



**SCOTTISH**  
**FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Working together for a safer Scotland

# **FIRE SAFETY AND ORGANISATIONAL STATISTICS (SCOTLAND) 2017-18**

31 August 2018



**Working together  
for a safer Scotland**



# Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>Main Points</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Commentary</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1	Workforce	3
2.2	Fire Stations	7
2.3	Fire Appliances and Vehicles	9
2.4	Attacks on Fire and Rescue Personnel	10
2.5	Fire Safety – Home Fire Safety Visits	11
2.6	Fire Safety – Non-domestic	13

This publication is accompanied by the following documents:

Fire Safety and Organisational Statistics Workbook 2017-18  
Technical Notes on Statistics 2017-18  
Statistical News 2017-18

# 1. Main Points

## Workforce

---

- **7,776** staff were employed by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) at the end of the 2017-18 financial year. This is a 0.7% reduction on 2016-17
  - ▶ **46%** of staff are wholetime operational. There has been a 2.7% reduction in this staff group since last year
  - ▶ **13%** of staff are female. This is unchanged on last year
  - ▶ **30%** of staff are over 50 and 66% are over 40

## Stations and Vehicles

---

- **356** fire stations across Scotland, comprised of:
  - ▶ **74** Wholetime fire stations
  - ▶ **240** Retained Duty System fire stations
  - ▶ **42** Volunteer fire stations

## Fire Appliances and Vehicles

---

- **1,506** vehicles in the fleet in total, of which:
  - ▶ **632** appliances were operational including 417 pumping appliances, and 27 operational boats
  - ▶ **138** were appliances in reserve or used for training

## Attacks on Fire and Rescue Personnel

---

- **61** attacks on SFRS personnel, down from 83 last year, of which:
  - ▶ **53** attacks related to operational incidents, down from 78 last year
  - ▶ **8** attacks not related to operational incidents, up from 5 last year
- **7** personnel injured as a result of these attacks, up from 5 last year

---

## Fire Safety - Home Fire Safety Visits

- **69,758** home fire safety visits conducted, slightly down on last year (by 1.4%)
- **54,159** smoke alarms installed, down 6.5% on last year
- **2.7%** of Scottish dwellings visited in 2017-18

---

## Fire Safety - Non-domestic

- **7,635** fire safety audits were completed, down 14.6% on last year. However, activity including specific visits and consultations increased by 3.7% last year
- **39,471** staff hours spent on audits
- **42** formal Notices issued



## 2. Commentary

### 2.1 Workforce

#### Staff Headcount

On 31st March 2018 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) had a total headcount of 7,776 staff, which is down 0.7% on the total last year.

The 3,546 wholetime operational staff (full-time firefighters) make up the largest staff group at 46% of the workforce. This was a reduction of 2.7% on last year's headcount for wholetime operational staff.

Retained Duty System staff make up the next largest group accounting for 37% of staff with a headcount of 2,863. This is relatively unchanged on last year.

The largest proportional change is in the control staff group which increased by 24 (14.5%) in the last year, bringing the total up to 189.

The number of support staff has increased slightly (by 1.0%) to 846.

The number of volunteer staff has increased by 5.1% to 332 staff.

Two thirds (64%) of SFRS volunteers are in the Argyll and Bute local authority area with a further 19% in the Highlands. The Highlands also have the largest number of retained staff at 538 (19%), followed by Aberdeenshire at 275 (10%).

#### Headcount Staffing by Staff Type

Within the overall total for wholetime operational staff the breakdown by staff type has changed in the last year. The number of staff ranked between Crew Manager and Group Manager has increased by 5.1%. There are 54 more Crew Managers (up 8.5%) recorded since last year, and within the Firefighter group a reduction of 172 (down 8.0%). These changes can be largely accounted for by a combination of planned retirements and promotions of staff, with the Firefighter group being the largest of the staff types impacted.

In the support staff category, there has been a 19.1% increase in the number of Service Managers (up by 8 from 42 to 50), a 5.8% increase in the number of Specialist/Technical staff (up by 20 from 346 to 366) and a 7.3% decrease in the number of Technical Support staff (down 12 from 165 to 153).

