

Report of the Head of Operational Support

Health and Safety Committee Update

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Committee on the activities and items of significance from the Service's Health and Safety Committee.
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Recommendations

It is recommended that the following issues, in particular, be noted:

- (i) ***Health and Safety performance information recorded during January to March 2019 (Quarter 4);***
- (ii) ***The involvement of the Service in a number of Health and Safety initiatives.***

Introduction

2. A key aim of Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority 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 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). 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 and Safety Working Group, which sits beneath it and is chaired by the Area Commander, Operational Support.

Update

5. The Health and Safety Committee met on 19 June 2019. The fourth quarter's performance was discussed at this meeting and is attached as Appendix 1 for information.
6. There has been a slight increase in accidents, injuries and damage reported in comparison to Quarter 4, 2017-18, and the previous quarter; however this is not seen as significant. Levels of overall reporting are still high and this should be seen as a positive reflection on the Service's Health and Safety culture. This assists in ensuring that personal injuries remain generally low and minor in nature, and significant events can be avoided. It also demonstrates a high degree of staff awareness in regards to H&S related matters.

7. All reported events (accidents and near hits) receive a minimum of a local level managerial investigation to identify the cause and implement any preventative control measures to help reduce the likelihood of similar occurrences. More serious events can receive a higher, more specialist and intensive investigation as is deemed appropriate.

Department Health and Safety Champions

8. A scheme to develop H&S Champions has recently been introduced across the Service. The role of the Champions will be to support the site responsible managers in assuring the H&S management system and acting as local point of contact to liaise with the Service. The H&S Champions have agreed as their first action to undertake a review of all the risk assessments pertinent to their sites and feedback any issues to the H&S advisor as appropriate.

Regional Activities

CFOA Health and Safety West Midlands Regional Group Audit

9. HWFRS representatives took part in the regional audit of West Midlands Fire Service in April of this year and any learning outcomes from this will be shared with all regional Fire and Rescue Services in the near future.
10. The outcome of the CFOA H&S West Midlands Regional audit of HWFRS last year highlighted 15 recommendations of which twelve have now been completed. The remaining three recommendations will be completed by the end of Quarter 3 2019, subject to some process and system updates.

National Activities

Firefighter Exposure to Contaminants Project

11. As has been previously reported to the Audit and Standards Committee, there is a project continuing through the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Health & Safety Group to look at the long term health effects on firefighters in regards to exposure to the products of combustion, with a formal (NFCC) update report and recommendations due to be issued in the near future.
12. There have been a number of actions already implemented by the Service and reported on this subject and whilst progress has not been rapid (nationally) in this area it is anticipated there will be further outcomes from this research in the future. HWFRS H&S Committee will report on any future developments as they arise.

HMICFRS Staff Survey Results

13. Between 1 October 2018 and 15 February 2019, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) conducted a staff survey across all England Fire and Rescue Service staff members.

Three specific safety and welfare questions were asked and responded to within the survey, and within HWFRS a total of 62 staff responded:

- Q1. I am satisfied that my personal safety and welfare is treated seriously at work.
Agree 46 Disagree 16
- Q2. I know how to report all accidents / near misses / dangerous occurrences.
Agree 57 Disagree 5
- Q3. I am encouraged to report all accidents / near misses / dangerous occurrences.
Agree 56 Disagree 6

The results are seen as generally very positive showing that Health & Safety is taken seriously by the majority of those surveyed and culturally most staff are aware of key processes, whilst feeling improvements are considered and implemented when required. Managers will however be exploring, where possible, why some staff feel more negatively about H&S as identified in the survey.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Contained within H&S budgets and departmental capacity.
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)	Representative Bodies attend H&S Committee and are fully consulted on H&S matters.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	N/A

Supporting Information

Appendix 1: Quarter 4 Performance and Event Reporting (January – March 2019)

Contact Officer

Jon Pryce, Area Commander
Head of Operational Support
Tel: (01905) 368237
Email: JPryce@hwfire.org.uk

Health and Safety Quarterly Report Quarter 4 (January – March 2019) Event Reporting and Summary

1. Overview

In the period from January 2019 to March 2019 a total of **49** Health and Safety (H&S) events were reported. They fall into the categories of:

- 20 Personal Injury
- 16 Vehicle Collisions
- 2 Property or Equipment
- 8 Near Hits or Causes for Concern
- 1 Violence or Aggression
- 2 Exposure

Individual detailed summaries of reporting in the key areas above are outlined below.

