

Report of Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Update from the Health and Safety Committee

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 issues, in particular, be noted:

- (i) Health and Safety performance information recorded during Oct 2016 to December 2016 (Quarter 3); and***
- (ii) The involvement of the Service in a number of Health and Safety initiatives.***

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 (see section 14 for current work package update).

Update

5. The Committee last met on 8 December 2016 and is due to meet next on 15 March 2017, after the writing of this report.
6. A review of quarterly performance for the relevant period is examined in detail at the Committee meetings. Whilst Q3 performance (Appendix 1) shows an increase in total number of personal injuries reported, the severity levels remained relatively low and there are no significant issue to report.

National Activities

CFOA R&D PPE Contaminants Project

7. A joint letter between CFOA and the Home Office has been sent to all Fire and Rescue Services. The content of the letter explains that a project group has been created to assess the level of risk associated with fire related contaminants on firefighting operational clothing
8. The first action of the Project group has been to commission a literary review to be undertaken by the Home Office Centre of Applied Science and Technology (CAST)
9. The questions and issues being considered as part of the literature review include:
 1. What is the international problem we are here to understand?
 2. Does the UK have an equivalent problem?
 3. To what relative extent does the UK have a problem?
 4. How far do current procedures address the issue?
 5. Do alternative procedures/ideas/technologies exist?
 6. Does existing research indicate any gaps in UK approach?
10. The Project Board will aim to provide an update on the progress of the project via similar letters to Services on a regular basis.

Lessons Learned – East Sussex FRS

11. East Sussex FRS has issued a report relating to a serious accident that took place at their training centre in June 2015. Following an investigation into the accident a report has been generated which identified 16 recommendations to enhance the safety of firefighters at similar training events.
12. An internal (HWFRS) review of the report has been undertaken, carrying out an analysis to identify any actions that could be taken within HWFRS. The initial review of the recommendations shows that the Service already has a number of control measures in place to manage the recommendations made within the report.
13. Of the 16 recommendations, only 5 remain open with some further action required. These are of a minor nature and will be monitored by the H&S Committee until all actions are closed.

HWFRS H&S Update – Local Initiatives

Regulation 28 – Coroners Reports

14. Regulation 28 reports are issued by Coroners to prevent future deaths. These reports are part of the legal process to ensure that the courts comply with their duty to inform parties where the Coroner believes action should be taken to prevent further occurrences which may lead to death or injury.

15. The Health and Safety Advisor has conducted a review of how the Service manages such reports it receives. HWFRS has a robust system in place to assess the impact of any reports received and then processes are in place to disseminate and follow up the findings of any reports issued.

Respirators

16. Following the changes to the asbestos regulations and to further enhance the level of respiratory protection available to staff, HWFRS has procured respirators to be worn in conjunction with the Draeger Breathing Apparatus face mask.
17. To ensure that the maximum level of protection is being provided, a formal face fit test, additional to that required for the wearing of breathing apparatus, will be necessary for all operational personnel.
18. An external provider has commenced a programme of face fit testing which will be complete by the end of March 2017.

Conclusion

19. This report provides Members with an update on health and safety issues and draws particular attention to key areas of work currently being undertaken by the Service. In addition, the report provides information on quarterly health and safety performance.

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 3 of year 2016/2017 (October - December 2016) Health & Safety Performance Report

Contact Officer

Richard Lawrence, Deputy Chief Fire Officer
(01905 368206)

Email: rlawrence@hwfire.org.uk

Overview of Events Reported During Quarter 3 (Oct 16 – Dec 16)

Summary

In the period of October 2016 to December 2016 a total of **41** Health and Safety (H&S) events were reported. They fall into the categories of:

- Personal Injury
- Vehicle Accidents
- Property or Equipment
- Near Hits or Causes for Concern.
- Violence or Aggression
- Exposure

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

Personal Injury

Of the **41** H&S events reported, **20** 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
13 incidents relate to accidents/injuries occurring during training.	1 relates to a fall injury when person slipped on wet rocks during water awareness training.
	1 relates to an ankle injury whilst restowing hose back on the fire engine. 3 calendar days lost
	1 relates to manual handling injury. Person reported sharp pain in shoulder when rolling out the hose.
	1 relates to an aggravation of a pre existing back injury whilst on recruit firefighter training. 30 calendar days lost <i>Significant Event</i>
	1 relates to manual handling injuries whilst carrying equipment
	1 relates to manual handling injuries whilst carrying equipment
	1 relates to an injury sustained by being hit on the chin due to potentially improper positioning when using RTC cutting equipment
	1 relates to an injury to persons hand becoming trapped whilst removing a casualty on a long board.
	1 relates to an injury to a person's back when replacing hydrant cover. 13 calendar days lost RIDDOR <i>Significant Event</i>
	1 relates to steam burns to person's ear during live fire training.
	1 relates to an injury to the person's knee during live fire training.
	1 relates to a minor burn to a person's right forearm during live fire training.

