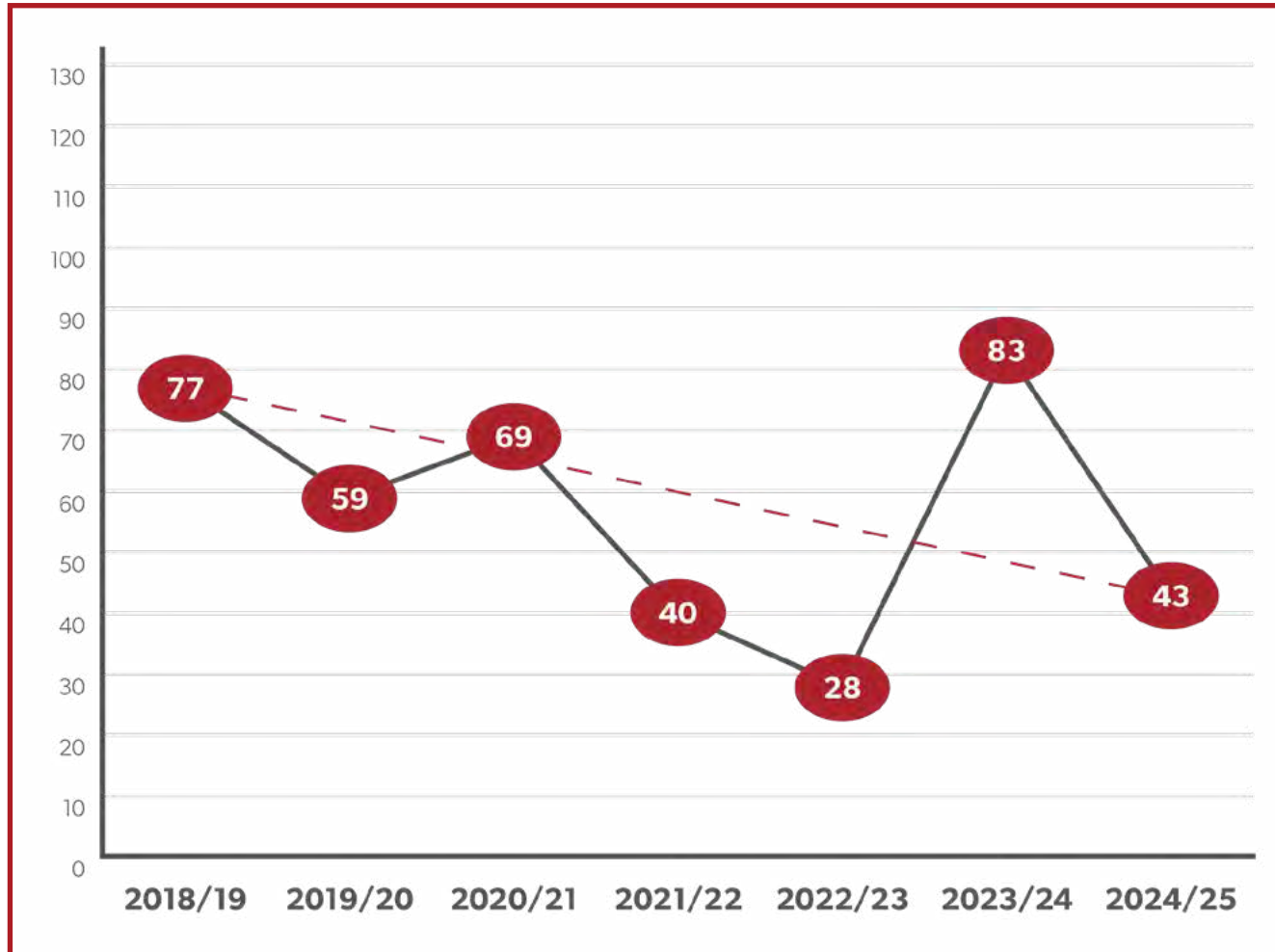
All recommendations arising from debriefs and thematic audits are subject to governance processes and recorded in the Organisational Learning Group (OLG) tracker, where they are assigned to the appropriate risk owner for progression to completion, supported by documented evidence.

Debriefs and Action Totals



Key Performance Indicators

Operational Assurance Audit Actions



KPI 19: Operational Assurance Audit Actions

Purpose:

The KPI demonstrates the number of Significant recommendations identified through OA Debrief Processes.

We will:

Continue to review significant operational events when appropriate, while reinforcing the use of hot debriefs and encouraging the consistent capture of lessons learned – both successes and areas for improvement – via the Operational Assurance Recording and Reporting System (OARRS).

Key Performance Indicators

Health and Safety Improvement Plans

Overall completion of the 2024-25 Health and Safety Improvement Plans (HSIP) is 98% (40 of 41) representing a 6% increase when compared to the previous reporting year.

TSA completed 97% (37 of 38) of 2024/25 actions. The 1 outstanding action relates to Support Reviews of Statutory Inspections which will be managed in the 2025/26 Improvement Plan. All other SDAs and Directorates completed 100% of their overall actions for 2024/25.

Our 2025/26 Improvement Plans ensure legal compliance, best practice and reaffirm our commitment to strengthening health and safety by focusing on people, processes, and systems to enhance staff wellbeing. These plans are guided by SA and SAIG meetings, ensuring all functions are supported in delivering their actions and driving continuous improvement across the service.

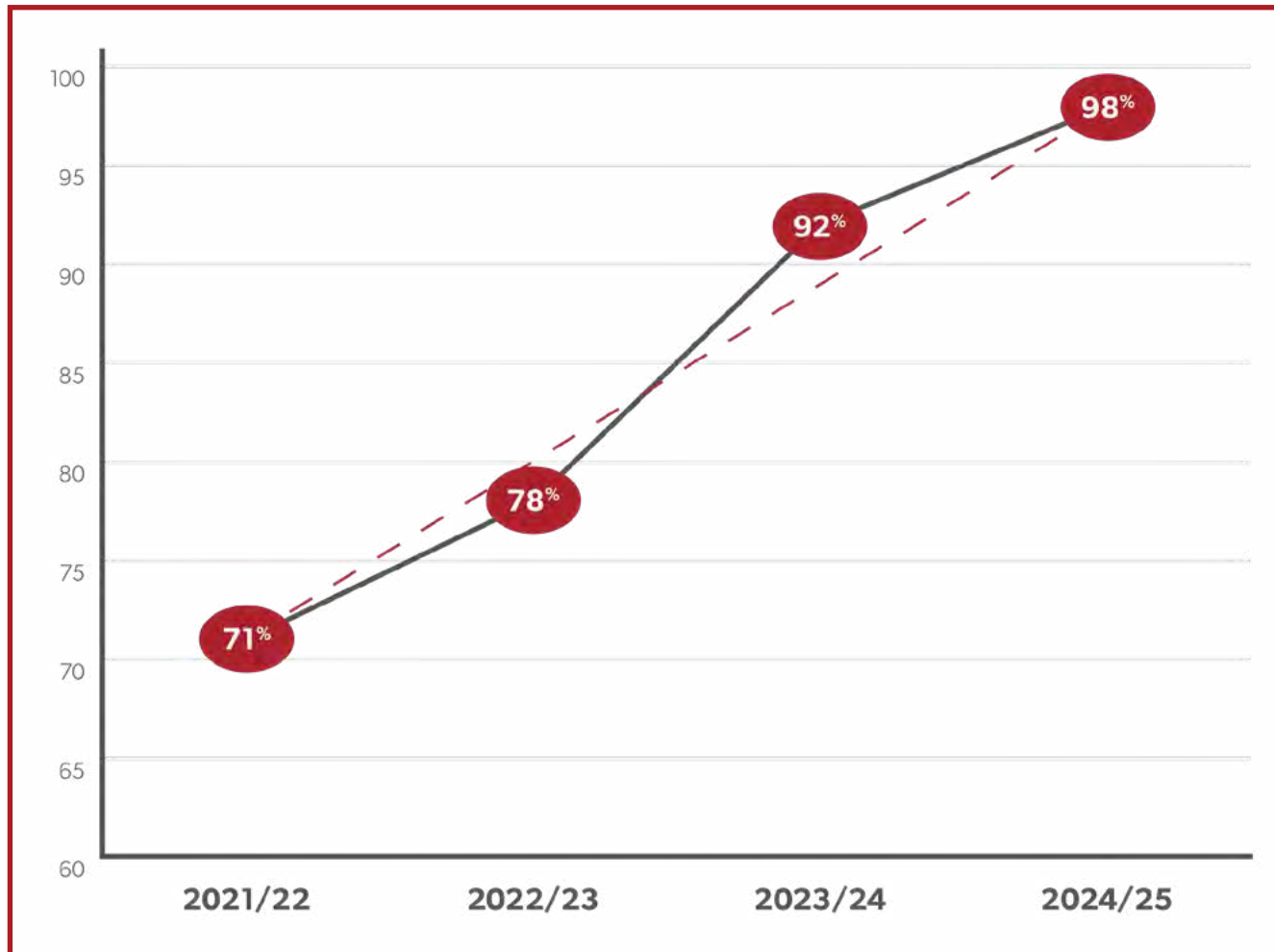
Key achievements from the HSIPs include:

- Methods of Entry Training Initiated: Course materials were developed, e-learning content created, and training modules scheduled for delivery in 2025/26
- Operational Assurance Audits Conducted: Thematic audits were completed on renewable energy technologies and station inspection programs, supporting risk-based assurance.
- Power BI Reporting Enhanced: SA and Strategic Planning, Performance and Communication (SPPC) collaborated to improve KPI reporting and data visualisation through Power BI.
- An SDA Handbook was published to support safe working practices within the station environment.



Key Performance Indicators

Health and Safety Improvement Plans



KPI 56: YTD Health and Safety Actions Completed

Purpose:

Demonstrates the completion of improvement plans to drive safety performance.

We will:

Drive continuous improvement in health and safety by setting SMART objectives that support legal compliance and reduce risk across the Service.

Key Performance Indicators

Health and Safety Improvement Plans

	Total Number of Actions	Number of Actions Complete	% Progress Towards Completion
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	41	40	98%
North SDA (NSDA)	16	16	100%
East SDA (ESDA)	16	16	100%
West SDA (WSDA)	16	16	100%
Finance and Contractual Services (FCS)	15	15	100%
People Directorate	11	11	100%
Prevention Directorate	10	10	100%
Operations (OP)	13	13	100%
Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications (SPPC)	14	14	100%
Training, Safety and Assurance (TSA)	38	37	97%
Portfolio Office	10	10	100%

Health and Safety Improvement Plan Annual Breakdown 2024-25

TSA completed 97% (37 of 38) of 2024/25 actions. The 1 outstanding action relates to Support Reviews of Statutory Inspections which will be managed in the 2025/26 Improvement Plan. All other SDAs and Directorates completed 100% of their overall actions for 2024/25.

Benchmarking UK FRS

1st of April 2024 – 31st of March 2025

Each UK FRS has different reporting variables; however, through data analysis of the figures provided, there are areas of strong performance and areas for improvement within SFRS.

When benchmarking, SFRS has utilised the figure per 500 employees, which provides a more comparable basis across the UK FRSs contacted.

The data indicates that, in comparison to smaller services, SFRS has a lower Accident/Injury and RIDDOR rate per 500 employees.

Areas for improvement within SFRS include our NM reporting figures, which remain relatively low compared to other UK FRSs per 500 employees.

