

## **Report of Deputy Chief Fire Officer Richard Lawrence**

### **10. Health and Safety Committee Update**

#### **Purpose of report**

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

*It is recommended that the following items be noted:*

- (i) ***Health and Safety performance for Quarter 2 of year 2015-16 (Jul – Sept 2015); and***
- (ii) ***the involvement of the Service in a number of Health and Safety initiatives at a national level.***

#### **Introduction**

2. 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 in regards 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 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2015 and is due to meet next on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2016.
6. A review of quarterly performance for the relevant period was discussed in detail. The Report is included at Appendix 1 with a summary below:

#### **Summary**

7. In comparison to the previous quarter, the total number of incidents is marginally higher. The number of Vehicle collisions has increased of which 8 were whilst

responding to fire calls. The number of personal injuries remained very similar including the number of personal injuries that occurred during training.

8. There was one RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) report submitted to the HSE for an eight day absence, the absence occurred whilst responding on foot to the fire appliance, the individual was distracted by the low sun and misjudged a trench causing a lower leg injury.

### **Local Activities**

9. The Service hosted Lesley Pascoe from the HSE (Health and Safety Executive) on 26<sup>th</sup> August, Lesley is the HSE Officer responsible at a national level for matters that relate to the Fire Service. This visit included visits to Worcester, Droitwich and Evesham fire stations, as well as the Defford Training Facility. A visit followed around various departments located at SHQ, allowing Lesley the opportunity to better acquaint herself with Fire Service operations and activities.
10. The Service led an audit in the West Midlands Fire Service reviewing Breathing Apparatus and slips, trips and falls. The outcome of the audit will be published in January 2016 and will be available to Members in the next update.

### **National Activities**

11. The Service is currently involved in a number of initiatives at a national level. Key areas of activity include:

#### Firefighter Injury Research Project

12. Bill Gough, Coventry University is undertaking a Firefighter injury research project. Bill has met with the Health and Safety department and the Service will provide the required information in line with his request. The Service will gain feedback from this study and assess recommended outcomes.

#### Investigation into Line Rescue Incident

13. An investigation into two serious injuries in Northampton Fire and Rescue Service has taken place and it was found there was no failure by equipment on the day. There were certain issues with equipment and ambiguity with the report from the HSE. An initial report has been sent to the National Rope Users Group, where an evaluation will be undertaken before sharing and recommendations.

#### Carcinogens on PPE

14. A number of international reports appear to suggest a higher prevalence of certain cancers amongst firefighters. These reports suggest the cause may be absorption of carcinogens through tunic/leggings or through exposed skin. A national working group has been assembled to assess the information available with all findings shared through CFOA.

## Conclusion

15. This report provides Members with an update on health and safety issues discussed at the previous Health and Safety 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.

## Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	N/A
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (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
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Reduces the overall impact of health and safety related issues in the areas identified and safeguards the Services legal requirements
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	N/A
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	N/A

**Supporting Information**

Appendix 1: Quarter 2 of year 2015/2016 (Jul – Sept 2015) Health & Safety Performance Report

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## Quarter 2 Performance Report (Jul - Sept 2015)

A total of 33 H&S events were reported this quarter:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13 incidents were personal injuries</li> </ul>	
5 incidents relate to injuries occurring during training.	1 relates to a manual handling injury
	1 relates to small abrasions to hand
	3 relate to slips trips and falls
4 incidents relate to injuries occurring during training.	1 relates to a crew commander falling into a trench (RIDDOR)
	1 relates to hot water spraying two firefighters from hot tap hose
	1 relates to trapping a finger in appliance door
	1 relates to being struck by falling masonry
2 injuries were caused by manual handling	1 relates to carrying PPE
	1 relates to carrying equipment
2 injuries were to maintenance technicians	1 relates to a cut finger
	1 relates to swollen hand whilst working in the cab of an appliance
Totalling 13 personal injuries	