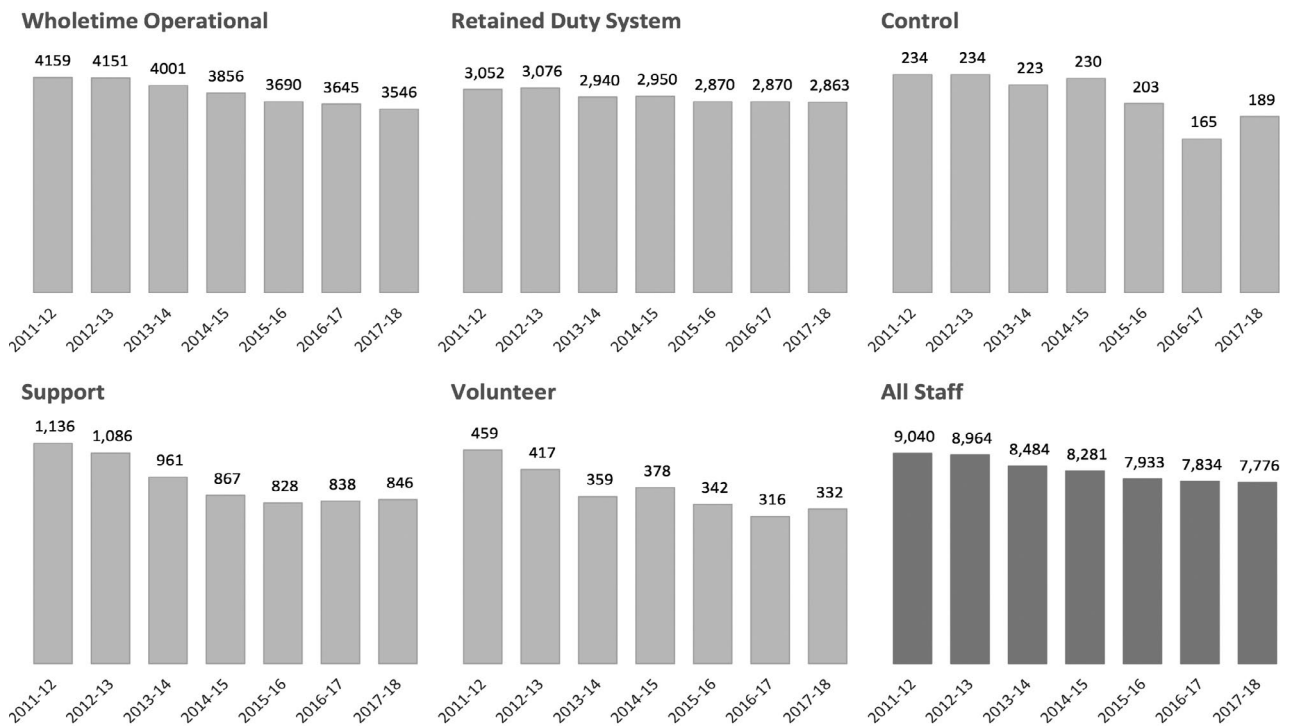
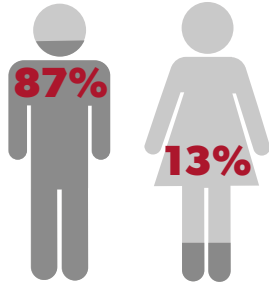


Figure 1: Headcount of Fire and Rescue Service Staff

## Gender

Overall the gender balance of SFRS staff does not vary much year-to-year remaining around 87% male.



For wholetime operational, retained and volunteer staff the workforce is predominately male (95.1%, 94.0% and 83.4% respectively). There have been only small variations in these proportions over recent years and while there has been an increase in the number of female wholetime staff this remains proportionally very low.

For control staff the balance is the reverse, as 83.6% of staff are female. This, like the gender balance of operational staff, has varied little in recent years.

The gender balance for support staff is more even overall with 56.3% of staff being female. The different types of support staff are unevenly balanced however, with 94.5% of Administration staff, 72.2% of Professionals and 57.5% Technical Support being female. For Technical Support this 57.5% proportion for the headcount of female staff reduces to 47.2% when full-time equivalent is considered, as there are many part time roles in this category.

In contrast, 66.4% of Service Managers are male and 62.5% of Specialist/Technical staff are male.

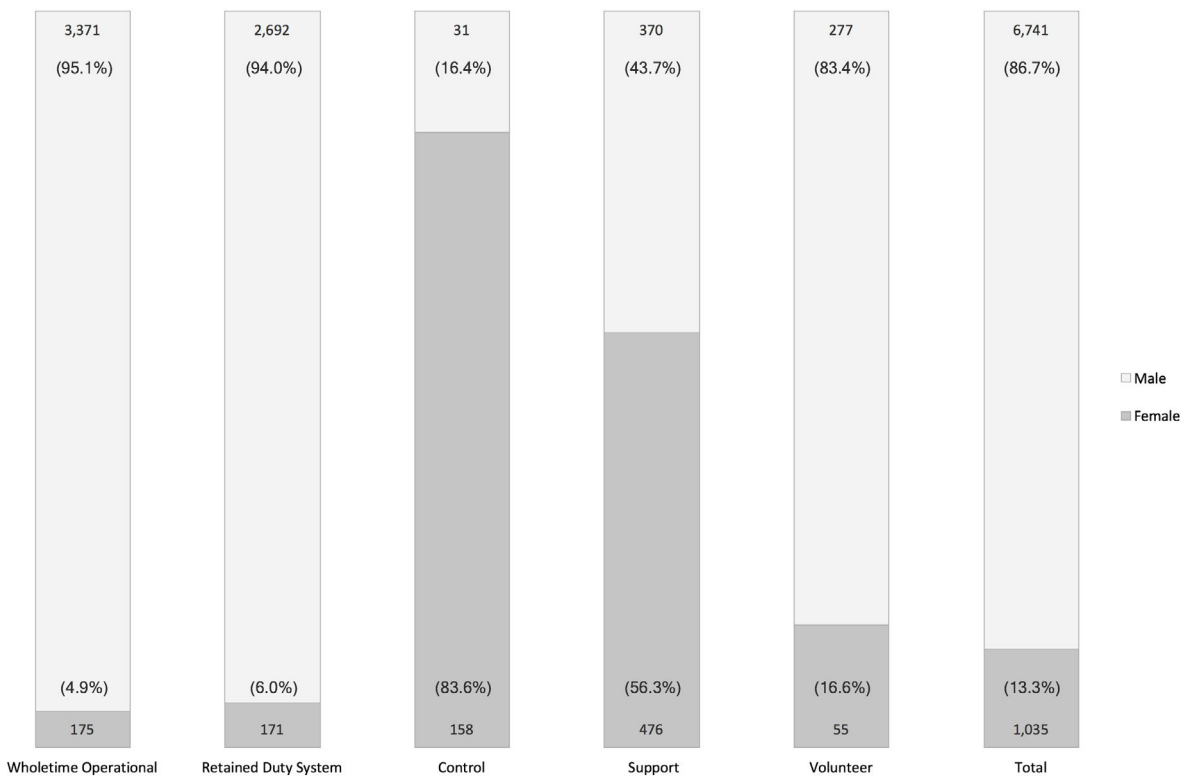


Figure 2 : Number and percentage of staff by gender and staffing type

### Staff Headcount by age

The retirement age for SFRS staff varies according to personal circumstance and the conditions of individual pension schemes which are different across staff types and areas of the country.