SA continue to promote near miss reporting, emphasising the importance of a positive near miss and hazard reporting culture.

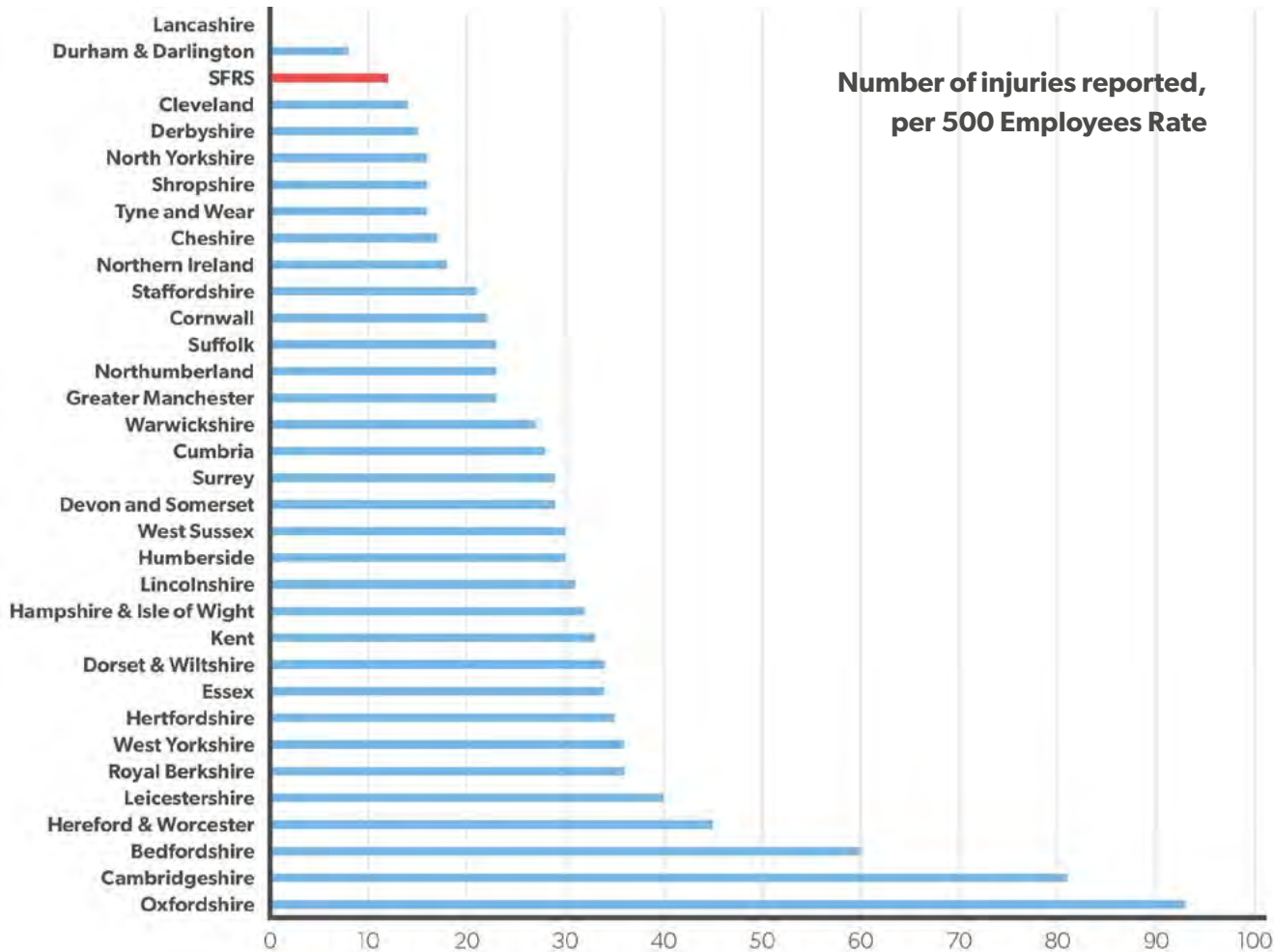
SA will seek to liaise with other UK FRSs during 2025/26 to explore how they have implemented proactive initiatives to improve NM reporting.

We will:

Continue to liaise and engage with other UK FRS through the NFCC Health and Safety (HS) Committee, sharing areas of best practice enhancing safety UK wide.



Benchmarking UK FRS



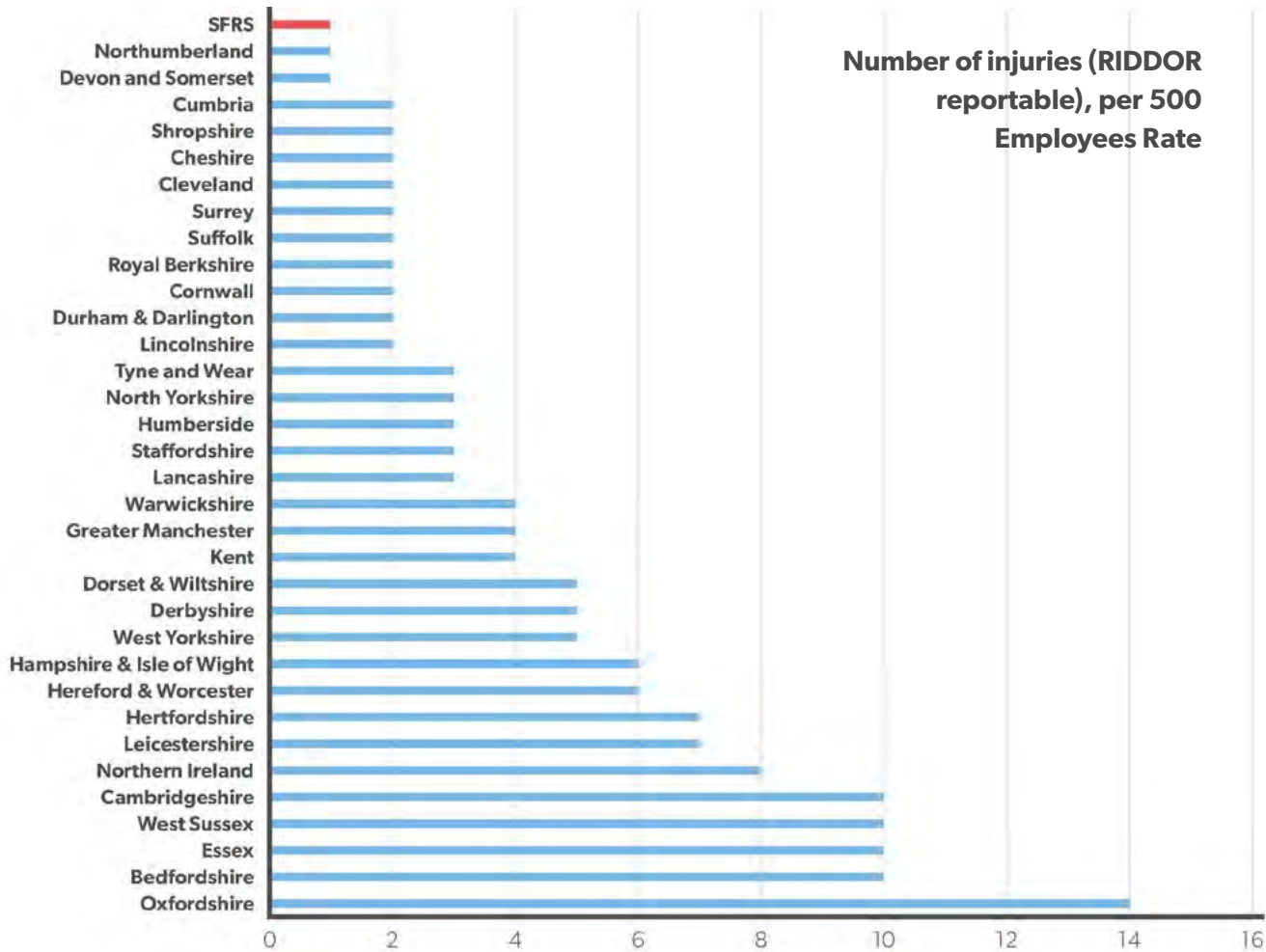
Injury and RIDDOR

SFRS report an injury rate of 12 per 500 employees and 1 RIDDOR reportable incident per 500 employees. This places SFRS in the lower scale when compared with UK FRS's.

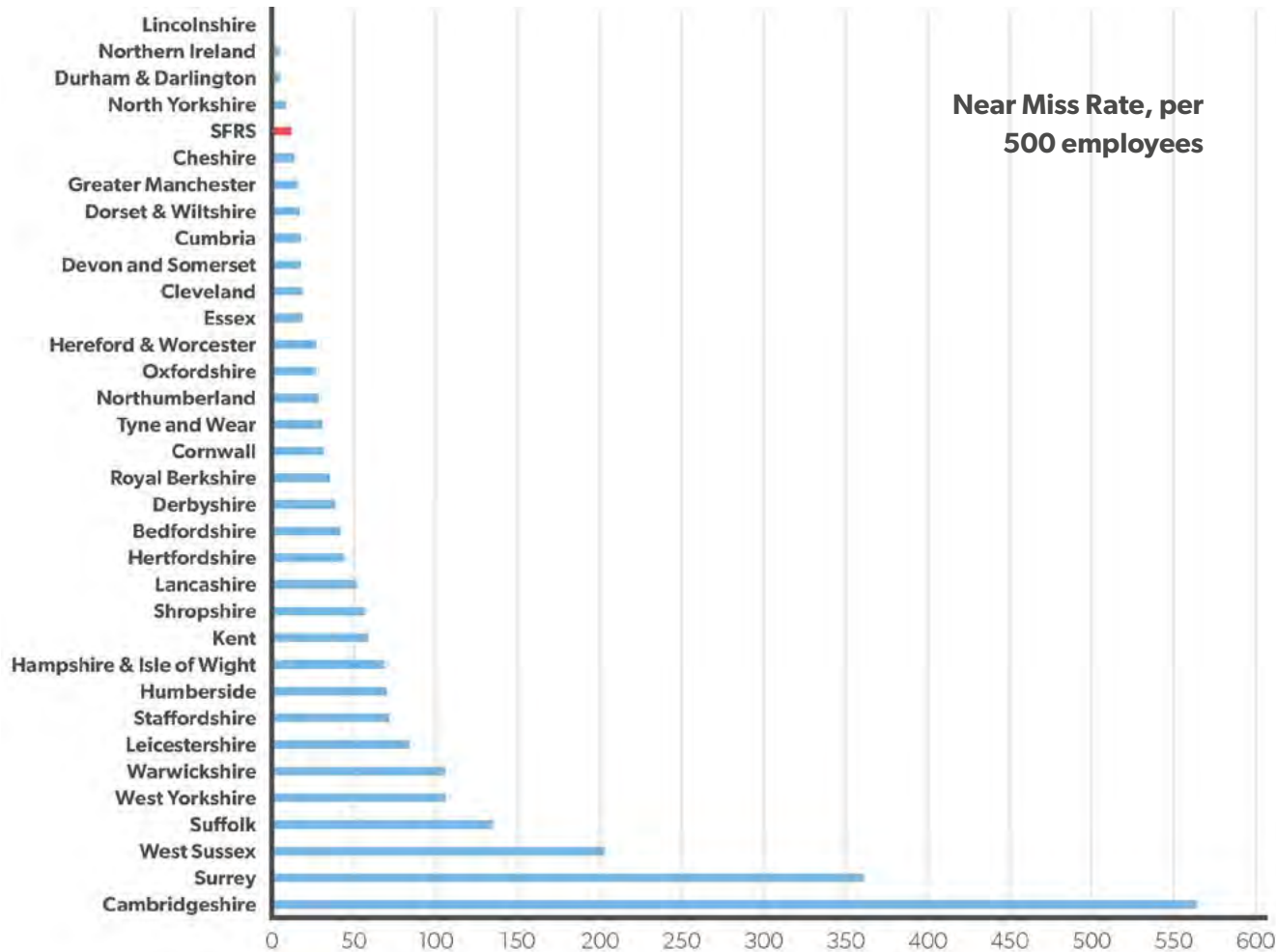
SFRS are striving to have a solid foundation of safety data. Safety information is fundamental for the HSMS, since it is the basis for data-driven decision making.