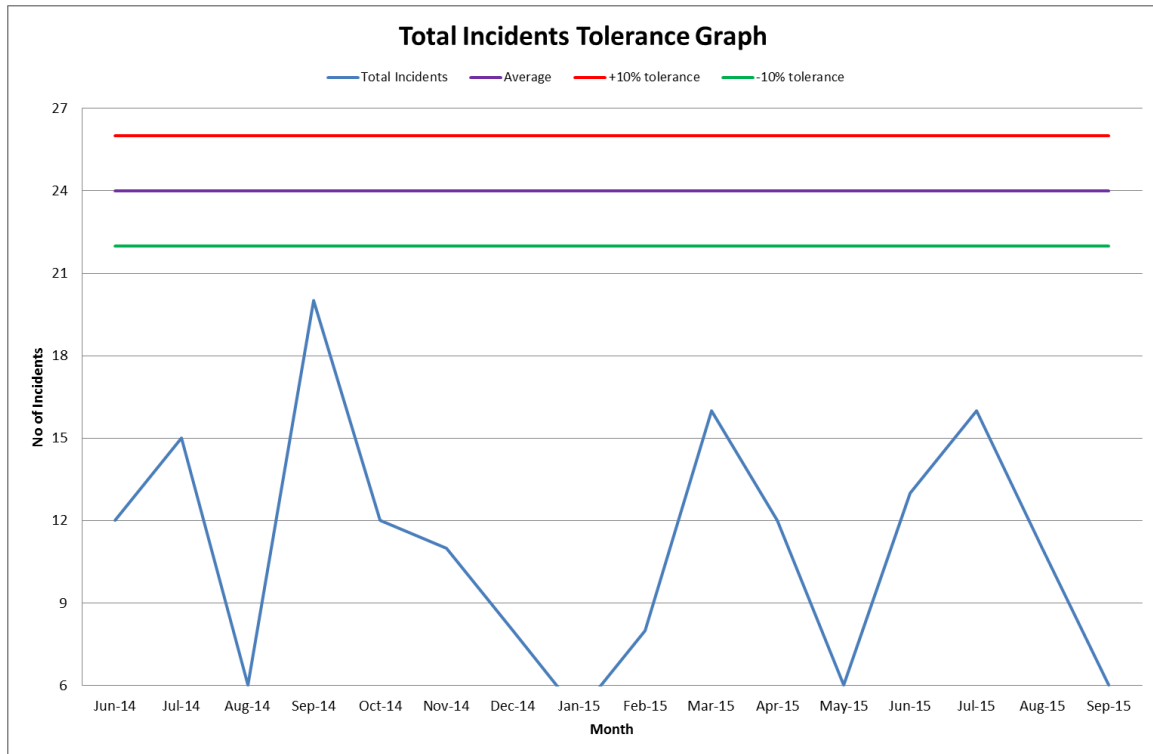
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 incidents were causes for concern or near hits</li> </ul>	
3 reports were during routine activities	2 relate to equipment falling out of appliance lockers
	1 relates to grease falling from overhead door mechanism
Totalling 3 causes for concern	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16 were vehicle collisions.</li> </ul>	
8 were whilst responding to a fire call	1 relates to driving over a metal bolt
	2 relates to hitting low overhanging branches
	1 relates to coming into contact with a bollard
	1 relates to a vehicle skidding and sliding into street furniture
	1 relates to contacting a bumper of a third party
	1 relates to reversing into the appliance bay doors
	1 related to wing mirror contacting third party wing mirror
8 were routine activities	3 relate to vehicles wing mirror being struck by third party
	1 relates to a vehicle reversing into a stationary vehicle
	1 relates to a vehicle striking a hedge branch
	1 relates to appliance colliding with appliance bay doors
	1 relates to bumper contacting a wall
	1 relates to appliance being hit by a manoeuvring HGV
Totalling 16 vehicle collisions	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 was property or equipment failure</li> </ul>	
1 report was from routine activity	1 relates to appliance colliding with appliance bay doors
Totalling 1 vehicle or equipment failure	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 was RIDDOR reportable</li> </ul>	
Reportable for +8 day absence	1 relates to a crew commander falling into a trench
	Totalling 1 RIDDOR reportable absence