2. Breakdown of Events

By Activity

Table 1 shows that during quarter 4 the majority of events were reported during training activities (personal injuries), closely followed by operational activities (vehicle collisions). Training Centre and H&S are working together to review the Risk Assessments and ensure that control measures are suitable and sufficient to help prevent events occurring.

	Total	Training	Operational Activities	Routine Activities	Non-Service Related Activities
Total H&S Events Q4	49	16	14	15	4
Personal Injury	20	11	3	4	2
Vehicle Collision	16	0	5	9	2
Property or Equipment Failure	2	1	0	1	0
Near Hit or Cause for Concern	8	2	5	1	0
Exposure	2	2	0	0	0
Violence or Aggression	1	0	1	0	0

Table 1: Safety Event Breakdown Q4 2018-2019

By Injury Type

Table 2 identifies manual handling (generally muscle strains) as the cause of the majority of personal injuries reported, which are within the expected areas in relation to the physical activities that are regularly undertaken by personnel. The “Others” category covers various issues from water training to general accidents.

Total Personal Injuries	20
Manual Handling	6
Slips, Trips & Falls	4
Hit by Moving Object	2
Hit Stationary Object	2
Burns – Operational	0
Burns – Training	0
Other	6

Table 2: Personal Injury Breakdown Q4 2018-2019

By Vehicle Type

Table 3 highlights that whilst at low numbers and on the whole of a minor nature, the vehicle collisions involving fire engines are mainly whilst non blue light driving. Car and van accidents have occurred during normal road driving or parking.

Vehicle Collisions	Fire Engines		Cars and Vans		Non-Service related
	On blue lights	Off blue lights	On blue lights	Off blue lights	
Total Collisions	3	9	0	2	2

Table 3: Vehicle Breakdown Q4 2018-2019

Vehicle Mileage Statistics

Vehicle mileage statistics for the year 2017-2018 have been provided by the Operational Logistics Fleet Department and have been used to predict vehicle mileage for Q4 2018/19. These are summarised in Table 3A below. It can be seen that there were 4 white fleet safety events out of approximately 247,137 miles driven, which equates to 1 event for every 61,784 miles driven. The 12 safety events by red fleet vehicles were out of approximately 71,622 miles driven, which equates to 1 event for every 5,969 miles driven.

Fleet	Total Mileage 2017-2018	Predicted Mileage Q4 2018-2019
White Fleet	988,548	247,137
Red Fleet	286,488	71,622
	Totalling 1,275,036 miles	Totalling 318,759 miles

Table 3A: Vehicle Mileage Statistics

3. Events Requiring Investigation during Quarter 4 (Jan 19 – Mar 19)

Tier One Investigations

A Tier One standard investigation is required for all safety events reported during the reporting period, usually by the on-duty or line manager present at the time of the event, and is usually minor in nature.

Tier Two Basic Specialist Investigations

In addition to the standard investigation required for Tier One, when a Basic Specialist Investigation (SI) is required for:

- Rare, unusual or unlikely events resulting in either a serious injuries or losses, or with the potential to incur such injuries or losses.
- Events involving Breathing Apparatus (BA).
- Near Hits resulting from unusual conditions or with the potential to cause serious injury or loss that are rare or unlikely to reoccur.

There has been one safety event reported during quarter 4 that required a tier 2 Basic Specialist Investigation.