These figures reflect the effectiveness of proactive safety measures, a good safety culture, and the dedication of staff across the organisation to maintaining a safe working environment.

Benchmarking UK FRS



Benchmarking UK FRS

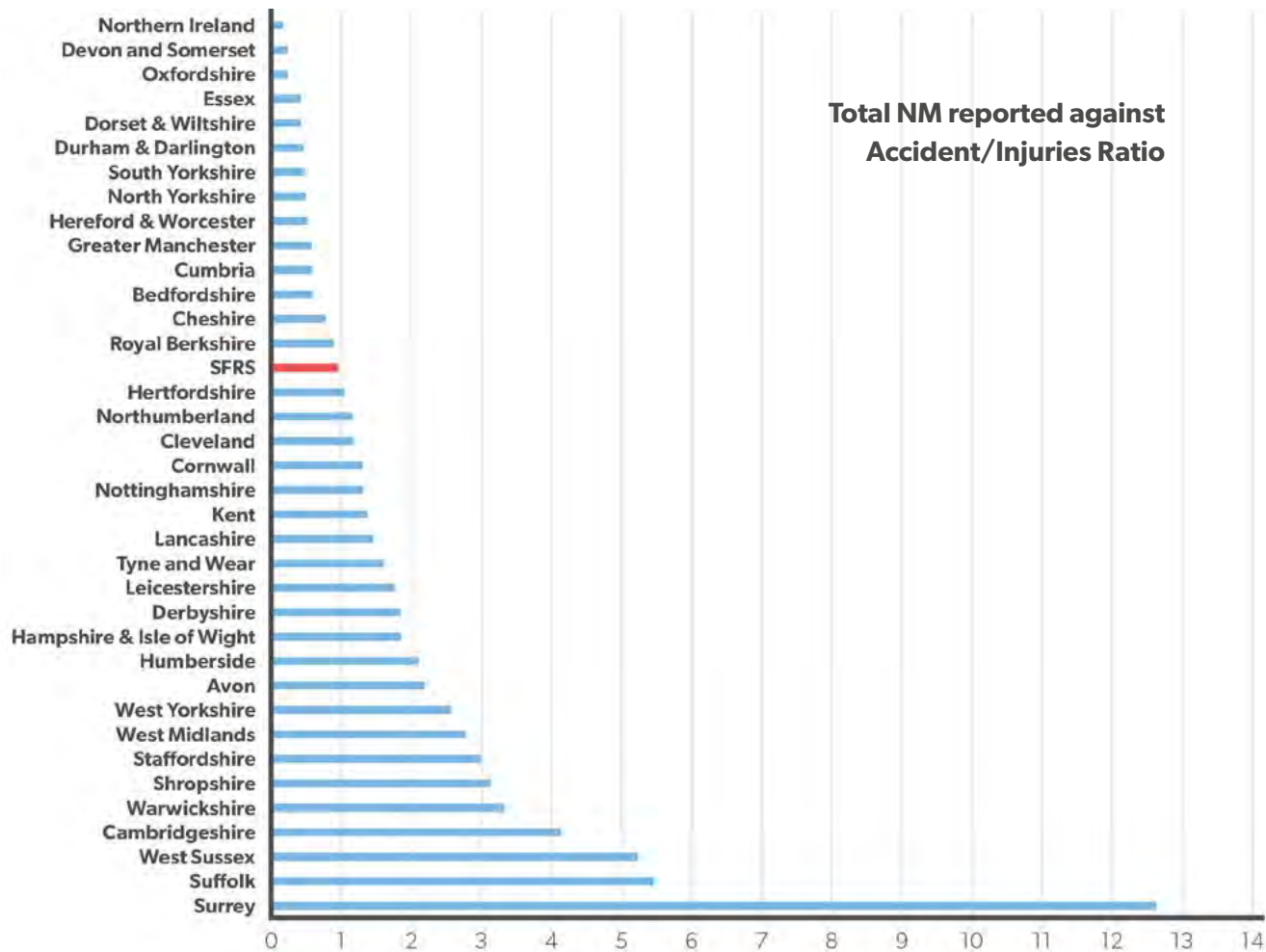


Near Miss

SFRS reports a rate of 12 near misses reported per 500 employees, placing it in the lower half of the comparison across UK FS. This figure indicates comparatively lower reporting frequency relative to sector norms.

This provides an opportunity for SFRS to promote a more open reporting culture and use near miss data more effectively to enhance reporting in future communications.

Benchmarking UK FRS



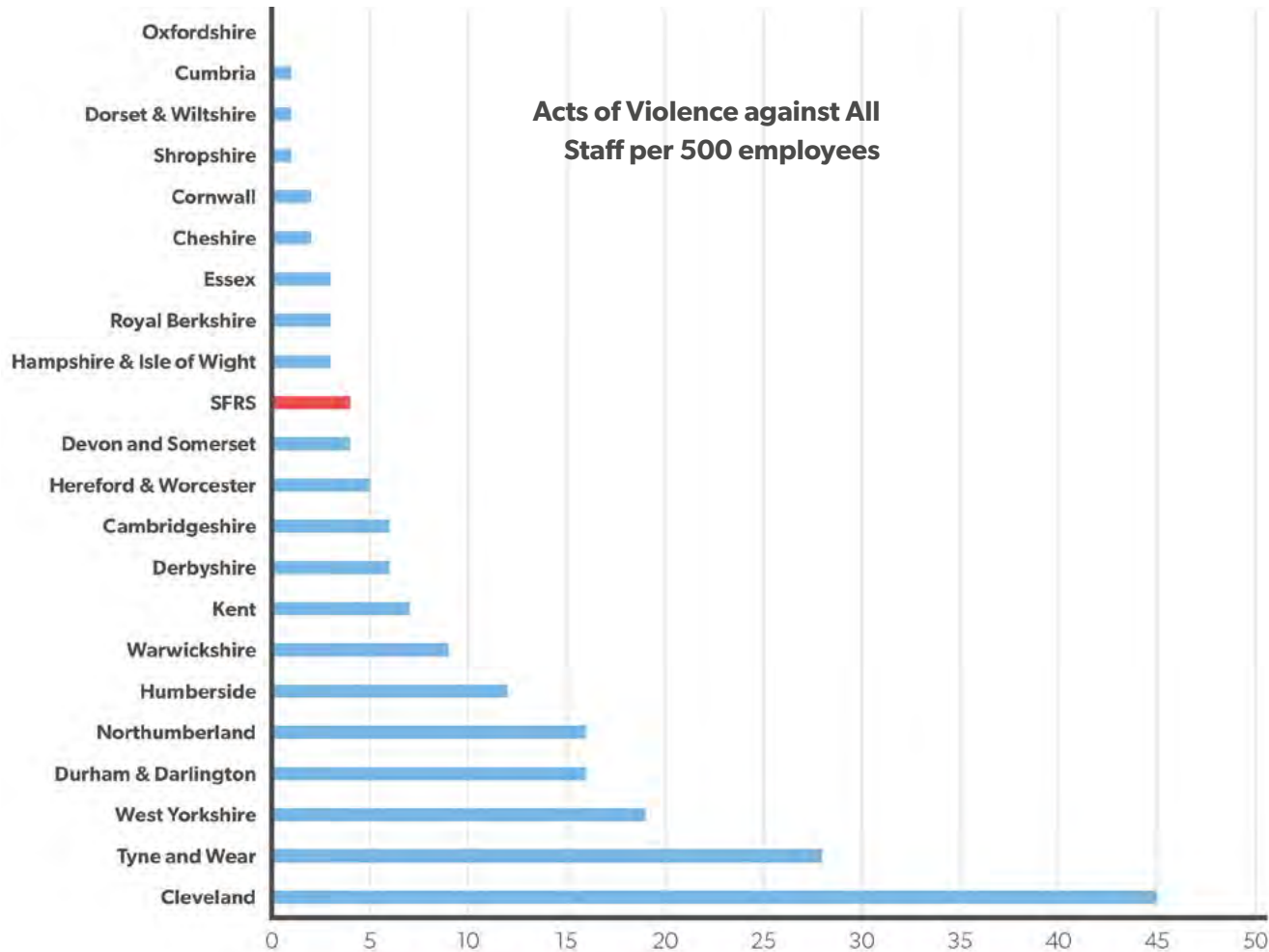
Near Miss against Accident/Injury Ratios

The ratio frequencies are calculated by number of NMs against recorded Accident/Injury Reports. A rate ratio of 0.96 is recorded for the SFRS, meaning that for every one accident/injury that 0.96 NM is recorded.

This may suggest that while incidents are occurring, near misses may be underreported, potentially missing opportunities for early intervention and prevention and the learning of lessons.

SFRS aims for better NM reporting and will liaise with the top 3 UKFS with positive reporting for any interventions to enhance reporting.

Benchmarking UK FRS



Acts of Violence

These figures include all reports of AOV to staff including both Verbal and Physical.

SFRS reports 4 AOV per 500 employees, placing it in the lower-middle range nationally. While this is significantly below high-risk regions it still indicates that staff are being exposed to violence and that continued vigilance is needed and proactive measures to reduce the risk of violence related incidents towards staff.

Benchmarking UK FRS

SFRS continue to work with Your Safety Matters which is led by Police Scotland and a multi-agency campaign, to raise awareness and ensure a safe, healthy and respectful workplace environment, free from violence and abuse.

The purpose of the group is to develop an integrated approach to address issues of violence and aggression against staff and determine any appropriate preventative measures that can be undertaken by all member organisations.

#NotPartOfTheJob

Report it!
Physical assault
Verbal abuse
Near miss
Cuts and bruises
Injury of any kind

Please submit a report as soon as you can following the incident and seek support from your line manager.

