

6. Service Report

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of recent key developments and activities together with performance information for the period 1 July to 30 September 2009.

Recommendation

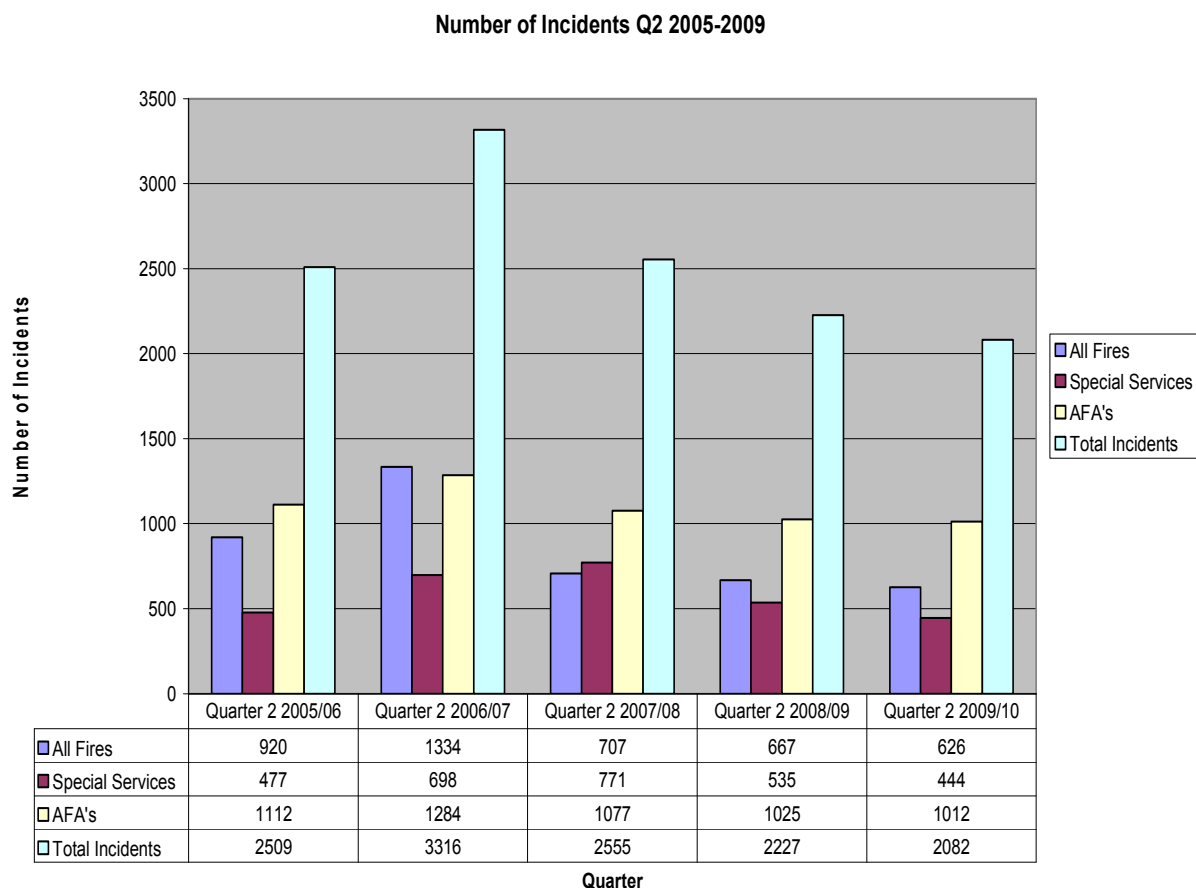
The Chief Fire Officer recommends that the report be noted.

Performance

Operational Incident Performance Update Quarter 2 2009-10

2. Figure 1 below demonstrates overall operational activity during Q2 2009-10 compared with the first quarter in the previous four years.
3. Total incident numbers for Q2 2009/10 show a decrease on the same period last year (2082 incidents compared with 2227) and represent a significant improvement on the previous four years' figures.

Figure 1



Health and Safety Incidents and Injuries

	Total Incidents	RIDDOR Reportable
July – Sept 2008	53*	10
October – December 2008	60*	12
January – March 2009	51*	3
April – June 2009	54	11
July – Sept 2009	46	4

*includes all Health and Safety Incidents (injuries, fleet Health and Safety incidents, near hits, etc)