	1 relates to a minor burn to a person's right forearm during live fire training.
2 accident/injuries were at operational incidents	1 relates to a facial injury whilst moving a piece of equipment from fire engine.
	1 relates to wrist injury caused by snagging of hose on the wheel of the fire engine.
1 accident/injuries were during routine activities	1 relates to when a piece of equipment fell from a locker and hit person in the chest and left side.
2 accident/injuries were non-work accident/injury	1 relates to an injury sustained to their middle finger when it was caught in a door. The finger became bruised, swollen and the nail, blackened.
	1 relates to an injury sustained by school pupil who fainted whilst at a "Dying to Drive" event.
1 accident/injury was due to special service activities.	1 relates to an injury when a person trapped their finger when removing a ladder from a fire engine.
1 accidents/injuries due to Responding – Fire call	1 relates to a person tripping over, severe grazing to right knee, hand and ribs occurred. 23 calendar days lost RIDDOR <i>Significant Event</i>
	Totalling 20 personal injuries
	Totalling 2 RIDDOR events
	Totalling 69 calendar days lost

Table 1: Personal Injuries Reported during Quarter 3

Vehicle Accidents

Of the **41** H&S events 9 are related to the category of Vehicle Accidents - these are further described in Table 2 below. Only 6 of these events could be attributed to the FRS driver these events are highlighted in grey.

Sub-Categories	Breakdown of Injuries in Each Sub-Category
3 accident was during routine activities	1 relates to a fire engine hitting gate post when leaving farm yard causing damage to locker closing bar
	1 relates to damage to wall heater when hit by 9 metre ladder on fire engine reversing.
	1 relates to damage to 9 metre ladder on fire engine caused by overhanging branches on narrow lane.
3 accidents were responding to incidents	1 relates to a fire engine struck by appliance bay door when it was travelling towards the forecourt.
	1 relates to the fire engine wheel guard being pulled off when driven past gate.

	1 relates to a fire engine catching nearside rear bumper and tow bar of car with nearside wheel arch of the appliance
2 accidents were responding to road traffic collisions.	1 relates to minor damage to nearside wing mirror of fire engine due to contact with rear offside corner of a LGV. 1 relates to complaint by third party about contact with their vehicle.
1 accident was a non-service related accident	1 relates to a damage done to front park assist mirror glass when pheasant flew out of hedge and hit front nearside of vehicle.
	Totalling 9 vehicle accidents

Table 2: Vehicle Accidents Reported during Quarter 3

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 Q3 2016. These are summarised in Table 2A below. It can be seen that there were no white fleet accidents out of approximately 254,500 miles driven. The 9 accidents by red fleet vehicles were out of approximately 69,600 miles driven, which equates to 1 accident for every 7,333 miles driven.

Fleet	Total Mileage 2015-2016	Predicted Mileage Q3 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 Failure/Damage

Of the **41** 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/damage during training	1 relates to a tripped fuse showing in STF control room relating to lighting cables in roof space above large ground floor burn room.
	Totalling 1 property or equipment damage

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

Near Hits or Causes for Concern

Of the **41** H&S events **9** 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
1 was whilst responding to incidents	1 relates to a near collision between a fire engine and other vehicles whilst responding to a fire call. <i>Significant Event</i>
1 was at operational incidents	1 relates to a the accidental activation of the air powered winding mechanism causing the hose to rewind, which could have endangered anyone close to or holding the hose.
2 were whilst responding to special service	1 relates to a discovering an empty cylinder to be used for inflatable path which may have been required for rescue.
	1 relates to a cliff rescue and person lost footing and fell on sloping embankment.
2 were during routine activities	1 relates to a piece of equipment falling from a locker of a fire engine
	1 relates to glass and powder from lighting tubes stored in racking bays getting into kit bag.
2 were during Non-Uniformed activities	1 relates to the discovery of a 6ft fluorescent light cover fallen from light and shattered on ground
	1 relates to 2 private vehicles clipping wing mirrors during manoeuvring around a stationary Fire engine.
1 was during a training exercise	1 relates to a cause for concern. After a training event 24 BA cylinders were found to have faulty ratchets which could enable them to be shut off accidentally. <i>Significant Event</i>
	Totalling 9 near hits or causes for concern

