

Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer

7. Health and Safety Committee Update

Purpose of report

1. To provide the Policy and Resources Committee with an update on activities and items of significance from the Service's Health and Safety Committee.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the activities and items of significance from the Health and Safety Committee be noted, in particular that:

- (i) the Health and Safety performance information recorded during April 2016 to June 2016 (Quarter 1) shows a downward trend in comparison to the same quarter in 2015; and***
- (ii) the Service has been involved in a number of Health and Safety initiatives, including the implementation of a new risk assessment database to conclude the outstanding actions identified by the Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA) Regional Health and Safety Audit.***

Introduction

2. With regard to the health and safety of employees, Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority's aim is to ensure the safety and well-being of its employees and to reduce and prevent accidents and injuries at work.
3. The Health and Safety Committee (the Committee) is established to provide effective arrangements for the liaison and review of matters of a common interest with regard to Health and Safety (H&S) and to act as a forum for liaison on all matters relating to H&S for key stakeholders and departments. The Committee provides the opportunity for the Service to discuss general H&S matters on which it must consult the workforce via employee representatives.
4. The Committee has the facility to task work to the Health & Safety Working Group, which sits beneath it and is chaired by the Area Commander Operations Support. The group meets as and when required but at least every six months.

Update

5. The Committee last met on 27 September 2016 and is due to next meet on 8 December 2016.

6. A review of quarterly performance for the relevant period was discussed in detail, which overall shows a downward trend of the total events reported. The report is included at Appendix 1.

Service H&S Activities

Risk Assessment Database

7. A new risk assessment database has been implemented to replace the current paper based system. This concludes the outstanding actions identified with the CFA Regional H&S Audit (March 2015). It is anticipated that the new system will change the way in which risk assessments are used, monitored and reviewed through:
 - Provision of current and up to date information online;
 - Risk assessments are readily available for all staff to view;
 - There are more standardised control measures for work activities shared with all users; and
 - Managers can easily verify that Risk Assessments are being used and updated.

Network Rail Safety Bulletin

8. Network Rail issued a safety bulletin to all emergency services following a serious safety event that occurred nationally on the rail network (not within the HWFRS area).
9. Across the UK there have been a number of near miss occurrences (not with HWFRS staff), where emergency service personnel have been working on or near lines without confirmed authorisation from Network Rail. The specific incident that caused this national safety bulletin to be issued was a serious health and safety event whereby responders were at serious risk while searching for a missing persons on a 'live' rail network.
10. As a result of this HWFRS have issued an internal H&S flash to all personnel. This flash reminds all staff of the control measures and the training package available that details the precautions that are required to be applied prior to working on or near railways. This safety flash has also been shared with our partners who often support us when responding at these types of operational incidents.
11. Specialist Accident Investigations

The Health & Safety department have undertaken a review of the significant safety events reported over the last five years to look for trends and to identify its outcomes are being properly implemented. The data has been reviewed by the Committee and further analysis and assurance will be undertaken, although no significant issues have been identified at this stage. This analysis will be reported back to the Committee by April 2016.

Conclusion

12. This report provides Members with an update on health and safety issues discussed at the previous Committee and draws Members' attention to key areas of work currently being undertaken by the Service. In addition the report provides information on quarterly health and safety performance, which overall shows a downward trend of the total number of events reported (See App 1).

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	N/A
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Corporate strategy – Ensuring firefighter safety
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Reduces the overall impact for health and safety management in the areas identified and safeguards the Services legal requirements
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	None
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	N/A

Supporting Information

Appendix 1: Quarter 1 of year 2016/2017 (April – June 2016) Health & Safety Performance Report

Contact Officer

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Title: Quarter 1 Performance Report (April - June 2016)

Personal Injury

Of the **24** H&S events reported, **11** were related to the category of Personal Injury. These are described in Table 1 below:

Sub-Categories	Break-down of Injuries in Each Sub-Category
6 incidents relate to accidents/injuries occurring during training.	1 relates to the collapse of a Shropshire FRS BA team member during a simulated basement Hot fire training using 1 st floor access. He was removed from a Training Facility and given O ₂ therapy and water. An ambulance was requested.
	1 relates to an upper arm injury (discomfort and slight stiffening). During a training exercise a fire engine door was opened and contacted a firefighter walking past.
	1 relates to tripping over items on the floor whilst accessing smoke generator.
	1 relates to falling over an obstacle during a team building exercise.
	1 relates to a slip whilst walking across a grass area after operating a branch and twisting an ankle on uneven ground. 8 Days Lost - RIDDOR
	1 relates to a slip whilst carrying equipment into a container and catching a foot on the edge of the doorframe and bottom latch. 1 Day Lost
5 accident/injuries were at operational incidents	1 relates to a knee injury caused by knee striking against the door as exiting own car. 3 Days Lost
	1 relates to a shoulder injury thought to be caused by putting on a dry suit for a river rescue.
	1 relates to a banged knuckle whilst opening a hydrant cover.
	1 relates to an injury sustained whilst entering a building during a firefighting situation.
	1 relates to a bite and scratches sustained whilst performing an animal rescue.
	Totalling 11 personal injuries
	Totalling 1 RIDDOR event
	Totalling 12 days lost

Table 1: Personal Injuries reported during Quarter 1

Vehicle Accidents

Of the **24** H&S events **8** are related to the category of Vehicle Accidents - these are further described in Table 2 below. Only 4 of these events may be attributed to the FRS driver and these events are highlighted in grey.

Sub-Categories	Breakdown of Injuries in Each Sub-Category
3 accidents were during routine activities	1 relates to a Service car struck by a third party impacting the rear whilst stationary.
	1 relates to a Service car being hit by a third party after fuelling.
	1 relates to the fire engine mirror striking a tree branch whilst travelling down a narrow road
5 accidents were responding to incidents	1 relates to a fire engine mirror striking a tree, during an operational response
	1 relates to a fire engine hitting a 3ft kerbside post whilst reversing, damaging the nearside front corner of the bumper.
	1 relates to a third party car clipping the rear side locker of the stationary fire engine.
	1 relates to a minor impact involving a fire engine with street lighting.
	1 relates to a collision of a fire engine caused by a vehicle coming up the inside on a roundabout where it was unable to pass.
	Totalling 8 vehicle accidents

Table 2: Vehicle Accidents Reported during Quarter 1

Vehicle mileage statistics for the year 2015-2016 have been provided by the Operational Logistics Fleet Department and have been used to predict vehicle mileage for Q1 2016. These are summarised in Table 2A below. It can be seen that the 2 white fleet accidents out of approximately 254,500 miles driven, equates to 1 accident for every 127,000 miles driven. The 6 accidents by red fleet vehicles were out of approximately 69,600 miles driven, which equates to 1 accident for every 11,600 miles driven.

Fleet	Total Mileage 2015-2016	Predicted Mileage Q1 2016
White Fleet	1,018,054	254,514
Red Fleet	278,464	69,616
	Totalling 1,296,518 miles	Totalling 324,130 miles

Table 2A: Vehicle Mileage Statistics

Property or Equipment Damage

Of the **24** H&S events **1** related to the category of Damage to Property or Equipment, this is further described in Table 3 below:

Sub-Categories	Break-down of Injuries in Each Sub-Category
1 - property or equipment failure during training	1 relates to air leaking from a Breathing Apparatus cylinder valve wheel. The valve wheel appears to have been turned past fully open position, creating an air leak from within the valve wheel mechanism.
	Totalling 1 property or equipment damage

Table 3: Damage to Property or Equipment Reported during Quarter 1

Near Hits or Causes for Concern

Of the **24** H&S events **4** related to the category of Near Hits or Causes for Concern - these are further described in Table 4 below:

Sub-Categories	Break-down of Injuries in Each Sub-Category
2 were whilst responding to incidents	1 relates to a near collision between a fire engine and a car being driven by a member of public at a crossroads in Worcester. The crossroads has a blind view until the very last approach.
	1 relates to a trailer hitch being semi-detached from the trailer. The forward most bolts had ripped up through the frame during transit. Significant Event
1 was during routine activities	1 relates to a trailer hitch mounting crack spotted during an inspection following failure (see above). Significant Event
1 was during a training exercise	1 relates to a near miss with a vehicle owned by a partner agency, travelling at speed in the station yard. A firefighter was making up a length of hose when the car passed very close to the firefighter.
	Totalling 4 near hits or causes for concern

Table 4: Near Hits or Causes for Concern Reported during Quarter 1

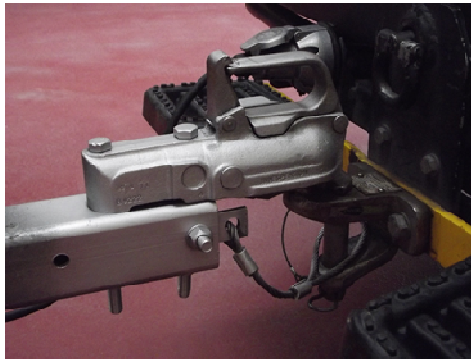
Significant/Serious Events during Quarter 1 (Apr 16 – Jun 16)

There have been two fleet related reports received by the Health & Safety Department; both have been responded to and relate to the same issue. The reports identified cracks in the metalwork holding the towing hitch of trailer connections. The trailer and towing connections are used to tow boats used during water rescue activities:

Fig 1



Fig 2



As can be seen in Figure 1 above the existing trailer hitch attachment failed. The Service has four trailers in use. In addition to the one shown in (Fig 1) one other connection was found to be defective in the same area during inspection, however the other two were undamaged. Fleet engineers worked promptly with the manufacturer of the trailer to rectify this and put improved solutions in place within 48hrs. The damaged trailers were taken off operational duties, remedial measures were implemented, and all four trailers were overhauled and replacement parts fitted (Fig 2), with additional safeguards built in. A full investigation was undertaken and additional measures relating to regular monitoring and servicing have also been implemented.

Summary for Quarter 1 (Apr 16 – Jun 16)

One RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) report was submitted to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This relates to a personal injury where a fire fighter twisted their ankle and was absent from work for 8 days.

Comparison Between Quarters

Comparison of Events Reported Showing Differences Q1 2016 and Q1 2015

Table 5 below, compares the number of events reported in Q1 2015-16 and Q1 2016-17 for different categories. It can be seen that in Q1 2016-17, the number of Vehicle Accidents, reports of Violence and Aggression and Near Hit reports reported were less than in Q1 2015-16. Conversely, Personal Injuries reported and reports of Damage to Property or Equipment in Q1 2016-17 have slightly increased compared to Q1 2015-16. Overall, this demonstrates that event reporting as a whole has slightly decreased during Q1 2016-17 compared with Q1 2015-16.

Event Type	Q1 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Increase/Decrease
Personal Injuries	9	11	+2
Vehicle Accidents	12	8	-4
Property or Equipment	0	1	+1
Violence & Aggression	1	0	-1
Near Hits	9	4	-5
Overall	31	24	-7

Table 5: Quarterly Events Reported Q1 2015-2016 and Q1 2016-2017

Table 5 above compares Q1 2015-16 to Q1 2016-17 reports the Service has had:

- Two additional Personal Injury reports
- Four **fewer** Vehicle Accidents
- One additional report of Damage to Property or Equipment
- One **fewer** report of Violence or Aggression against Service personnel
- Five **fewer** reports of Near Hits or Causes for Concern were made

In summary, this demonstrates positive reporting of Health and Safety events within HWFRS and is an encouraging indicator of the culture and attitude towards H&S matters. There has been a drop in Vehicle Accidents (-4), Violence or Aggression (-1) and Near Hit reports (-5). There has also been an increase of 2 Personal Injuries reported and 1 report of Damage to Property or Equipment, which indicates that more people are utilising the systems in place to identify Health and Safety events, to inform others, and contribute to corrective control measures to continue to drive injuries and accidents down.