This event related to a personal injury to a firefighter who injured their hand during on station RTC training. The injured person was operating hydraulic cutters on a vehicle when their finger became trapped between the tool and the vehicle. Minor bruising was diagnosed and the investigating officer felt this was primarily down to lack of experience and awareness of the risk of this possibility, although training was in place for such an event. The guidance for the new hydraulic has been reviewed and issued to all stations reminding of this kind of risk.

Tier Two Full Specialist Investigations

A Full SI may be assigned immediately or following a Basic SI and is required for:

- Possible or likely events resulting in serious injuries or losses.
- All significant events involving Breathing Apparatus (BA).
- Near Hits resulting from unusual conditions or with the potential to cause serious injury or loss that are possible or likely to reoccur.

There have been no safety events reported during quarter 4 that required a Full Specialist Investigation.

Tier Three Specialist Investigations

A Tier Three specialist investigation is conducted as required by Major Event Response Protocol (MERP) SPI. These are for the most serious events such as death or potentially life threatening injury to a member of HWFRS whilst on duty, or a third party either occurring on Service property or as a result of an act or omission on behalf of HWFRS.

There have been no safety events during quarter 4 that required a Tier 3 specialist investigation.

4. Comparison Between Quarters and Trend Analysis

Comparison of Events Reported Showing Differences Q4 2017-18 and Q4 2018-19

Table 4 below compares the number of events reported in Q4 2017-18 and Q4 2018-19 for the different categories. For events over the last 12 months, 1 of the categories experienced a decrease, 3 with an increase and 2 stayed the same.

Overall, event reporting as a whole has increased by 4 over the period with 49 reports in Q4 2018-19 compared to 45 in Q4 2017-18.

Event Type	Q4 2017-18	Q4 2018-19	Increase/Decrease
Personal Injuries	19	20	+1
Vehicle Collisions	16	16	0
Property or Equipment	3	2	-1
Violence & Aggression	0	1	+1
Near Hits	5	8	+3
Exposure	2	2	0
Overall	45	49	+4

Table 4: Quarterly Events Reported Q4 2017-2018 and Q4 2018-2019

Trend Analysis

In summary compared with the previous year, there has been a slight increase (+4) in the number of events reported during quarter 4.

All events that occurred during the quarter have had a minimum of a Tier One local level investigation to identify preventative control measures, to help in reducing the likelihood of similar occurrences.

The number of serious events requiring a Tier 2 specialist investigation has decreased from previous quarter 3 (-3) and decreased from quarter 4 last year (-3).

12 Month Trend Analysis

Table 5 below breaks down the last 4 quarters by injury type. Personal injuries are the most common type of reported accident and follow a similar pattern/numbers over the latest 12 months. Table 1 shows that 50% of quarter 4 injuries were sustained whilst training, generally muscle strains. The largest increase has been vehicle collisions where hitting a stationary object or trying to negotiate tight/narrow spaces are the key factors.

	Q1 18/19	Q2 18/19	Q3 18/19	Q4 18/19
Total H&S Events	42	48	46	49
Personal Injury	21	19	19	20
Vehicle Collision	8	13	7	16
Property or Equipment Failure	2	2	2	2
Near Hit or Cause for Concern	5	12	13	8
Exposure	0	0	2	2
Violence or Aggression	6	2	3	1

Table 5: 12 Month Trend Analysis Q1 2018 – 2019 to Q4 2018 – 2019

Description of all Safety Events

1. Personal Injury

Of the **49** H&S events reported, **20** relate to the category of Personal Injury. These are described in Table A1 below:

Sub-Categories	Break-down of Injuries in Each Sub-Category
11 events/injuries were during training.	1 relates to a personal injury. During a training course a firefighter came over faint and passed out, banging their head on a table as they fell. No further medical assistance was required.
	1 relates to a personal injury where a firefighter had a minor collision with a rock whilst water rescue training resulting in some bruising, they continued with training and no medical treatment was required.
	1 relates to a personal injury where a firefighter felt a muscular pain in their back during a ladder pitch. Took no further part in training on the day, no medical treatment required and remained on duty.
	1 relates to a personal injury when taking part in combination drills a firefighter felt a calf muscle strain. They took no further part in training, stretched and no further treatment was required.
	1 relates to a personal injury where a firefighter pulled a muscle in their back whilst undertaking ladder training. 3 calendar days lost. 3 working days lost
	1 relates to an injury whilst training using hydraulic cutters on a vehicle, the crew members finger became trapped resulting in a crush injury to little finger on right hand. They attended A&E bruising diagnosed. Procedures reviewed and guidance highlighting risk shared with crews. Tier 2 Basic Investigation.
	1 relates to a personal injury. Whilst a firefighter was attending their BA Phase 1 training and attaching their cylinder to their BA Set they felt their back twinge resulting in some discomfort. They did not continue with practical element of course. Advised to visit doctor. Booked uncertified sick 4 days. 4 calendar days lost. 4 working days lost.
	1 relates to a personal injury. A firefighter attended a BA refresher course and received a Personal Development Plan due to poor performance. This and other pressures led to them suffering with feelings of stress and headaches. Being managed locally, CIST informed to support Fire fighter.
	1 relates to a personal injury. Whilst attending a training course a firefighter twisted his knee and was removed from further training activities at that time. They were taken to A&E and booked off work with an on duty injury. 21 Calendar days lost. 21 working days lost. RIDDOR reportable, remains off work at the end of the quarter.
	1 relates to a personal injury where a firefighter during BA

	<p>training, strained his back carrying a casualty out of the building. The firefighter didn't take part in any further drills on that day.</p> <p>1 relates to a personal injury where a firefighter aggravated a previous hip injury (which had been reported at the time). Fire fighter rested for remainder of the training but remained on duty.</p>
4 events/injuries were during routine activities	<p>1 relates to a personal injury. As a Crew Commander opened an appliance locker a dislodged crow bar caught them in the eye resulting in a cut and black eye. Some items of PPE had been hung on the crowbar when stowed. Station staff were informed that kit should not to be hung on crowbar and to use designated PPE storage.</p> <p>1 relates to a personal injury. Whilst collecting clothing from Operational Logistics and attempting to deactivate the alarm, the fob didn't work resulting in the alarm sounding next to the persons ear causing temporary pain and affecting the hearing.</p> <p>1 relates to a personal injury where a firefighter suffered a cut to their left hand whilst setting up an improvised dam. They were not wearing their gloves. The importance or correct PPE has been reiterated.</p> <p>1 relates to a personal injury where a firefighter climbing into the rear of a fire engine hit their head on the overhead locker which was open. Resulted in minor scraped skin on the top of the head.</p>
3 events/injuries were at or during operational incidents	<p>1 relates to a personal injury where a firefighter experienced a shooting pain in his right elbow whilst using a lever at a fire call. Remained on duty.</p> <p>1 relates to a firefighter jarring his back whilst attempting access into the station through the magnetically locked door which was not open (unlocked). 56 calendar days lost. 56 working days lost, RIDDOR reportable</p> <p>1 relates to a personal injury. At an incident a firefighter was required to climb over a fence to get to a casualty, but on lowering themselves down twisted their left knee. No further medical assistance required and remained on duty.</p>
1 event/injury was non work related	1 relates to a personal injury where a member of support staff received a splinter in their leg from an office desk.
1 event/injury was classed as an other	1 relates to a personal injury. A Young Firefighter was stood listening to debrief details when they came over faint and fell to the ground. No injuries reported or noticed at time of incident.
	Totalling 20 personal injuries
	Totalling 2 RIDDOR event
	Totalling 84 calendar days lost. 84 working days lost.

Table A1: Personal Injuries Reported during Quarter 4

2. Vehicle Collisions

Of the **49** H&S events **16** relate to the category of Vehicle Collisions which are further described in Table A2 below. **12** of these events could be attributed to the FRS driver; these events are highlighted in grey. If these collisions occurred while on response to an operational incident the category of response has been given in bold.