SFRS staff older than 50 make up 30.3% of the workforce (up from 25.7%) while those older than 40 make up 66.1% (up from 64.1%). For wholetime operational staff 25.6% are older than 50 (up from 20.1%) and 69.0% are older than 40 (up from 65.6%).

The number of wholetime operational staff aged 45-49 has dropped from 26.6% to 24.8%, while those aged 50-54 has increased from 18.1% to 21.9%. Similarly for volunteers 20.6% were aged 50-54 last year, while this year the proportion is 24.1%.

Overall the number of SFRS personnel in their 40s has decreased by 231 in the last year (7.7%) while those in their 50s has increased by 291 (16.2%).

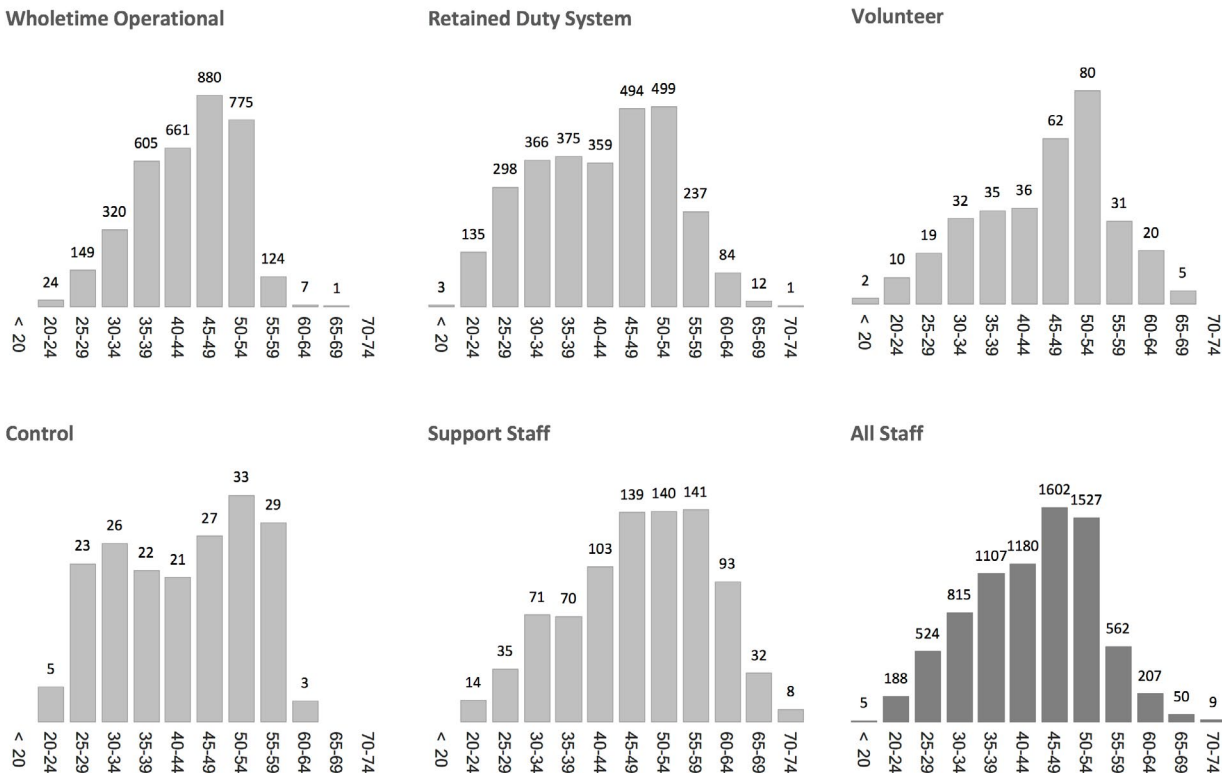


Figure 3: Headcount of all staff by age band and type



## Years of service

### Wholetime Operational staff

A large proportion of wholetime operational staff have a length of service of 10 to 19 years (45.3%). Those who have served from 20 to 29 years make up a further 32.9% of the total. Wholetime staff recruited in the last ten years make up just 18.6%.

### Retained Duty System staff

24.1% of Retained Duty System staff have served less than 5 years with a further 20% between 5 and 10 years.

### Volunteer staff

29.2% of volunteer staff have served less than 5 years.

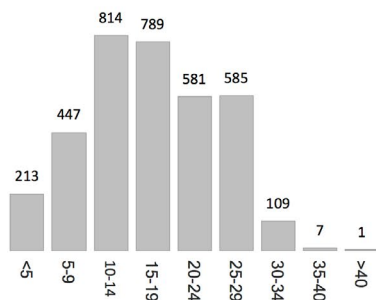
### Control staff

29.6% of control staff have served for less than 5 years. This relatively large proportion results from recruitment following the planned closure of legacy control rooms over the past four years with consequent retirements from longer-serving staff.