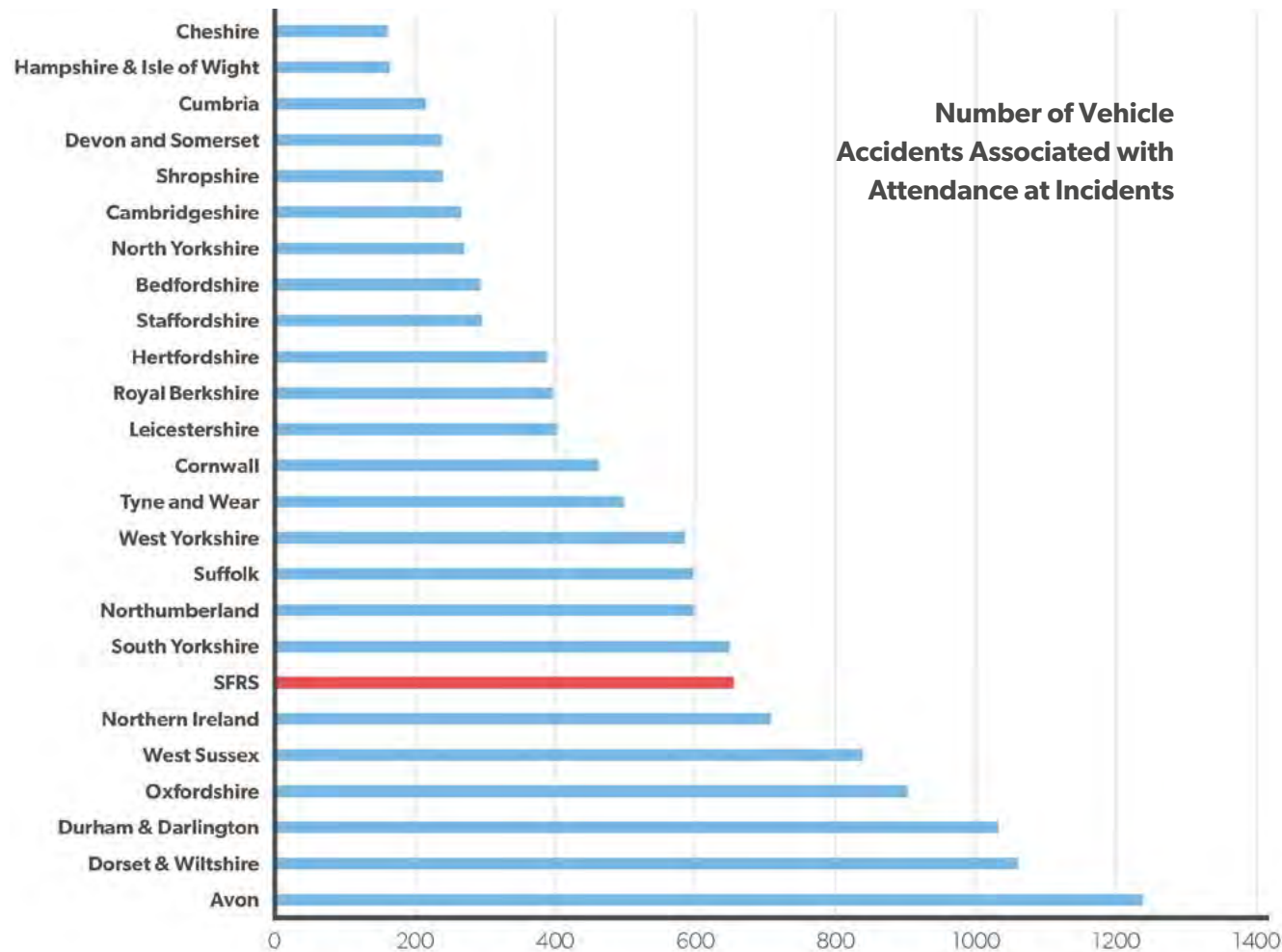
Public Health Scotland | **ROULETTE AGAINST CRIME** | **SGF** | **NHS** SCOTLAND | **SPS** SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE | Victim Support Scotland

POLICE SCOTLAND | **SCOTTISH** FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE | **BRITISH** TRANSPORT POLICE | **Scottish** Ambulance Service | **LIFELINES** SCOTLAND

IN CONSULTATION WITH COPFS

MPK-POSTER-24-00093_44

Benchmarking UK FRS

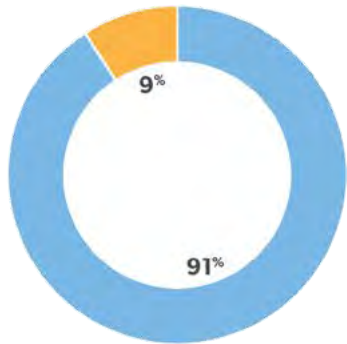


Vehicle Accidents associated with Attendance at Incidents

SFRS reports 1 vehicle accident in every 654 operational incidents, placing SFRS in the lower end of the incident rate.

SFRS continue to promote safe driving through the work of the Driver Safety Group and Business Partner engagement.

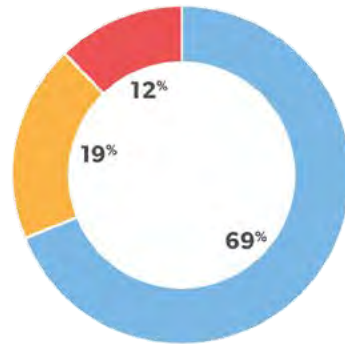
Safety and Assurance Indicators 2024/25



**Total Event Investigations:
693 Events**

Complete

Ongoing

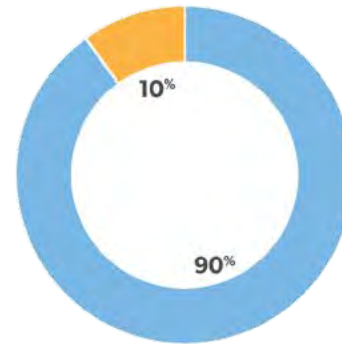


**Scheduled Management
Arrangement Updates: 16 in
Total**

Complete

In Governance

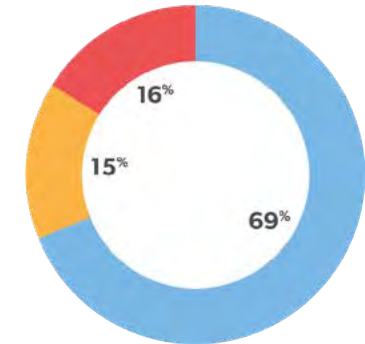
Re-prioritised



**Safe System of Work by
Percentage**

Published

Under Review



GRA Register Status

Published

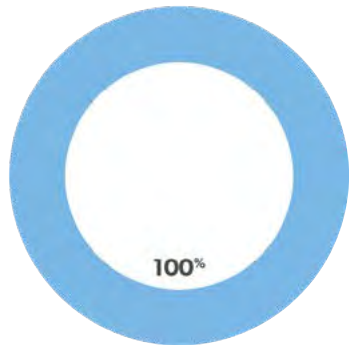
New/In Development

Under Review

We will:

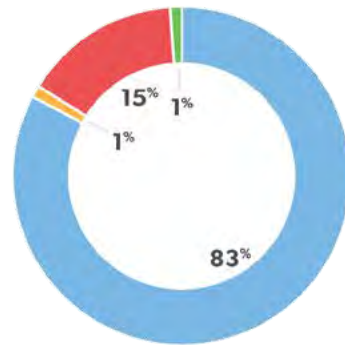
Continue to assess and communicate risks across SFRS, ensuring staff are equipped to identify and manage hazards effectively. Support business partners in reviewing risks and technical assessments, ensuring appropriate controls are implemented in line with Risk Assessment GANTT chart timelines.

Safety and Assurance Indicators 2024/25



Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Assessments by Percentage

Live



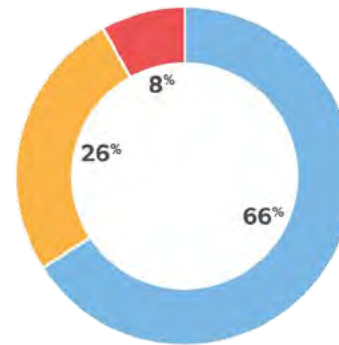
DSE Assessments

Completed

Open Ongoing

Open >2M

Rejected No LCMS

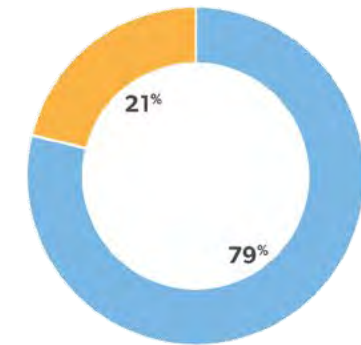


Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Assessments by Percentage

Live

Under Review

New/In Development



Manual Handling Assessment by Percentage

Complete

Under Review

We will:

SFRS continue to carry out a full review of all technical risk assessments to ensure hazards are effectively identified and controlled in line with GANTT chart timelines.

Additionally, SA will support the development of the PUWER assessment tracker to strengthen compliance monitoring.



3. Compliance

Annual Operating Plan Progress; SA Strategy; Legislative Compliance; Contaminants; and Driver Safety Group (DSG)

Annual Operating Plan (AOP)

Strategic Objective 6:4

Action:

Align SFRS Health and Safety Management System to ISO 45001 and seek approval for external accreditation.

Update:

It was proposed and agreed that the SFRS will align SFRS Health and Safety Management System (HSMS) to ISO45001.

SA have completed an ISO45001 Gap Analysis with areas of continual improvement identified. SA continue to align the HSMS to ISO45001.

Strategic Objective 6:5

Action:

Lead on contaminants management including horizon scanning, research reviews (UK and International) and support the development and implementation of procedures.

Update:

There has been SFRS representation at UK wide contaminants conferences with information reported back to the Contaminants Group. Horizon scanning and engagement with UK scientific research and other FRS continues. SFRS Fire Contaminants Standard Operating Procedure and Fire Contaminants Management Arrangement. SFRS continues to progress with the CivTech Innovation Accelerator Programme. More information is contained within the Fire Contaminants and CivTech sections within this report.

Strategic Objective 6:6

Action:

Develop and publish SFRS Safety and Assurance Vision and Strategy.

Update:

SA has developed a draft Safety and Assurance Strategy 2025-28. A Training, Safety and Assurance (TSA) Workshop was held early 2025 to assist with its direction.

SA Strategy 2022/26 – Year 3

ACTION: SA Improvement Plans are 100% complete at the end of the financial year.

UPDATE: Safety continues to be closely monitored and is priorities on the agenda at governance meetings. A 98% completion rate was achieved which is the highest SFRS completion.

ACTION: SFRS will have an ISO 45001 gap analysis carried out by an accredited body.

UPDATE: Several safety courses were delivered during 2024/25 including ISO 45001 Lead Auditor training. Provision of training enabled personnel to undertake an internal gap analysis. Going forward, the auditing of our Safety and Assurance Management System (SAMS) against the requirements of ISO 45001 will provide assurances that our SMS and safety related policies, procedures, risk assessments are meeting our statutory safety requirements.

ACTION: SFRS has a documented asset design process in place that actively considers Health and Safety.

UPDATE: The PUWER process has been reviewed and updated to support end users in completing PUWERs. This enhancement ensures that all work equipment is assessed for compliance and for design suitability, operational safety, and user interaction.

ACTION: All SFRS staff are fully trained to allow tasks to be undertaken safely.

UPDATE: SFRS remains firmly committed to maintaining the highest standards of workplace safety through comprehensive training and continuous development. SA continue to support recommendations from Organisational Learning, ensuring these are embedded through in our operational practices and is continuously reinforced through updates to Learning Content Management System (LCMS), refresher training, and supporting mechanisms.



Legislative Compliance

Health and Safety Legal Register

The Health and Safety Executive / Scottish Government publish new and amended legislation in April and October each year. Each publication is reviewed by Safety and Assurance to identify if it impacts SFRS.