Sub-Categories	Breakdown of Vehicle Collisions in Each Sub-Category
5 events were responding to operational incidents	1 relates to a vehicle accident. Whilst a fire engine was responding to a fire call it drove down a road with parked cars restricting access. Crew deployed as 'banks' people to observe for safety, however despite this the appliance step came into contact with the front nearside door of a parked vehicle, which caused slight damage. Emergency Response.
	1 relates to a vehicle accident. A fire engine was attending an emergency fire call, on arrival the fire engine came into contact with a parked vehicle. Emergency Response.
	1 relates to a vehicle accident where a fire engine responding to a special service call was reversing with a banks person to gain better access to the property and made contact with some street lighting. No damage was caused to the street lighting but minor damage to the ladder bracket on the fire engine. Prompt Response
	1 relates to a vehicle accident. Crews were proceeding to a fire call travelling up a very narrow lane. The off side front wheel struck a boulder resulting in the wheel cover being damaged. Prompt Response
	1 relates to a vehicle accident. On attending a fire call, the fire engine was entering a tight driveway and the front side bumper came into contact with the grass verge causing minor scratches to the vehicle. Emergency Response.
9 events were during routine activities	1 relates to a vehicle accident. As a fire engine returned from an incident, driver was parking the vehicle with a banks person when they came into contact with the stone pillar of the appliance bay and damaged a large lamp 2 meters up the pillar. Resulting in minor damage to the Fire appliance.
	1 relates to a vehicle accident. On returning from a fire call the fire engine hit a low hanging branch on a tree resulting in a crack to the nearside wing mirror.
	1 relates to a vehicle accident. Whilst reversing a fire engine out of the appliance bay on the fire station to commence a training event, the offside top wing mirror made contact with the wall resulting in the glass cracking. There was restricted space due to some equipment being stored, this has since be removed to prevent reoccurrence.
	1 relates to a vehicle accident. Whilst reversing into a car parking space no warning sounds from sensors were heard resulting in hitting a post at light level. Minor damage to nearside light cluster.

	1 relates to a vehicle accident where a member of the public collided at a slow speed with a Service vehicle. Some damage was sustained to the front offside of the Service vehicle.
	1 relates to a vehicle accident where after washing a fire engine and returning it to the parking bay, it caught the barrier post resulting in a dent in the locker door.
	1 relates to a vehicle accident. A fire engine returning from a call caught the 9m ladder gantry on a stone archway (at slow speed). On checking the ladder it was found to be damaged. Ladder taken off the run.
	1 relates to a vehicle accident. A fire engine was stationary at traffic lights when a flatbed lorry with ladder protruding above cab impacted with driver's side mirror, blind spot mirror plastic cover cracked.
	1 relates to a vehicle accident where the fire engine being manoeuvred caught the corner of the drill tower and punctured the tyre.
2 events were non service related	1 relates to a vehicle accident. A fire vehicle was manoeuvring around a stationary HGV. Once part way past, the HGV pulled out damaging the rear passenger door and wheel arch. NON SERVICE RELATED.
	1 relates to a vehicle accident. Reversing into a parking bay the reversing sensors did not give solid tone resulting in the vehicle connecting with the wall. Damage to rearside bumper. NON SERVICE RELATED.
	Totalling 16 vehicle collisions

Table A2: Vehicle Collisions Reported during Quarter 4

3. Property or Equipment Damage

Of the **49** H&S events **2** relate to the category of Damage to Property or Equipment, this is further described in Table A3 below:

Sub-Categories	Break-down of Property or Equipment Damage in Each Sub-Category
1 property or equipment failure was during training	1 relates to an equipment failure. During high rise training, a fire engine failed, the water pump went into idle mode resulting in no water pressure. Electrical fault found and reset to be monitored.
1 property or equipment failure was during routine work	1 relates to equipment failure. The air system on a fire engine had a leak and loss of air when parked resulting in not being able to drive fire engine until pressure had built up by engine being turned on. Appliance has since been replaced as part of the Fleet upgrade.
	Totalling 2 property or equipment damage

Table A3: Damage to Property or Equipment Reported during Quarter 4

4. Near Hits or Causes for Concern

Of the **49** H&S events **8** relate to the category of Near Hits or Causes for Concern - these are further described in Table A4 below.