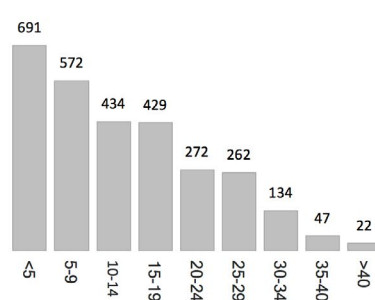
### Support staff

23.9% of support staff have served less than 5 years with a further 14.4% between 5 and 10 years, and 24.8% between 10 and 15 years. This is the only group with a double peak.

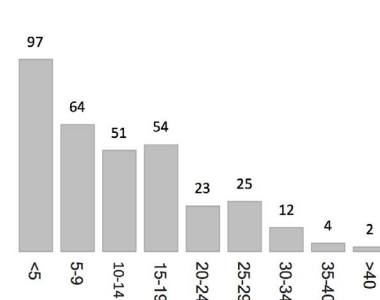
**Wholetime Operational**



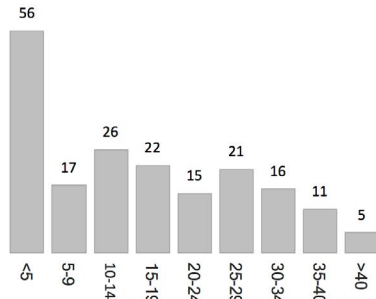
**Retained Duty System**



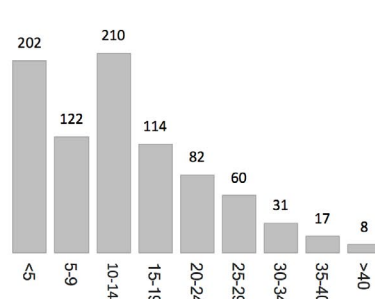
**Volunteer**



**Control**



**Support Staff**



**All Staff**

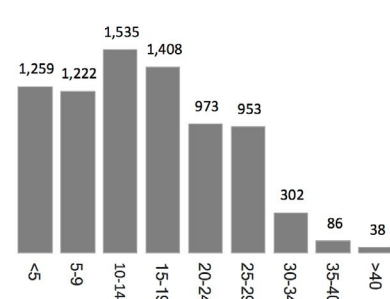


Figure 4: Years of service by staff type

## 2.2 Fire Stations

There are 356 fire stations in Scotland. Of these, 74 are wholetime fire stations, 240 are Retained Duty System fire stations and 42 are volunteer stations. There have been no changes in station crewing types since 2014-15.

There are five local authority areas in which all SFRS stations are wholetime crewed: Glasgow City (11), Dundee City (4), East Dunbartonshire (3), East Renfrewshire (2) and Renfrewshire (3).

In contrast, there are three local authority areas in which all SFRS stations are crewed by Retained Duty System staff: Orkney Islands (12), Shetland Islands (14) and Na h-Eileanan Siar (14). In the Highland local authority area SFRS has the most retained-crewed stations at 51 but also has 9 volunteer-crewed stations and 1 wholetime-crewed station in Inverness.

In the Argyll and Bute local authority area SFRS has 25 volunteer-crewed stations, around two thirds of all stations in this area.



Although incidents are most likely to be attended by a crew from the closest fire station, they all form part of the national network of operational resilience and crews frequently attend incidents across area boundaries. The three regional control centres based in the North, East and West Service Delivery Areas determine the most appropriate response to send to incidents.

For further details and a full list of Fire Station locations, please see [Technical Notes on Statistics 2017-18](#).