The SFRS Legal Register reflects the two updates:

- Inclusion of Worker's Protection Act 2024. It places a legal duty on UK employers to proactively take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace; and
- Martyn's Law 2025 also known as the Terrorism (Protection of Premise) Act 2025. This is UK law aimed at improving security and preparedness at publicly accessible locations to mitigate the risk of terrorist attacks



Legislative Compliance

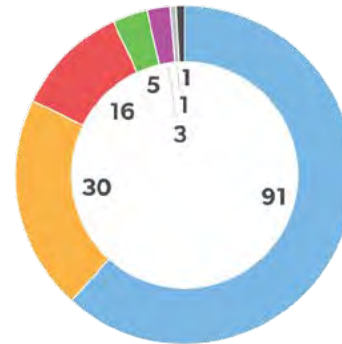
Guidance Review Register

As part of our horizon scanning process, over seven hundred guidance notifications were received and evaluated during 2024/25, leading to 700 entries in our guidance tracker.

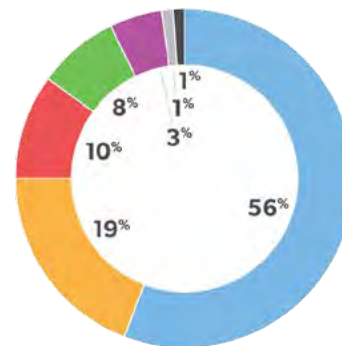
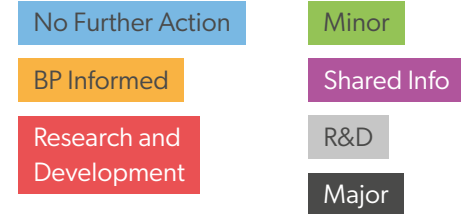
143 entries confirmed that our arrangements are up to date and reflect best practice, providing a high level of assurance to the Service. Information received resulted in 7 identified areas for improvement in our health and safety management arrangement.

Examples of updates from the Guidance Reviews include:

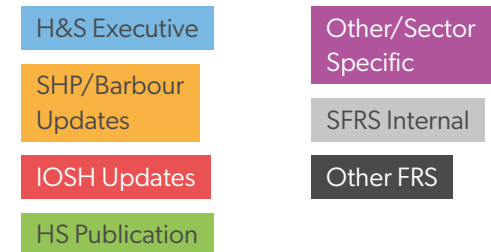
- British Compressed Gases Association provided guidance on Medical Oxygen in a Vehicle. SFRS published a Generic Risk Assessment and Safe System of Work on Transportation of Breathing Apparatus Cylinders by SFRS Personnel.
- Equality and human Rights: Employer 8 step guide to preventing sexual harassment at work guidance resulting in a review of Safety and Assurance documentation.



Outcome of Review



Reviews by Source



Legislative Compliance

Statutory Enforcement

Health and Safety Executive Enforcement / Notices

The HSE issued one Improvement Notice to SFRS.



His Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate

There are currently no outstanding HMFSI actions.



Other, i.e. Local Authority

There were no other enforcement actions issued to SFRS.



HSE Improvement Notice Update

The HSE identified an improvement action for SFRS to provide adequate facilities in accordance with Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 within 3 stations on the Shetland Isles, specifically highlighting the challenges of having to decontaminate after a response to a fire.

As a result, the SFRS have implemented additional control measures, working with On call crews and representative bodies to further support their welfare. This consisted of three On call stations now use a Hub approach to support continued delivery of equipment testing, training and accessing facilities for post incident decontamination. This is supported through the provision of additional support vehicles, decontamination kits and improved laundry arrangements.

HMFSI Update

SA was actively overseeing the completion of the HMFSI Action Plan titled "Management of Health and Safety: An Operational Focus". In February 2025, there was one action outstanding, and the overall action plan was 95%. That remaining action was completed in May 2025 with 100% completion.

In addition, SA has contributed to and supported the ongoing HMFSI Operational Assurance in the SFRS throughout the 2024/25 period. The final report from this review is anticipated in October 2025, and SA will take responsibility for progressing and monitoring the recommendations to ensure continuous improvement in operational safety standards.

Fire Contaminants

During 2024/25, Safety and Assurance continued to lead and support the Contaminants Group and its Sub-Group, working to reduce the risk of injury and ill health from fire contaminants exposure among all SFRS staff.

SFRS published a Fire Contaminants Management Arrangement (MA) and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), Generic Risk Assessments, Safe Systems of Work, and Station Zoning Guidance, which embed best practices across SFRS operations and training.

To improve post-incident decontamination, SFRS procured and distributed new equipment across the Service. This included reserve PPE at 36 key locations and an online booking system for accessing the PPE. Airing racks and cages are in place at all wholetime fire stations to allow lightly contaminated PPE to air while secure external storage boxes hold contaminated PPE pending laundering collection. Approximately 1,000 body wash and shampoo dispensers have been installed at fire stations and training centres to support the 'Shower Within an Hour' guidance.

Three professional washing and drying units for Breathing Apparatus (BA) sets and masks were procured by SFRS and installed at three national training centres to ensure BA sets in use at these sites are subject to enhanced decontamination post carbonaceous training.

Contaminants zoning is now in place at stations and training centres to limit the spread of fire contaminants within SFRS premises. Each site uses a bespoke Zoning Diagram created by the CAD team and assured by the Safety and Assurance Function.

Learning and E-Development launched new LCMS modules on contaminants and post-incident procedures, delivered in Quarter 2 as part of the Training for Operational Competence (TfOC) programme.

Station Zoning Plans

Purpose: To reduce the transfer of fire contaminants and secondary contamination in SFRS premises.

Implementation: 374 zoning plans were implemented in SFRS premises.



Fire Contaminants



Implementation of BA Washers: NTC Cambuslang, Newbridge and Portlethen Training sites.



CivTech Update: Overview

SFRS are working with the Scottish Government CivTech programme - a programme that brings the public, private and third sector together to create solutions that solve challenges and make people's lives better.

SFRS has been working to solve two challenges through the programme:

- How can technology be used to improve situational awareness for emergency responders, before, during and after a wide range of incidents?
- How can technology identify and measure firefighter exposure to contaminants across a wide range of incidents?

Two companies, Rowden Technologies Ltd. and FireHazResearch, Ltd. were successful through the various stages of the programme working with SFRS to develop their solutions to secure funding from the Scottish Government CivTech funding panel for the final stage of development which will take place over the next 12 to 24 months.

Further info on CivTech processes available here: [FireHazResearch – CivTech Demo Day 10](#)

CivTech Update

Contaminants

Through the CivTech process, FireHazResearch Ltd. led by Professor Anna Stec, is developing an innovative, data-driven solution designed to assess, mitigate, and reduce firefighters' exposure to toxic contaminants. This includes advanced monitoring and assessment tools which will enhance operational safety and efficiency, providing a safer working environment for firefighters.

This system will ultimately help to protect health and wellbeing by reducing their long-term health risks, such as cancer and other occupational diseases.

As part of development, SFRS procured the following equipment and systems:

- 26 physiological monitoring sensors and vests, including software licences for the monitoring platform.
- 10 gas sensors with associated mobile phones and app integration for real-time air quality monitoring.

- 100 lateral flow test kits for the detection of Pyrene metabolites in urine, supporting biological monitoring.

Initial testing has been incorporated into controlled training environments to allow structured, repeatable data collection.

The Compartment Fire Behaviour Training (CFBT) Instructors based at the SFRS National Training Centre have been the primary participants due to the predictable and scheduled nature of their live fire activities.

In March 2025, the equipment was introduced to National Training Centre CFBT instructors. This session focused on familiarisation and practice in using the devices rather than formal data collection.

The findings from these first stages are informing the on-going development on the solution and are intended to lead to a wider roll-out across SFRS in due course

Situational Awareness

For this challenge, Rowden Technologies Ltd. have worked alongside SFRS employees to develop a proposal which combines their 'District' platform with a solution called Team Awareness Kit, to demonstrate a transformative innovation for SFRS, redefining how first responders and control-room employees access real-time data.

The solution is a tablet/phone-based interface for dynamic risk assessment and management that updates in real time across devices for SFRS operators, supporting improved collaboration at incidents and integrating with SFRS current technology.

The solution provides a shared picture of an incident no matter where people are located and is expected to provide improved coordination between team members in the field and sector commanders to support informed decision-making. It will also provide that shared picture of an incident that can be provided to those on route to or monitoring the incident.

Driver Safety Group (DSG)

The DSG monitors and analyses reported vehicle accidents to identify trends and, where applicable, to agree and implement additional control measures to prevent recurrence. The group has cross service representation and receives regular updates from all Directorates including Service Delivery Areas (SDA), Driver Training, Operations, and Fleet.

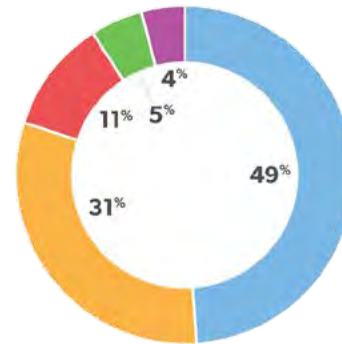
The Fleet department continues to provide updates on new vehicle specifications and legislative changes to ensure that SFRS remains legally compliant.

2024/2025 has seen the roll out of new all terrain vehicles (ATVs) and the DSG has been kept apprised of the progress of the roll out and related training.

Through consultation with our staff and representative bodies the DSG developed a Low-Speed Manoeuvre (LSM) Booklet which will be published in Q1 of 2025/2026 while the SDA's have sourced and provided equipment for on-station LSM training.

The following Safe Systems of Work have also been published:

- SSOW 239 Mobilising to Incidents and Responding to Pager
- SSOW 265 Entering and Exiting a Vehicle



Vehicle Speeds

Slow Speed

Emergency Response Driving

Normal Road Speed

Other

Stationary





4. Improvement

Directorate Summaries; Continual Improvement; and Looking Ahead

Key Achievements and Improvements

Training, Safety and Assurance (TSA)

- **Tactical Advisor Development:** 14 USAR, 12 Marine, and 12 Water Incident Management Tactical Advisors trained, expanding national capability.
- **Localised Water Rescue Training:** Courses now delivered within local areas, improving local risk awareness and operational effectiveness. The Training team has collaborated with Service Delivery staff to identify waterways within their respective LSO areas. As a result, water rescue courses are now being delivered locally, enhancing crews' knowledge and situational awareness through familiarity with local risks.
- **Specialist Wildfire Training:** Enhanced Level 2 and technical burns training delivered to Tier 2 and Tier 3 stations, focusing on SSoW and multi-agency safety.
- **Hazmat Capability & Refresher Training:** Acquisition and refresher courses for Hazmat and DIM advisors delivered in partnership with Glasgow Scientific Services.
- **Heavy Rescue Training Model Overhaul:** New equipment rolled out and training decentralised across SDAs, increasing uptake and improving HR currency from 98% to 114%.
- **BA & RTC Pathway Enhancements:** BA competency rose from 82% to 91%; RTC acquisition process improved, and review aligned with NFCC guidance.
- **Contaminant Reduction & Research:** Decon training embedded; PPE upgrades, zoning, and contaminant monitoring implemented; staff contributed to national research.
- **Strategic Training Initiatives:** ATV, ALP, ERD, IOSH/NEBOSH training expanded; self-compliance status improved to Gold; UK Rural Skills partnership established.
- **PPE & Contaminant Control:** 600 reserve PPE sets distributed; contaminant zoning and SSoW/GRA implemented; BA set cleaning equipment installed at key training centres.

TSA Accident Summary	
Types of Events:	Top 3 causations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accident (38) • NM (10) • VA (7) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Temperature 2. Manual Handling 3. Slips, Trips and Falls

- **CivTech Collaboration:** Supported biomonitoring project using urinalysis, wearable contaminant sensors, and an exposure tracking app.
- **Smoke Curtain Training:** A new training package launched with Ops, H&S, and Fire Brigades Union to enhance firefighter safety during smoke control operations.