## Quarter 2 Total Reported H&S Events

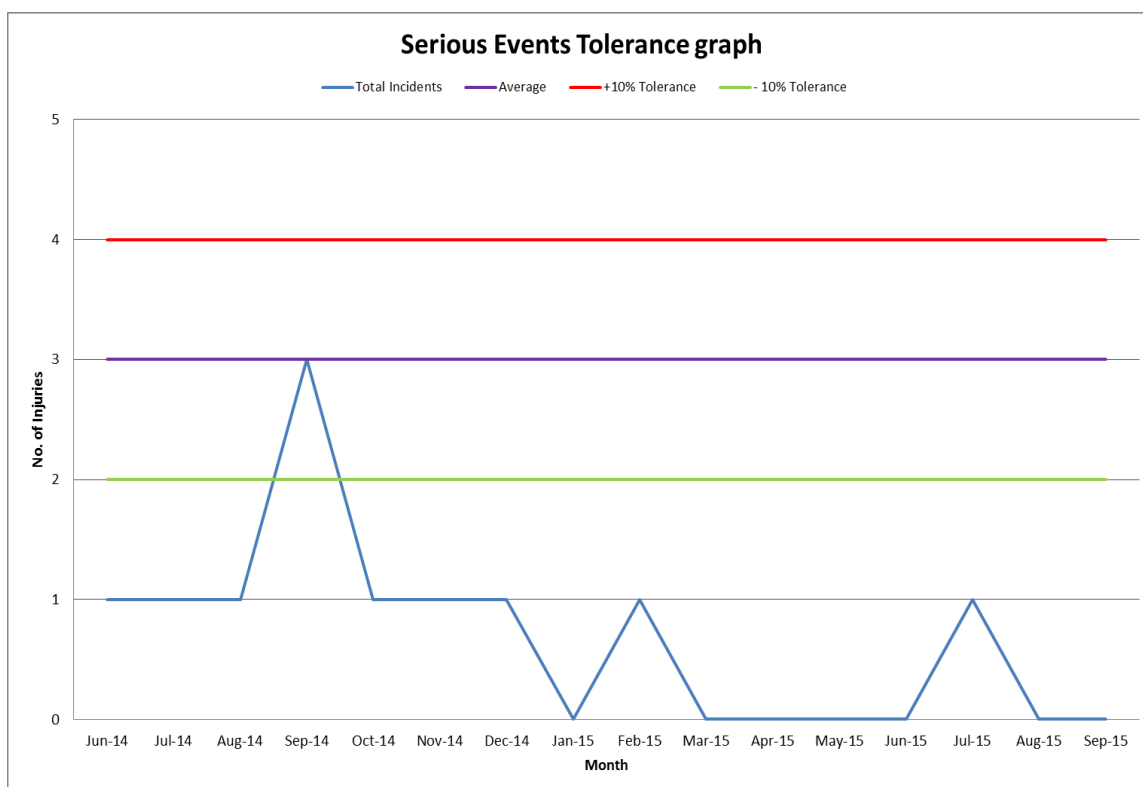


*Figure 1 – Total events per month June 2014 to September 2015*

**Summary** Total H&S events for this quarter show a slight increase in July, returning to a downward trend during August and September. Total H&S events remain below set tolerance levels.



## Quarter 2 Serious Events Reported



*Figure 2 – Total events per month June 2014 to September 2015*

**Summary** *The total number of significant/potentially significant events in this period remains low, there has been one serious event this quarter.*

### Significant/Serious Events

1. The individual was walking back to the fire appliance due to a fire call being received. Whilst doing so he fell into a trench that had been dug by contractors for the purpose of disconnecting services to a training venue.

**Action –** This has been investigated with no further actions as this was an accident caused by glare from the low sun.