Analysis

4. The number of reported Health and Safety Incidents/Injuries this second quarter of 2009-10 has decreased significantly when compared to the previous quarter – down from 54 to 46.
5. Furthermore, the number of incidents which are reportable under RIDDOR has decreased significantly when compared to the immediately preceding quarter - from 11 to 4.
6. Of the 4 RIDDOR reportable Health and Safety incidents this period, one involved a Breathing Apparatus malfunction, one was the result of manual handling activities during training, one involved a YFA volunteer and one was an impact injury.
7. Again, as identified in previous periods, a significant number of all Health and Safety incidents continue to involve operational personnel (78%). A quarter of these incidents occurred during operational activity, a further quarter occurred during training activities and the remainder occurred during routine activities.
8. In a departure from previous quarters, analysis of all reported incidents has shown a decrease in slip, trip and fall injuries and Manual Handling injuries, with the largest proportion of injuries this quarter being attributed to impact injuries, which accounted for almost 22% of injuries.
9. A total of 8 Fleet Health and Safety Incidents were reported this quarter, with 7 of these incidents occurring during routine driving activities. Whilst the total number of reported fleet incidents is equal to the figure reported during the immediately preceding quarter, reported incidents occurred predominantly during operational driving activities (5 incidents).
10. The number of reported Near Hits and Potential Hazards has remained low as in previous periods, with 11 incidents being reported this quarter; and 18 in the immediately preceding quarter.
11. These incidents represent less than a quarter of all reported Health and Safety incidents this quarter. This again emphasises the fact that the number of injuries and incidents occurring remains higher than the number of potential hazards and near hits being reported.

Health and Safety Activities

12. The programme of Health and Safety competency training continues. Ten additional specialist incident investigators have been trained to investigate health and safety incidents. There will be further IOSH, Risk Assessment and COSHH management training courses during 2009/10.
13. The review of existing Health and Safety policies continues, as has the development of several new Health and Safety policies.
14. During the summer, a health and safety management systems' audit was undertaken. This will be supported by a selection of location audits being undertaken in the New Year. The findings of both sets of audits will then be used to inform future Health and Safety strategies. The outcome of these Audits will be reported to Members in 2010.

Complaints, Concerns, Compliments and Donations

15.

Q2	July 09	Aug 09	Sept 09	Totals
Complaints	2	0	1	3
Concerns	0	1	2	3
Compliments	4	3	4	11
Donations	4	2	1	7

Information Management

16. Requests for Information

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)/Data Protection Act (DPA)/Environmental Information Regulations (EIR)

Q2	FOIA Requests received and completed	DPA Requests received and completed	EIR Requests received and completed	Total Requests received in Q2
July 2009	23	2	1	
August 2009	12	0	0	
September 2009	23	0	2	
TOTALS	58	2	3	63
Requests received January – September 2009 (Q4/Q1/Q2)			184	

Interim Fire Control Arrangements

17. In light of delays in the Regional Control Project reported to the Authority in June, work continues to identify a potential interim solution for Fire Control resilience. Officers have been working with colleagues from Shropshire FRS to evaluate a potential replacement mobilising system that could deliver both enhanced capability and reliability, and enable seamless mobilising across both Services. An update on this evaluation, and the latest position in respect of the Regional Fire Control project, will be delivered to the Authority in February 2010.

International Support Provided by Hereford & Worcester FRS

18. In November the Service was host to two Senior Officers from Trinidad and Tobago, Godfrey Fitzroy McKellar and Anthony Allan McEarchrane. These Officers were in the UK to undertake a Senior Command Course at the Fire Service College and were attached to Hereford & Worcester to learn more about performance management, communications and technical services. The Officers also accompanied the Chairman and Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive to the National Emergency Services Show at Stoneleigh for the launch of the Service's new CARP appliance.
19. Following a request for support from Dr Barooah, the President of the College of Emergency Medicine of India, it was agreed that two H&W Officers, WM S Cusack and WM A Elliott, would attend the 11th Annual International Conference of Emergency Medicine in India between 15-22nd November to deliver a range of training inputs. The theme of this conference was 'team work'. WM Cusack was identified as being an ideal candidate because of his dual Fire Service and Air Ambulance experience and interest in RTC and major incident management. WM Elliott was selected based on his similar interests and both individuals were considered to be ideal ambassadors for HWFRS.
20. Road traffic collisions are a major cause of fatalities and serious injury in India, and until very recently, there was no organised rescue service for victims involved in these incidents. The Fire Service has recently been given this responsibility and is working hard to secure appropriate training and equipment. During the conference week, H&W Officers delivered training to Fire Service staff on a wide range of RTC principles, casualty management and extrication.
21. H&W Officers also provided input at a Major Incident Management Seminar on Incident Command, the UK response following the terrorist attacks of 9-11 and HWFRS involvement in UK flood response. During a simulated major incident exercise, H&W Officers were involved in playing the roles of Tactical and Strategic commanders in a simulated terrorist attack.
22. This visit was funded by the hosts and did not involve any costs for the Service.