Key Achievements and Improvements

Training, Safety and Assurance (TSA) Cont.

- **BA Recovery & Future Development:** BA competency increased from 82% to 91%; The national training standard is under review, with a new Business As Usual (BAU) model set for April 2026.
- **ERD Re-Assessment Pilot:** Localised re-assessments introduced using familiar appliances and teams to improve driver competence and efficiency.
- **ATV & Trailer Training:** Delivered to all 10 Tier 3 stations; supported by a new UK Rural Skills partnership to enhance programme robustness.
- **ALP Operator Training:** Kilmarnock and Coatbridge crews were fully trained ahead of new ALP appliance deployment.
- **Leadership & Compliance Improvements:** A self-compliance audit was conducted. TSA received a gold award. 15 IOSH and 6 NEBOSH courses were delivered to 182 managers to support strengthening the culture.

Policy and Objectives:

- Engaged with business partners on the 2024-25 safety objectives.
- Utilised GANTT charts to manage risk assessments.
- Enhancements to the collation and storage of personal information were undertaken, which involved a review and revision of Data Protection Impact Assessments for our health and safety management arrangements.
- ARA/DRA Storyboard developed and submitted to training function to develop.
- Management Arrangements were simplified to enhance usability and improve user experience.

Risk Management:

Station zoning for fire contaminants guidance and approval for all Stations was undertaken, and concluded to support the management of fire contaminants.

Supporting the implementation of Risk and Technical Assessments and SSoW including;

- Rope Rescue
- Training Fire Ground Technicians
- Offsite Training
- Water Rescue Training
- Transportation and use of Cylinders

The following papers were progressed through governance;

- ICAT V First Aid
- Face Fit Testing Update
- IOSH Managing Safely and Course Content
- Noise and Vibration
- Firestorm Review
- Food Safety Compliance
- Steam Burns Trend Analysis
- PRE Trend Analysis

Key Achievements and Improvements

Training, Safety and Assurance (TSA) Cont.

Training and Communication:

The following training and awareness content was delivered.

- Manual Handling e-learning programme for personnel learning training, and updating content to reflect current guidance, best practices, and statistical information.
- Introduced a new Manual Handling Assessors programme of learning to enhance assessors' skills, knowledge, and understanding of this technical risk assessment. This programme supports assessors and provides them with additional guidance.
- E-learning content continued to be updated, and introduced learning programmes for Noise, vibration, lone working, safety signs and signals, manual handling, PUWER, and Manual Handling technical assessments.
- Staff awareness campaigns including Stress management, Cancer Awareness, Home Working Doesn't Have To Be Isolating Poster developed for Digital Wellbeing Month, MSK, Prostate Cancer and Stress Awareness articles.

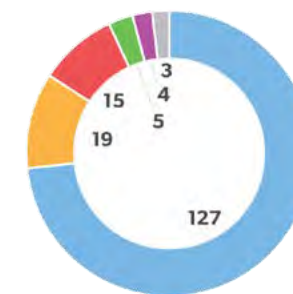


Key Achievements and Improvements

Operations

- Completed Self-Compliance forms as part of the Management Assurance (MA) process.
- Reviewed and produced Operational Technical Assessments, including:
 - Manual Handling
 - PUWER (Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations)
 - PPE Assessments
- Ongoing Document Conversion Project (DCP), publishing a total of 127 Equipment Information Cards including new and revised.
- Produced an evidence-based paper on Lightweight PPE, following a trend identified by Ops Assurance:
 - Reviewed by Ops FMT and DMT.
 - Next steps under consideration, potentially informing a service-wide PPE strategy.
- In collaboration with SA colleagues, developed Methods of Entry (MoE) procedures:
- Produced supporting Manuals, EICs, and completed a service-wide equipment gap analysis.
- Supported the Clinical Governance Technical Working Group:
- Contributed to governance processes and documentation.
- Helped align SFRS trauma bags with Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) standards, including:
 - Oxygen therapy
 - Catastrophic bleed control
 - Tick removal equipment

Operations Accident Summary	
Types of Events:	Most Common Causations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VA (7) NM (4) Accident (2) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Impact (Stationary Object) Other



Operations Improvements

- Equipment Info Cards
- Awareness Briefings
- Standard Operating Procedures
- General Info Note
- Urgent Instructions
- Policy and Operational Guidance

Key Achievements and Improvements

Service Delivery Areas - North

- FFP3 Face-Fitting – Future-Proofing Readiness:** All Whole time and On-Call recruits face-fitted for FFP3 masks during initial training. Results are formally recorded and shared with Watch Commanders to ensure early procurement of suitable Respiratory Protection Equipment (RPE). Process rolled out across all NSDA training centres to ensure compliance, safety, and consistency.
- Site-Specific Information (SSI) Trial:** New system trialled using Getac tablets to store and access Operational Intelligence for derelict/ domestic properties. Led by CAT and Ops teams, improving risk awareness, tactical planning, and firefighter/public safety. Results will inform a national model for SSI management.
- Manual Handling Awareness:** NSDA-wide briefing issued following increased musculoskeletal injuries. Reinforced correct manual handling practices and incident reporting to reduce harm and identify learning.
- Bonfire Period Engagement:** Targeted Q3 briefings improved awareness, preparedness, and public engagement. Resulted in a 44% reduction in verbal and physical attacks on staff.
- Equipment & Safety Campaigns:** BA cylinder test date checks highlighted via EIC update after Think, Act, Stay Safe (TASS) event. Service-wide awareness raised; reinforced the importance of near miss and safety event reporting.
- BA & Driver Training Developments:** BA competency increased from 82% to 91%; review underway ahead of 2026 BAU training model. ERD re-assessment pilot launched; ALP and ATV training delivered to support specialist operations.
- Contaminant Control Measures in WIOS:** Strategic decontamination support introduced for remote stations lacking shower facilities. Stocked post-fire kits and decontamination equipment deployed to designated locations. Future plans include issuing personal post-fire kits for affected crews.

North Accident Summary	
Types of Events:	Most Common Causations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NM (55) VA (45) Accident (34) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Impact (Moving Objects) Slips, Trips and Falls Manual Handling

Key Achievements and Improvements

Service Delivery Areas - East

- **Conical Strainers – Incorrect Fitting Identified:** TASS event revealed water failure due to incorrectly fitted conical strainers across multiple SDAs. National check confirmed widespread issue. Service wide Urgent Instruction (UI) issued and reassurance from manufacturer requested.
- **BA Set Testing – Compliance Issues:** Audits in City of Edinburgh showed BA sets not consistently tested at shift start. Gaps found in PIFM logbook entries and out-of-date spare cylinders at three stations. Communications sent out to adhere to BA EIC, which staff are reminded to comply with.
- **Low Speed Manoeuvres – Risk Reduction Measures:** Rise in incidents prompted ESAIG-led response: Staff engagement, training improvements, and 20 new training sets purchased in partnership with Arco. Cross-department assurance focus now embedded.
- **Breathing Apparatus Support Unit (BASU) – ESDA:** BASU introduced at Galashiels to support new Fire Contaminants SOP. Reduces appliance

movements, fuel costs, and emissions while improving firefighter safety and BA servicing access. Increased RIDDOR understanding and national consistency in learning.

- **Interim Vehicle Acceptance Checks – MELSB/CoE:** New process implemented following TASS near miss (unroadworthy vehicle returned from workshop). Formal handover procedure recommended; EIC and driver handbook updates in progress.
- **TASS Supervisory Manager Training – CFS:** New package introduced to address early-stage TASS mismanagement. Focus areas: safety culture, investigation process, support tools, interactive scenarios. Delivered during Supervisory Officer development sessions.
- **TASS Reporting Support Tools:** All CFS appliances now have laminated OIC checklists for incident reporting. Evaluation underway; rollout planned across ESDA and nationally via Safety & Assurance Sub Group.

- **Expected Outcomes Across All Areas:** Improved accuracy and quality of TASS reports. Greater confidence in reporting and stronger safety culture.

East Accident Summary	
Types of Events:	Most Common Causations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NM (56) • VA (56) • Accident (49) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Impact (Stationary Object) 2. Slips, Trips and Falls 3. Manual Handling

Key Achievements and Improvements

Service Delivery Areas - West

- **Face Fit Testing & Fire Contaminants Management:** Face Fit Testing completed across all duty systems in CoG, Lanarkshire, and EWDAB, overcoming geographic and logistical challenges.
- **Fire Contaminant Zoning:** implemented at all stations, including remote and island communities.
- **All Contaminant Risk Assessments completed:** SOPs embedded through staff engagement and resource provision. Additional contaminated PPE boxes requested to support laundry procedures.
- **Low Speed Manoeuvre (LSM) Reduction:** LSM-specific training delivered across areas, including 10-day programme at Cowcaddens.
- **15% decrease in LSM incidents in EWDAB;** national rollout of Lanarkshire pilot has improved process consistency. Appraisal processes now include LSM performance objectives.
- **TASS Improvements & Learning:** TASS training delivered to all CoG supervisory officers via MS Teams. Interim vehicle acceptance checks adopted post-TASS near miss, improving safety and accountability.
- **Leadership, Engagement & Culture:** SALOs in West SDA maintain active involvement in Safety & Assurance Improvement Group (SAIG). Staff demonstrated exceptional commitment in delivering key programmes under tight timeframes and challenging conditions.
- **New SSoW 275 – Trailer Coupling/ Uncoupling** implemented following CoG TASS event. Interim audits conducted (Q4) to address issues from Conical Strainers, Getac Batteries, and EIC usage.
- **Audit & Assurance:** 2024/25 Station Audits completed in CoG with all actions closed.
- **Quarterly Thematic Audit Programme** launched in EWDAB; Q1 focused on EIC usage and appraisal consistency. Early signs show increased awareness and preparedness at station level.
- **Training & Operational Readiness:** MSF 4-pump scenario programme launched in CoG to support Command development.
- **Specific Risk Assessment Register:** created in Lanarkshire for community training sites, available to all SFRS crews.

West Accident Summary	
Types of Events:	Most Common Causations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VA (87) • NM (55) • Accident (43) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Impact (Moving Objects) 2. Manual Handling 3. Temperature

Key Achievements and Improvements

Financial and Contractual Services (FCS)

Finance and DaTS

Ongoing Safety & Assurance Engagement

- Regular participation in SAIG meetings with the Safety Advisor.
- Health & Safety remained a standing item at all management team meetings.
- Health & Safety Improvement Plan (HSIP) used to track progress and guide decisions.
- 100% of HSIP actions completed by both Finance and DaTS.

DaTS Handbook Review

- ICT Handbook fully reviewed and transitioned to a digital format.
- Updates included Handbook Overview, Briefing Paper, Risk Assessments, 16 SSoWs, and revised PPE Assessment.

Remote Working & Staff Wellbeing

- Managers maintained regular contact with remote staff via MS Teams.
- Continued emphasis on health, safety, and wellbeing for home workers.
- Staff supported through Office Handbook guidance on safe remote working.

Recognition

- Achieved Gold Award for Self-Compliance Support Review.

FCS Accident Summary	
Types of Events:	Most Common Causations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accident (10) • VA (5) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Impact (Stationary object) 2. Slips, Trips and Falls 3. Human Error

Key Achievements and Improvements

Financial and Contractual Services (FCS)

Assets

Health & Safety Management

- Continued positive progress across FCS, with active collaboration between internal and external partners (e.g. Police Scotland, SAS, Scottish Government, suppliers).
- Health & Safety remains integral to all Asset Management activities.

Fleet Modernisation

- Deployment of new appliances supporting firefighter decontamination (e.g. wipe-clean surfaces, hand-wash facilities).
- Fleet upgrades include:
 - 2 new ALPs for enhanced rescue capabilities.
 - 6 Iveco Eurocargo Medium Rescue Pumps.
 - 12 Iveco Daily Light Pump Units for volunteer support.
 - 30 Scania 18T chassis cabs pending conversion to Rescue Pumps.

- 39 Kia Niro EVs (plus 13 leased) for carbon reduction.
- 4 4x4 Wildfire Support Units.
- 16 Mercedes eVito and 3 eCitan vans.
- 11 Ford Rangers for rural/off-road use.

Equipment Improvements

- New Tier 1 & 2 SWAH kits aligned with SFRS strategy.
- Ongoing Holmatro Hydraulic Rescue Equipment (HRE) replacement, new TICs, smoke curtains, Wildfire PPE.
- Standardised medical oxygen and introduced pulse oximeters.
- Contaminant control: 2000 reserve PPE sets available across the service, SCBA cleaning units at three national training sites, airing rails/cages at stations, and body/hair wash supplies made available.

Property Enhancements

- RAAC remediation at Galashiels; planning in place for Dalkeith and Liberton replacements.
- Reconfiguration of stations (e.g. Dingwall, Galashiels, Newcraighall) for improved facilities and contamination control.
- Training site upgrades: 7 CBFT unit replacements and Structural Collapse simulator under development at NTC.

Governance & Strategic Planning

- Strategic Asset Management Plans in place for Fleet, Equipment, Property, and Training.
- 10-year risk-based investment strategy aligned with condition, risk, and operational needs.
- Annual Asset Management progress updates delivered.
- Corporate office review completed to identify space savings and co-location opportunities.
- Community Resilience Hubs Outline Business Case submitted to Scottish Government.

Key Achievements and Improvements

People

People Improvements

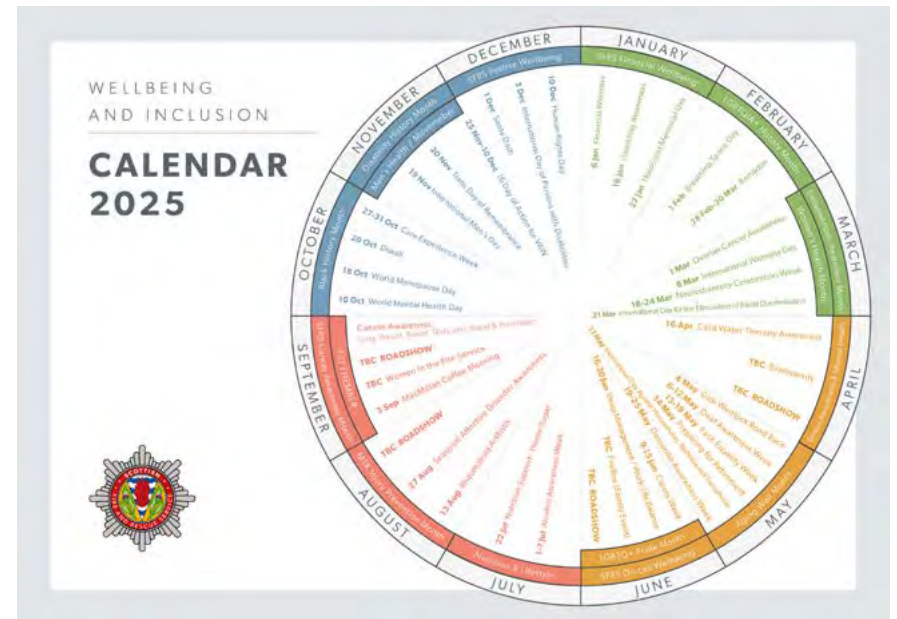
- Developed Specific Risk Assessment and Safe System of Work for Randex Filing Cabinets.
- Reviewed Wellbeing Handbook, two General Risk Assessments, and associated Safe Systems of Work (completion due October 2024).
- Successfully delivered the Career Ready Programme across 2024/25.
- Provided Talent input to the first national and North SDA Women in the Fire Service Events.
- Led the implementation of a Multi-Agency Emergency Services Event in collaboration with Police Scotland and SAS.
- Collaborated on the integration of hazard perception into recruitment processes.
- Delivered “People Management Essentials” training to 233 supervisory managers as part of the SFRS Management Development Framework.
- Established a working group to plan post-Day 1 Management Development content (including TSA, Prevention, and Mental Health/Lifelines).
- Continued delivery and support of the Lifelines programme across the Service.
- Partnered with Collective Learning and Union Learning to widen access to lifelong learning opportunities.
- Conducted analysis of SFRS Colleague Experience Survey results to inform future improvements.
- Launched the SFRS Confidential Reporting Line to support transparency and staff voice.
- Supported early stages of HMFSI Culture Review (Volume 1).
- Ongoing contribution to the Strategic Service Review Programme, enhancing alignment with risk and demand across Scotland.
- Created, reviewed, and implemented policies that reinforce a culture of health, wellbeing, and safety Service-wide.

Key Achievements and Improvements

Wellbeing

Over 190 Wellbeing Champions in SFRS to support colleagues.

- SFRS continues to strengthen its approach to staff wellbeing through ongoing review and enhancement of the Wellbeing Management System and associated documentation.
- Inducted three new Wellbeing Champions, including representatives with a veterans' focus, further strengthening SFRS's commitment to the Armed Forces community.
- Supported by the Ministry of Defence Gold Employer Recognition Award, reflecting ongoing veteran engagement and support.
- Completed the review of the Post-Incident Support Process, enhancing wellbeing surveillance for Operations Control, Fire Investigation, and ISAR personnel.
- Delivered wellbeing content at the Women in the Service Event, promoting inclusive health support.
- Continued support for the Firefighters Charity, including implementation of the FireRox event and ongoing involvement in the Santa Dash.
- Developed and approved the 2025 Wellbeing Calendar following evaluation, aligning initiatives with service-wide needs.
- Action plan implemented in response to the approved HMFSI Wellbeing Report, with progress tracking in place.
- Established a short-life working group to explore enhanced support for employees transitioning to retirement and post-service life.
- Continued delivery of Mental Health, Contaminants Awareness, and Musculoskeletal Injury Prevention roadshows across all SDAs.
- Ongoing wellbeing and ergonomic support for Operations Control personnel, including workstation assessments.
- Participated in the NFCC Menopause Conference, engaging with other UK fire services to benchmark and share best practices.



Key Achievements and Improvements

Wellbeing



The first ever FireRox Charity Challenge on 21 September 2024. This event saw SFRS colleagues take on a firefighting-themed Hyrox style workout challenge in aid of The Fire Fighters Charity.

(Photo credit: SFRS Station Commander Gordon Curran).



Over 200 participants dressed as Santa took part in a charity race to support the Fire Fighters Charity.

The festive fun run, held at our Cambuslang site, the five-kilometre race was completed by colleagues from across the Service, including families and children, raising over £3,500.

Key Achievements and Improvements

Portfolio Office



Portfolio Office Accident Summary

Types of Events:

- Accident (1)
- VA (1)

Top causations:

1. Slips, Trips and Falls
2. Hit Something Fixed or Stationary

- Active participation in the Service's overarching Health and Safety Management Structure.
- Provision of local leadership and oversight through the Safety and Assurance Subgroup (SAIG).
- Ongoing delivery of the Local Health and Safety Improvement Plan to uphold and enhance staff safety standards.
- Achieved and maintained the Health and Safety Gold Standard for five consecutive years (2 years – Portfolio Office; 3 years – Service Development).

Key Achievements and Improvements

Prevention



- Collaborated with Representative Bodies to develop and implement Safe Systems of Work (SSoW) and Generic Risk Assessments (GRAs) aligned to the Safer Homes strategy, ensuring safety of staff, partners, and the public.
- Established a Wellbeing Group within PPP to foster a supportive team culture:
- Increased the number of Wellbeing Champions.
- Promoted access to wellbeing resources.
- Launched a Wellbeing Newsletter to improve communication and awareness.
- Fire Safety Enforcement team achieved a Gold Award in their Self Compliance Review.
- Following the PPP Self Compliance Assessment, SAIG identified gaps in DSE assessments for dual work locations (office/home):
- Reviewed data and implemented assessments for all affected staff.

Prevention Accident Summary	
Types of Events:	Top causations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• VA (5)• Accident (2)• AoV (1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Hit Something Fixed or Stationary2. Temperature3. Verbal Assault

Key Achievements and Improvements

Strategic Planning, Performance and Communication



SPPC Accident Summary	
Types of Events:	Top causations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AoV (2)• Accident (1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Verbal Assault2. Impact (Stationary Object)

- Quarterly reporting conducted using the Health and Safety Tracker to monitor progress and ensure ongoing compliance.
- In 2024/25, a new fire evacuation system was implemented at National Headquarters (Cambuslang):
 - Introduced a more robust sign-in/sign-out process.
 - Enhanced the accuracy and safety of roll call procedures during evacuations.

Continual Improvement

SA Improvements

- ISO45001 Gap Analysis and Maturity Model under development identifying areas of improvement
- Produced papers on 4 Action Notes from NFCC
- Produced papers on 5 Information Notes from NFCC
- MV Ultravirtue Case Study from Learning at incidents.
- Low Speed Manoeuvre Booklet created and approved for awareness.
- Future planning of E-Safety and Assurance Management System.
- TASS Hazard reporting module went live following presentations at all Safety and Assurance Groups.

Support Reviews

Support Reviews provide assurance that SFRS requirements are met, and in addition to supports legal compliance.

The aim is to promote and share areas of best practice or highlight where improvements can be made to allow standardisation throughout the service.

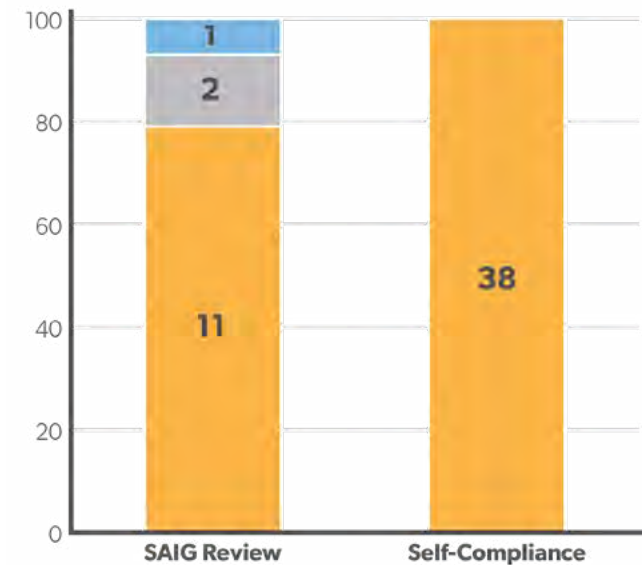
A sample of the following topics were undertaken:

- Self Compliance; and
- Safety and Assurance Improvement Groups

As a result of the SRs areas of national learning have been identified and continue to be addressed through various workstreams such as the ongoing review and update of the Safety and Assurance Engagement and Governance MA.