Table 4: Near Hits or Causes for Concern Reported during Quarter 3

Exposure to Violence or Aggression

Of the **41** H&S events **1** related to the category of Exposure to Violence or Aggression, this is further described in Table 5 below:

Sub-Categories	Break-down of Injuries in Each Sub-Category
1 Exposure to violence or aggression	1 relates to incident where a member of public became verbally aggressive to 2 people from Fire Control
	Totalling 1 exposure to violence or aggression

Table 5: Exposure to Violence or Aggression Reported during Quarter 3

Exposure or Contamination

Of the **41** H&S events **1** related to the category of Exposure or Contamination, this is further described in Table 6 below:

Sub-Categories	Break-down of Injuries in Each Sub-Category
1 Exposure or Contamination	1 relates to incident where 2 broken asbestos sheets had been placed against a bonfire which was out of control. The asbestos was still in large pieces and did not appear to have been damaged by fire.
	Totalling 1 Exposure or Contamination

Table 6: Exposure or Contamination

Significant/Serious Events during Quarter 3 (Oct 16 – Dec 16)

- The first incident relates to a manual handling injury whilst an operational member of staff was replacing a hydrant cover. Manual handling refresher given (found in personal injury category).
- The second Specialist Investigation relates to a reoccurrence of and pre existing injury during a training course, no specific action caused the injury (found in personal injury category).
- The third event occurred when a member of staff tripped over when responding to a fire call, resulting in grazes and damage to their ribs (found in personal injury category)
- The near miss relating to a near collision between a fire engine and another vehicle was fully investigated as part of the electronic stability programme (ESP) investigation which was briefed during quarter 2's events paper. Fully reviewed control measures have now been implemented.

- 24 BA cylinders were found to have faulty ratchets which could enable them to be shut off accidentally. All cylinders had their ratchets repaired and a more robust equipment inspection schedule has been implemented at Training Centre. (Found in near hits or causes for concern category). Notification has been sent to stations by Ops Logistics to check other cylinders for the defects.

Summary for Quarter 3 (Oct 16 – Dec 16)

- 2.1** Two RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) reports were submitted to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). These relate to personal injuries where operational personnel were absent from work for 36 days of quarter 3.

Comparison between Quarters

Comparison of Events Reported Showing Differences Q3 2016 and Q3 2015

- 2.1.1** Table 6 below, compares the number of events reported in Q3 2015-16 and Q3 2016-17 for different categories. It can be seen that in Q3 2016-17, the number of Vehicle Accidents reported were less than in Q3 2015-16. Conversely, Personal Injuries reported, reports of Violence and Aggression, Near Hit reports and reports of Damage to Property or Equipment in Q3 2016-17 have increased compared to Q3 2015-16. Overall, this demonstrates that event reporting as a whole has slightly increased during Q3 2016-17 compared with Q3 2015-16.

Event Type	Q3 2015-16	Q3 2016-17	Increase/Decrease
Personal Injuries	11	20	+9
Vehicle Accidents	20	7	-13
Property or Equipment	0	3	+3
Violence & Aggression	2	1	-1
Near Hits	5	9	+4
Exposure or Contamination	0	1	+1
Overall	38	41	+3

Table 6: Quarterly Events Reported Q3 2015-2016 and Q3 2016-2017

- 2.1.2** Table 6 above, compares Q3 2015-16 to Q3 2016-17 reports the service has had:*

- Nine additional Personal Injury reports
- Thirteen **fewer** Vehicle Accidents
- Three additional report of Damage to Property or Equipment
- One additional exposure or contamination
- One fewer Violence or Aggression events against service personnel
- Four additional reports of Near Hits or Causes for Concern were made

*Specific details of these can be provided upon request to the Health and Safety advisor.

2.1.3 Trend Analysis

In summary, whilst there has been an increase in personal injuries reported, overall they have been of a minor nature. There has been a significant reduction in the number of vehicle accidents reported, which supports the high level of driver training provided.