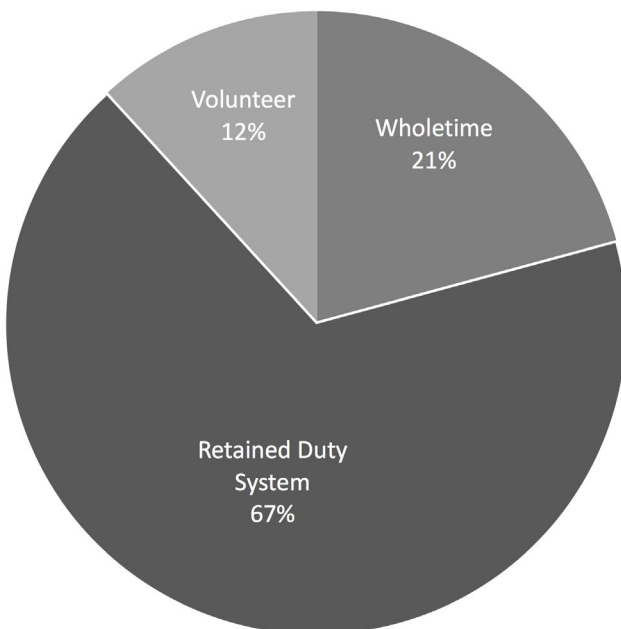


Figure 5: Percentage of fire stations in Scotland by crewing type

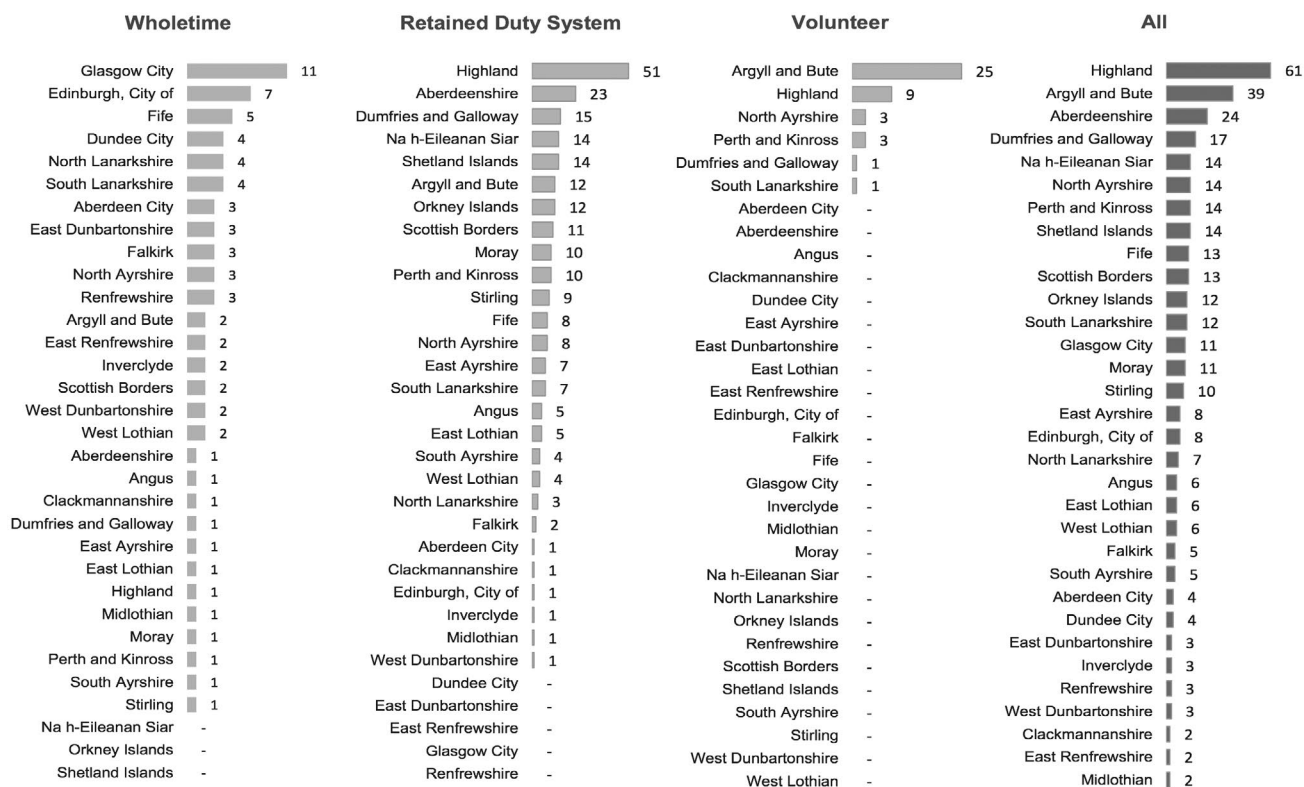


Figure 6: Fire and Rescue Stations in Scotland by local authority and crewing type

## 2.3 Fire Appliances and Vehicles

At the end of the 2017-18 financial year, the SFRS fleet had a total of 1,506 vehicles, a 2.7% reduction on last year (1,547). Operationally-active<sup>1</sup> vehicles account for 48% of the fleet.

In total there are 632 operational appliances, comprising:

- 417 Pumping Appliances
- 25 Aerial Appliances
- 43 Resilience Appliances
- 147 Other Appliance Types

This is very similar to last year.

There are a further 74 appliances held in reserve or undergoing maintenance (up from 65 last year) and 64 appliances used for training purposes (up from 62 last year). When added to the 632 operational appliances already mentioned this gives a total of 770 (51% of the fleet).

SFRS also have three types of water vehicles: Rigid Hulled Boats, Rigid-hulled Inflatable Boats, and fully Inflatable Boats. There are 27 operationally-available boats which can be used for water rescue across Scotland.



---

<sup>1</sup>Operationally-active vehicles include operational appliances and officer response cars

## 2.4 Attacks on Fire and Rescue Personnel

In 2017-18 there were 53 attacks on SFRS personnel related to operational incidents which resulted in 7 injured personnel.

While it is possible that figures will be revised upward next year, at present 53 appears to be a substantial reduction on the previous three year average of 81 incidents and is the lowest in this series. This has not resulted in a decrease in the number of injuries recorded. The type of injury sustained in such attacks is not recorded in this bulletin.

There were an additional 8 attacks on SFRS personnel which were not related to operational incidents, bringing the total number to 61. This is down 22 (26.5%) from 83 last year.

The Glasgow, Inverclyde and North Lanarkshire Local Authorities combined had 29 attacks which is more than half of the Scotland total yet only account for 19% of the Scottish population<sup>2</sup> and 23.4% of operational incidents. There were 28 attacks across these areas last year, which means that the reduction in recorded attacks is mainly from other areas of Scotland.