Routine Replacement of Light Vehicles

23. There will be a routine phased replacement of 22 light vehicles, 16 of which are used for emergency response. Having worked with the Services' Fleet Department, FireBuy and users, base-specification Freelanders are due to be purchased through the Department of Works & Pensions contract to Police (base) Specification. The purchase price is more than £2,200 per vehicle lower than the existing vehicles and further savings will be achieved due to greater accessibility to local servicing outlets across the Hereford and Worcester areas.
24. From a Corporate and Social Responsibility perspective, the new vehicles are manufactured in the West Midlands, supporting local jobs and employers in related sectors within the region. The replacement vehicles will be more functional, with 4 wheel drive and permanent high visibility markings. In addition, Landrover has fewer transportation costs than the existing vehicles and operates a Carbon Offset programme.

Information for Members

Pandemic Flu Update

25. The Service continues to meet with Local Authorities, Health Trusts and other partner organisations to monitor the national, regional and local situation for Pandemic Flu in line with agreed Business Continuity arrangements.
26. There has been a substantial fall in new swine flu cases in the past few weeks with a marked decrease among young adults and children.
27. The independent committee of experts in the UK recommended that all those in the at risk groups should be offered the swine flu vaccine. These included frontline health and social care workers to protect them and their patients and ensure the NHS is staffed should it come under pressure this winter. The vaccination programme that began on 21 October 2009 continues. As of the 4 December 2009 1.6 million people in the priority groups have received their vaccination.
28. Despite the fall in new cases across the two counties the Service remains vigilant. The Corporate Risk Management Group set up to manage resilience to the Flu Pandemic continues to monitor staff sickness levels.
29. The Service continues to exercise Business Continuity arrangements and train our staff where necessary.

West Midlands Regional Management Board

30. The West Midlands Regional Management Board held its Annual General Meeting on 23 July 2009 in the HQ of the West Midlands Fire Service.
31. Brigadier Peter Jones was elected Chair of the Regional Management Board for the period until the commencement of the annual meeting of the Board in July 2010.

32. The formal close-down of the West Midlands Regional Management Board Programme Office was approved and it was agreed that the Regional Management Board would only meet annually. The Chair informed Members that a special meeting of the Regional Management Board could be called if any significant issues arose.
33. The Board also considered the delay to the RCC/Regional Fire Control Project and the issues arising from same.
34. Draft Minutes of the Meeting are attached as Appendix 1.

Local Incidents to Note

Stop Fire Spreading

35. Two crews from Hereford managed to stop a fire causing serious damage to a shop in Hereford in the early hours of Thursday, October 22. The fire actually involved two minibuses and one catering trailer, which were all well alight when the firefighters attended. The crews used three hose reels and one jet to bring the fire under control. Station Manager Neil Lilwall praised the crew's hard work and skill as they managed to stop the fire spreading to the roof of a nearby shop.

USAR Attend RTC in Stretford

36. An HGV was in collision with a house in Stretford Bridge Farm, Stretford, Hereford on Saturday, October 24. Crews from Kingsland, Leominster and Leintwardine were called to the incident at 7.35 pm. The lorry driver and passenger escaped with minor injuries and were released prior to the arrival of the Fire Service. The occupants were home and escaped without injury. The USAR team was called to shore up the property to help stabilise it following the collision. They worked for a considerable amount of time at the scene, using equipment from all four modules to help reduce the risk of any further damage to the house.

Holt Heath Collision

37. Three fire crews from Worcester were called to a road traffic collision on the Worcester Road at Holt Heath on Thursday, October 22. Three cars were involved in the incident, which happened at 5.39 pm. One casualty was released from a vehicle by firefighters and three people were taken to hospital.

George Saved by Red Watch

38. George, a 21 year old, one tonne Shire horse was rescued by Red Watch, Redditch on Sunday, November 1. The incident took place in Sillins Lane, Elcocks Brook, Redditch where the Shire horse was unable to right himself. It was feared that the vet would have to put the horse down as he had lain on his left side for too long. However, after nearly two hours, with assistance from the winching strops and the farmer's vehicle, Red Watch managed to turn George onto his right side from where he was able to get himself up a few hours later. This rescue featured on BBC Hereford & Worcester and Radio 5 Live.

Factory Fire

39. Firefighters from across Worcestershire attended a severe fire at a plastic packaging storage premises on Saturday, November 7. Crews were called to Gemini Trading Estate, Stourport Road, Kidderminster, at 11.52 pm. Eight pumps attended the incident. Crews were on scene throughout the next day and carried out the final re-inspection on Monday, November 9.

Woman Airlifted to Hospital

40. A woman was airlifted to hospital following a collision on the A38 near to the Swan Inn at Martin Hunningtree on Tuesday, 10 November. Firefighters from Worcester and Droitwich attended the incident, which involved a van and a car, at 10.50 am. The stop message was given at 11.56 am and confirmed that one female had been released from the vehicle by Firefighters.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1: Draft Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the West Midlands Regional Management Board held on 23 July 2009.

Contact Officer

Paul Hayden, Chief Fire Officer
(0845 1224454)
Email: phayden@hwfire.org.uk