Support Reviews

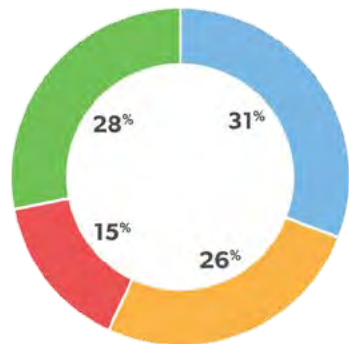


Continual Improvement (Operational Assurance)

2024/25 Service Delivery completed the Station Audit process utilising the Operational Assurance Reporting and Recoding System (OARRS).

- North Service Delivery Area 78 audits completed;
- East Service Delivery Area 31 audits completed; and
- West Service Delivery Area 110 Audits completed.

Actions continue to be monitored where significant improvement is required, and where minor areas of improvement was identified these actions continue to be actioned at local level.



Station Audit Outcomes

Excellent

Satisfactory

Areas of Improvement

Good

Operational Assurance have published 4 Frontline Updates

- Renewable Energy Technologies
- Near Miss Reporting
- Carbon Monoxide
- Breadalbane Street

The purpose of these updates is to provide staff with an overview of the challenges and hazards associated to increase knowledge and share learning across the Service.



Continual Improvement

(Organisational Learning Group)

Since the implementation of the reformed Operational Learning Group (OLG) meetings, risk owners have continued to actively manage and address recommendations from a variety of sources. The OLG tracker is a real-time dashboard. This live system enables risk owners to input updates directly, upload evidence of completion, and support informed decision-making and closure of actions during OLG meetings.

The dashboard provides key stakeholders with immediate access to live data, facilitating the identification of trends, monitoring of progress, and promotion of shared learning across the organisation. This has significantly contributed to the continuous improvement of health and safety practices across the organisation.

The dashboard has recorded a total of 551 recommendations, of which 363 have been completed. Risk owners remain engaged and committed to progressing the remaining actions.

In the 2024–25 reporting year, over 100 new recommendations were added to the dashboard, reflecting the ongoing efforts of the Safety and Assurance Team. Their dedication and proactive approach have been instrumental in driving forward improvements and embedding lessons learned across the organisation.

Given the nature of our services, a substantial proportion of actions fall under the remit of the Operations Directorate. Their continued efforts to prioritise and address these actions are acknowledged and appreciated.

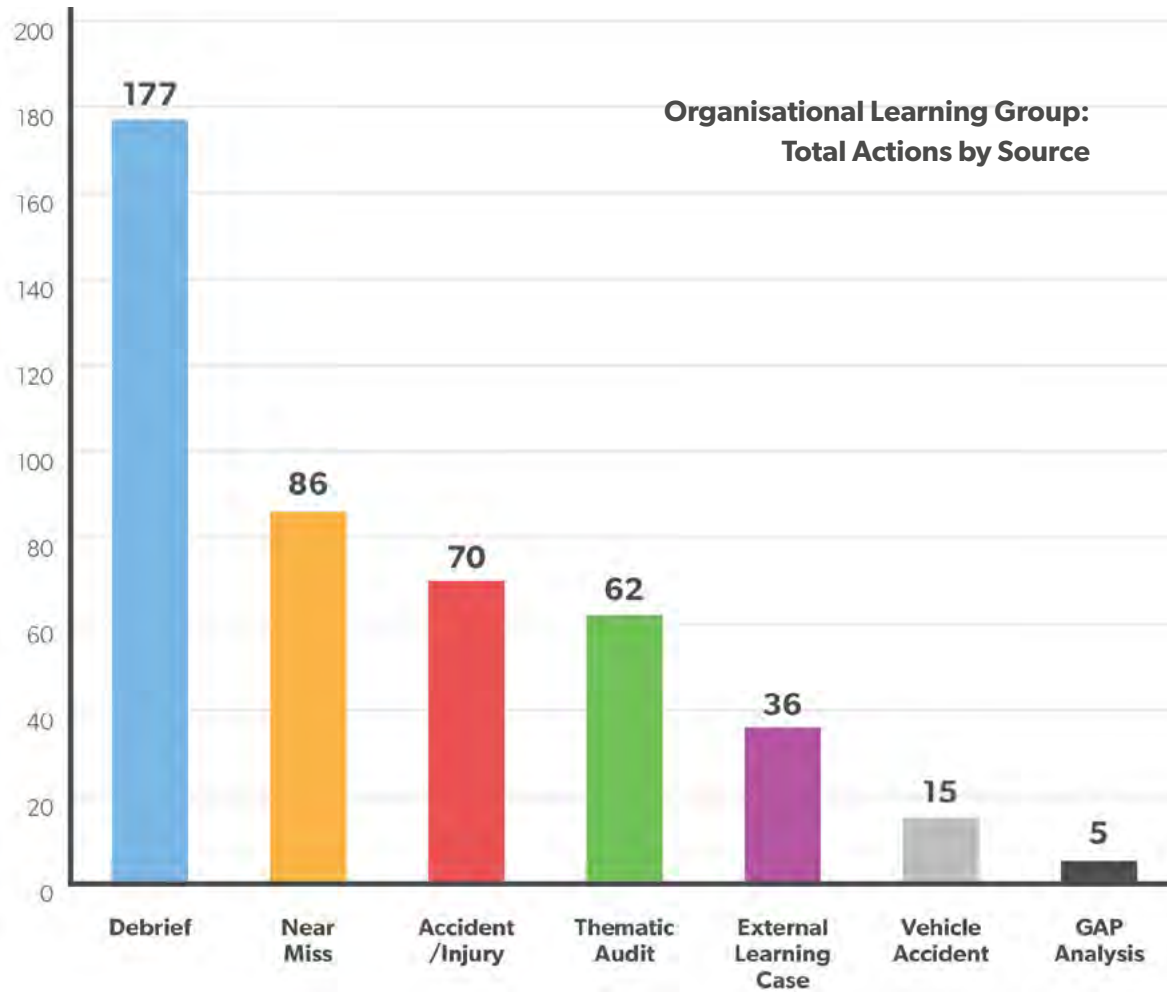
Examples of Completed Actions and Progression:

- The Driver Safety Group conducted a comprehensive review of Appendix H of the Driver Handbook. This update was initiated in response to a significant event, ensuring the content remains current and aligned with best practices.

- The Asbestos Safe Operating Procedure was thoroughly reviewed and updated. In addition, a corresponding Learning Content Management System (LCMS) module was developed and successfully completed by all operational staff based at TfOC.
- Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) were procured and standardised in accordance with Swift Water Rescue operational requirements, enhancing safety and compliance during water-related incidents.
- The Generic Risk Assessment (GRA), Safe Systems of Work (SSoW), and Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) assessments for All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) were reviewed and formally published. Relevant personnel have since undertaken and completed the required ATV training.

Continual Improvement

(Organisational Learning Group)



Continual Improvement

(Organisational Learning Group)

Significant Event Summary

The SFRS carried out a total of 3 Investigations in 2024-25;

Inverness Road Traffic Collision (RTC)

Description: On route to an incident involving a large animal rescue, a fire appliance lost traction on the road and was involved in a collision with a commercial van.

Outcome: Following the investigation, 8 recommendations were made.

Brechin Wall Collapse

Description: Whilst undertaking firefighting operations at a blaze in an abandoned building / fire in a derelict building. A near miss occurred when a wall collapsed, narrowly missing the firefighters.

Outcome: This investigation is ongoing through relevant governance routes. Any recommendations will be progressed to the OLG.

Selkirk Burn Injury

Description: During the initial stages of an incident, two Firefighters in Breathing Apparatus received injuries whilst in the process of carrying out a casualty rescue resulting in minor burns reported.

Outcome: This investigation is ongoing through relevant governance routes. Any recommendations will be progressed to the OLG.

Ongoing Jenners Fire Investigation

Investigation is ongoing and any risk critical findings are being actioned as a priority.



Looking Ahead

As we look ahead, the Safety and Assurance (SA) Directorate will continue to strengthen its strategic direction and vision, aligning our efforts with key organisational priorities and emerging risks.

A key area of development will be the full integration of our Health and Wellbeing department into the directorate. This will foster stronger cross-functional collaboration, enhance the effectiveness of occupational health monitoring, and improve the measurement and reporting of health outcomes.

We will also maintain our proactive role in addressing fire contaminants, continuing to engage with national working groups and drawing on the latest research from academic and industry experts. This ensures our practices remain evidence-based and aligned with sector-leading standards.

We will progress the recommendations on publication of His Majesties Fire Service Inspectorate inspection of SFRS Operational

Assurance processes. While continuing to improve our approach toward Safety Assurance and the development of our structure/approach toward Training Assurance, working closely with colleagues within the Training Function.

Our commitment to continuous improvement remains through our Organisational Learning arrangements, we will further enhance our management systems to ensure risks are effectively identified, assessed, evidenced and mitigated.

We are dedicated to strengthening our approach toward performance communication and engagement strategies. By ensuring our workforce performs to the highest safety standards and remains well-informed and actively involved in safety matters, we aim to build a more resilient, knowledgeable, and safety-conscious organisation.

For further information of enquiries please contact sfrs.healthandsafety@firescotland.gov.uk

Our goal is to ensure that our people are safe, healthy and protected from risks they are faced with whilst carrying out their work activities.

The continued focus on safety relies on application of the SFRS values; teamwork, respect, innovation and safety.



We sincerely thank all employees for continually contributing to the health, safety and wellbeing of our people and creating a Safer Scotland.

5. Glossary of Terms

The following glossary is an alphabetical list of terms and/or abbreviations contained within the report with their corresponding meanings or explanations.

Accident/Injury Rate: The total number of reported Accidents/Injuries divided by total number of employees multiplied by 1,000 to give the accident injury rate per employee

ALP: Aerial Ladder Platform Power

AoV: Acts of Violence

ATV: All-terrain Vehicle

BA: Breathing Apparatus

BAU: Business as Usual

COSHH: Control of Substances Hazardous to Health

DCP: Document Conversion Project

DSG: Drivers Safety Group

FBU: Fire Brigades Union

FCS: Fleet and Contractual Services

GANTT: A graphical representation of activity against time

GRA: Generic Risk Assessment

HRE: Hydraulic Rescue Equipment

HS: Health and Safety

HSE: Health and Safety Executive

KPI: Key Performance Indicators

LCMS: Learning Content Management System

LSM: low-speed manoeuvres

LSO: Local Senior Officer

MA: Management Arrangement

MSK: Musculoskeletal – Referring to the musculoskeletal system including bones, ligaments, muscles, tendons, nerves and other connective tissues

NFCC: National Fire Chiefs Council

NM: Near Miss

OARRS: Operational Assurance Recording and Reporting System

OLG: Organisational Learning Group

People: People Directorate

PPE: Personal Protective Equipment

Prevention: Prevention Directorate

5. Glossary of Terms

PRE: Pneumatic Rescue Equipment

PUWER: Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations

RIDDOR: Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations

RPE: Respiratory Protective Equipment

SAIG: Safety and Assurance Improvement Group

SA: Safety and Assurance

SAMS: Safety and Assurance Management System

SDA: Service Delivery Area

SFRS: Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

SOP: Safe Operating Procedure

SPPC: Strategic Planning, Performance and Communication

SSOW: Safe System of Work

TfOC: Training for Operational Competence

TASS: Think, Act, Stay, Safe

UFAS: Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

VA: Vehicle Accident



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