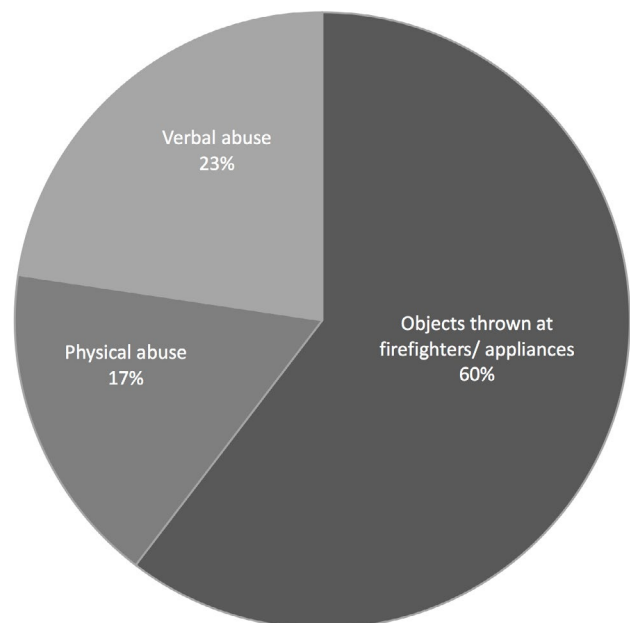


Figure 7: Percentage of attacks by type

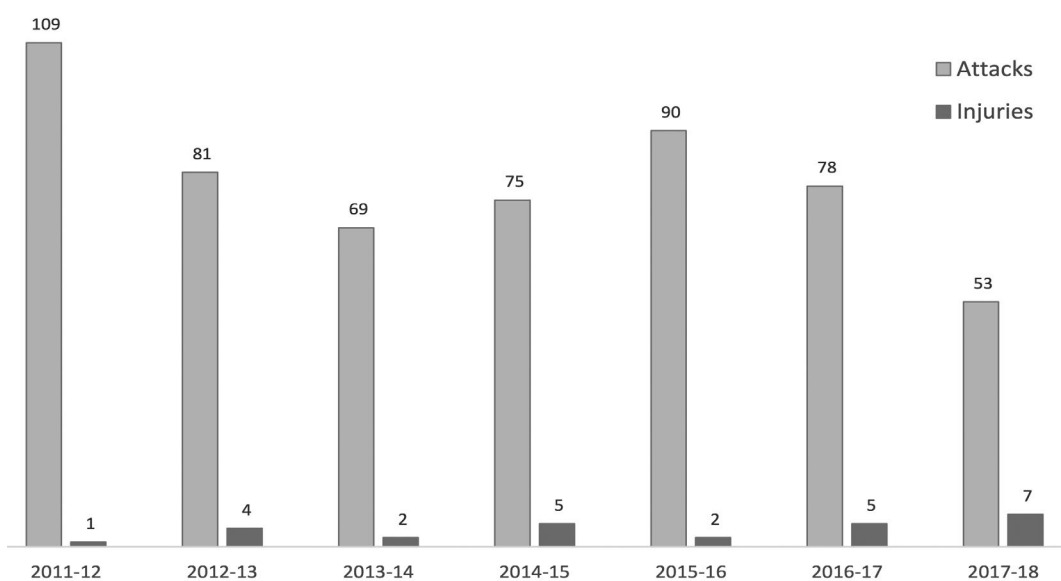


Figure 8: Number of attacks and injuries related to operational incidents

<sup>2</sup>Source: Mid-2017 population estimates Scotland, National Records of Scotland (<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-estimates/mid-year-population-estimates>)

## 2.5 Home Fire Safety Visits

In 2017-18 there were 69,758 home visits which is a reduction of 1.4% on last year though it is still the fourth-highest total in the last seven years. In 40% of visits smoke or heat alarms were installed. This is very similar to previous years, see Figure 9 for the long term series.

There were 27,729 home fire safety visits at which 39,900 new alarms and 14,259 replacement alarms were installed. On average 2.0 alarms are installed during these visits. This has been stable for several years. This averages to 0.8 alarms installed per visit overall, when taking into account the advice-only visits.

The rate of visits per 1,000 residential buildings provides a useful comparison between local areas (see Figure 10). The Scottish average is 26.9 visits per 1,000 dwellings<sup>3</sup>. The local authority area with



**69,758**  
HOME  
FIRE SAFETY  
VISITS

the highest rate is the Highlands at 44.3 visits per 1,000 dwellings, followed by Scottish Borders at 40.9, followed by Dundee City at 39.8. The lowest is Aberdeenshire at 18.2.

This year Glasgow City is up to 26.1 visits per 1,000 residential buildings, from 19.6 last year, which is the biggest increase in Scotland.