Sub-Categories	Break-down of Near Hits or Causes for Concern in Each Sub-Category
2 were during training exercises	1 relates to a cause for concern. Whilst carrying out training there were two incidents of TIC (Thermal Imaging Camera) failure resulting in a loss of contact with crews whilst they were inside the Strategic Training Facility. Crews were withdrawn. Camera issue reported, no fault found.
	1 relates to a cause for concern. Whilst crews were fighting fire in a live fire demo box container, the extraction unit vent failed causing the instructor to be unable to control conditions in the box. Crews were withdrawn from the situation. Lever has since been replaced.
5 were during operational activities	1 relates to a near miss. Fire engine being driven around a corner when vehicle skidded slightly, driver corrected this and didn't hit anything. Potential cause was contamination on the roadway which resulted in slight loss of traction.
	1 relates to a near hit where a fire engine was pulling out of the station and nearly collided with a car that had ignored the flashing warning wig wag lights to tell the car driver to stop. Awareness campaign carried out by station and media team.
	1 relates to a cause for concern. Whilst driving a fire engine and braking, the gas monitor that is stowed at the rear of the driver seat came loose from its mounting and fell forward into the driver foot well wedging itself under the accelerator. The driver removed the gas monitor with their foot and the OIC then picked it up. Advised ensure Gas monitor is correctly stowed (as with all equipment stowed) prior to commencing journey.
	1 relates to a cause for concern. In one of the fire engines, the driver siren foot button does not operate correctly when pressed. Defect reported and fixed.
	1 relates to a cause from concern as when responding to an incident several public vehicles ignored wig wags causing driver of fire engine to have to brake hard. Awareness campaign carried out by station and media team.
1 was during routine activities	1 relates to a near miss/cause for concern. Whilst plugging a charging reel into an appliance, there was a flash from the reel. On trying again it was discovered there was no power to appliance bay doors. PPL informed, attended to find fault and this has been rectified.
	Totalling 8 near hits or causes for concern

Table A4: Near Hits or Causes for Concern Reported during Quarter 4

5. Violence or Aggression

Of the **49** H&S events **1** relates to the category of Aggression, this is further described in Table A5 below:

Sub-Categories	Break-down of Violence or Aggression in Each Sub-Category
1 was during operational activities	1 relates to violence/aggression. As a crew of firefighters turned up to a fire incident, a member of the public became very aggressive and hostile towards the crews. Swearing and being obstructive, threatening to call the police. At the end of the incident, the person had calmed down considerably.
	Totalling 1 violence or aggression

Table A5: Violence or Aggression Reported during Quarter 4

6. Exposure or Contamination

Of the **49** H&S events **2** relate to the category of Exposure or Contamination, this is further described in Table A6 below:

Sub-Categories	Break-down of Exposure or Contamination in Each Sub-Category
2 were during training exercises	1 relates to a personal injury where a firefighter during water rescue training was exposed to potentially contaminated water resulting in gastro-intestinal illness. Correct hygiene and decontamination procedures carried out. 10 calendar days lost. 4 working days lost.
	1 relates to a personal injury where a firefighter was ill after water rescue training through coming into contact with potentially contaminated water. All crews had received input on correct hygiene procedures and full PPE was used. 3 calendar days lost. 1 working day lost.
	Totalling 2 exposure or contamination
	Totalling 13 calendar day lost 5 working day lost

Table A6: Exposure or Contamination Reported during Quarter 4

Note: The 10 calendar days lost is not RIDDOR due to the sickness being booked over 24hrs after exposure. The incident must occur within 24hrs of the exposure to be classed as work related.