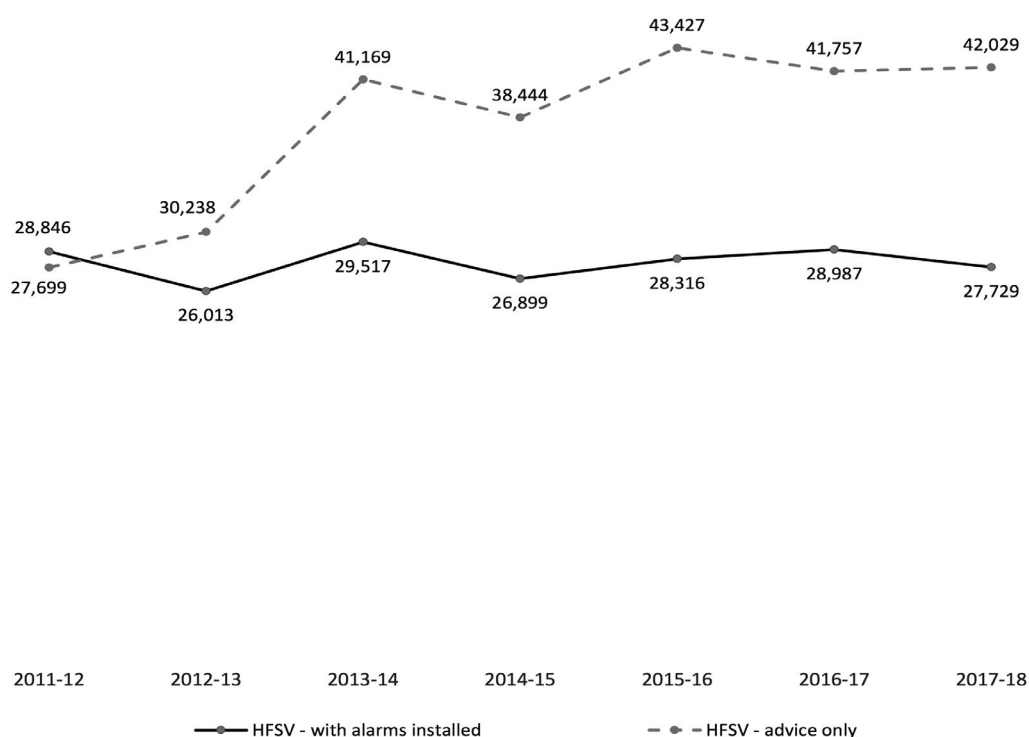


Figure 9: Home Fire Safety Visits by type

<sup>3</sup>Source: Estimates of Households and Dwellings in Scotland 2017, National Records of Scotland  
<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/households/household-estimates/2017>

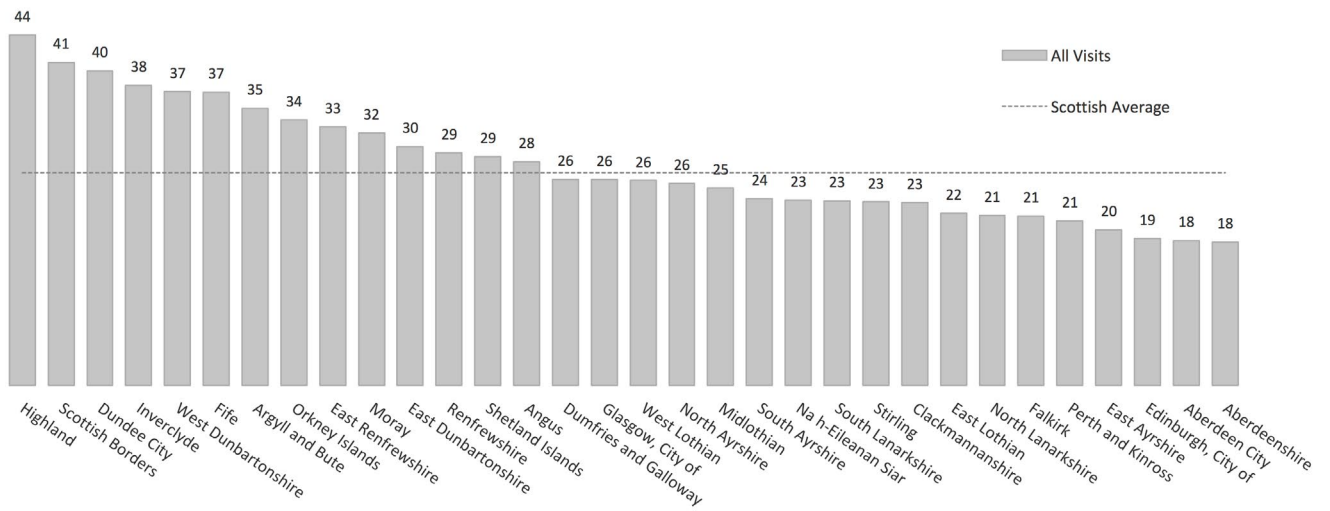


Figure 10: Rate of Home Fire Safety Visits per 1,000 dwellings by local authority area

## 2.6 Non-domestic Fire Safety

There were 7,635 audits completed in 2017-18, a reduction of 14.6% from 8,946 last year. However, there was a 77.5% increase in the number of specific visits to a site (from 1,460 last year to 2,592) and a 25.5% increase in consultations (from 2,582 to 3,241). Overall there was a 3.7% increase in the number of non-domestic workflows completed (from 12,988 to 13,468).

The majority of audits are completed in three types of premises: Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) (2,077, 27.2% of the total), Care Homes (1,653, 21.7% of the total) and Hotels (1,167, 15.3% of the total).

The proportion of audits which did not need formal notification of deficiencies was 93.9% in 2017-18, similar to previous years.

In total 39,471 staff hours were recorded against the audits undertaken in 2017-18. The average audit workflow takes a little over 5 hours of staff time to fully complete. Where serious deficiencies were found, this increases to an average just over 10 hours. Where legal Enforcement Notices were needed the process takes much longer; the three-year average is just under 25 hours of staff time recorded against such audits.

**7,635**  
FIRE SAFETY  
AUDITS  
COMPLETED



There were 15 Enforcement Notices, 25 Prohibition Notices and 2 Alteration Notices issued in 2017-18, a total of 42. This is a 23.5% increase on the 34 issued in 2016-17.

Audits where the owner needed to be notified of deficiencies make up 6.1% of all audits in Scotland. Premises classified as Hotels and Licenced Premises have the highest proportion where deficiencies were notified, at 12.8% and 11.5% respectively. Offices have the lowest rate where deficiencies were notified at 1.4%.

In the Highlands the proportion of audits where deficiencies were notified is much higher than the Scottish average of 6.1% at 20.6% of audits. In the Orkney Islands the rate is 23.1%, in Na h-Eileanan Siar it is 17.4% and in Angus it is 16.8%.



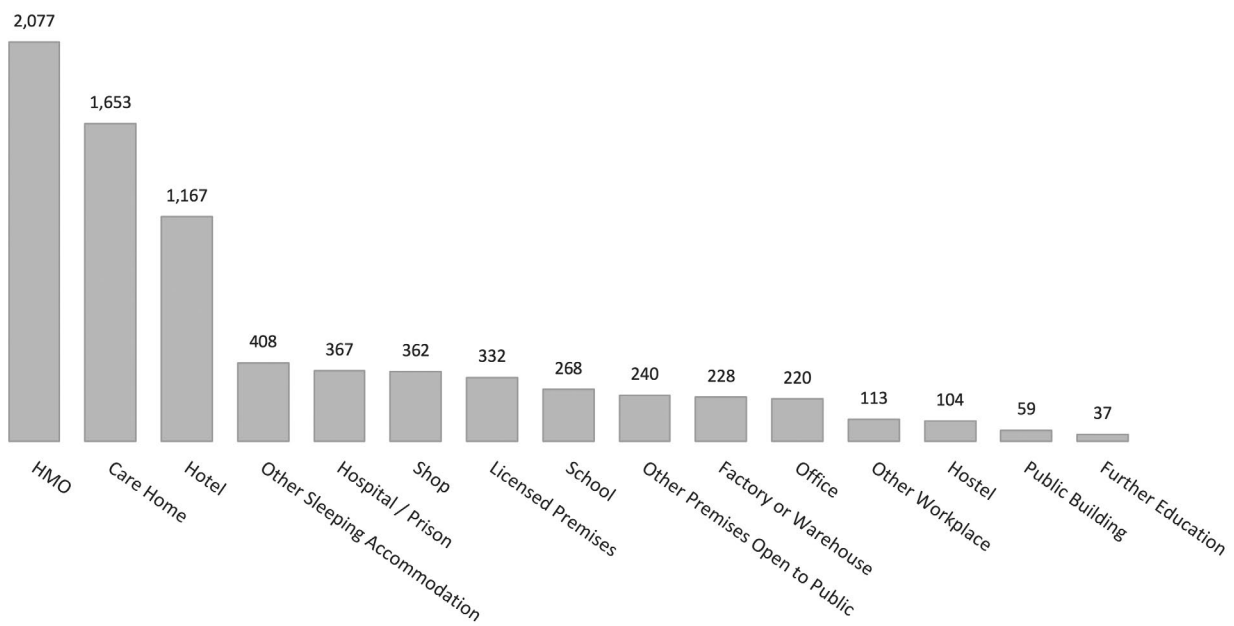


Figure 11: Number of non-domestic premises audited by premises type

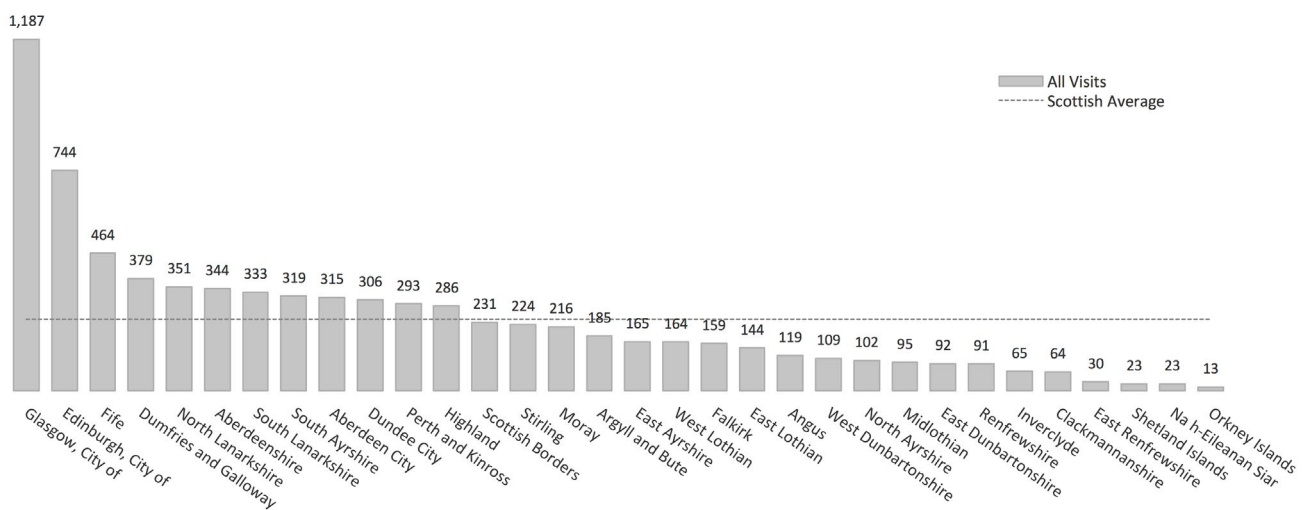


Figure 10 : Number of non-domestic premises audited by local authority area

# A Statistics Publication from The Scottish Fire And Rescue Service

## **Correspondence and enquiries**

Lead statistician for this bulletin and associated documents was Gregor Welsh.

For enquiries or feedback please contact:

[National.Statistics@firescotland.gov.uk](mailto:National.Statistics@firescotland.gov.uk)

The next edition of Fire Safety and Organisational Statistics bulletin and associated documents is scheduled for release in August 2019.





SCOTTISH  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

[www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk)