

# Public Document Pack



To: All Members of the Scrutiny Committee



**R. Groves**  
**Monitoring Officer**

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Extn: 4122 Mia Griffiths

Our ref MG/RG

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at the rise of the Audit Committee on **TUESDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2025** in the Liverpool Suite at Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bridle Road, Bootle.

This meeting will be available to watch via YouTube on the following link:

<https://youtube.com/live/JkFu8OwHNw8?feature=share>

Yours faithfully,

*PP – M Griffiths*

Monitoring Officer

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**MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**25 FEBRUARY 2025**

**AGENDA**

**Members**

Councillors Edna Finneran (Chair)  
Councillors Jeanie Bell  
Councillors Tracy Dickinson  
Councillors Sam Gorst  
Councillors Dave Hanratty  
Councillors Doreen Knight  
Councillors Ed Lamb  
Councillors Andrew Makinson  
Councillors Gill Wood  
Co-opted Member Mr Anthony Boyle

**1. Apologies**

To consider any apologies for absence.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

To consider any Member declarations of interest in relation to any item on the agenda.

**3. Minutes of the Last Meeting (Pages 5 - 10)**

To consider the minutes of the last meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024.

**4. Update on Grenfell Recommendations (Pages 11 - 14)**

To consider the report relating to the Update on Grenfell Recommendations (CFO/64/24).

**5. Annual Health, Safety and Welfare Report 2023/24 (Pages 15 - 56)**

To consider the report relating to the Annual Health, Safety and Welfare Report 2023/24 (CFO/65/24).

**6. Scrutiny Forward Work Plan (Pages 57 - 62)**

To consider a report of the Monitoring Officer presenting the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan 2024- 2025 (CFO/66/24).

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## MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23 JULY 2024

#### MINUTES

**Present:** **Councillors** Edna Finneran, Gorst, Janet Grace, Dave Hanratty, Knight, Lamb, Makinson, Linda Maloney, Barbara Murray and Gillian Wood

**Also Present:** Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan  
Head of Finance James Campbell  
Monitoring Officer Ria Groves

#### **21. Appointment of Chair**

Prior to the start of the meeting, Members were informed apologies had been received from the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee and there was therefore a requirement to appoint a Member to Chair the meeting.

Councillor Linda Maloney nominated Councillor Dave Hanratty to chair the meeting. This nomination was seconded by Councillor Barbara Murray.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Hanratty act as Chair of this meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

#### **22. Apologies**

Apologies received from Councillors Paul Tweed, Jeanie Bell, Gill Wood, and Co-opted Member Mr Anthony Boyle.

#### **23. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest in relation to any item on the agenda.

#### **24. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024 were agreed as an accurate record.

#### **25. Review of Organisational Culture**

The Chief Fire Officer, Phil Garrigan presented a 'Review of Organisational Culture' to Members.

The Chief Fire Officer emphasised the importance of Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) nationally in recognising the cultural dynamics of Minority and Ethnic communities.

The Chief Fire Officer highlighted the tragic loss of Jaden Francois Esprit, a Firefighter of the London Fire Brigade, who took his own life in August 2020. This event prompted a review of the culture within the London Fire Brigade.

Members were advised that subsequently, an Independent Culture review of the London Fire Brigade was conducted in November 2022 with an outcome of 33 recommendations proposed which were shared nationally with other Fire and Rescue Services'.

The Chief Fire Officer reported on various other cultural reviews into staff conduct across Fire and Rescue Services in South Wales, Dorset & Wiltshire, and Tyne and Wear.

Members were also briefed on the results of the Fire Brigade Union (FBU) review which took place in February 2024, which highlighted sexual harassment as an issue. The review found that 30% of female conference attendees had experienced harassment, prompting a renewed focus on addressing such behaviour across the sector.

*Councillor Sam Gorst entered the meeting at 1:10pm.*

It was noted that His Majesty Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) undertook a review on the culture within Fire and Rescue Services on March 20, 2023, detailing feedback of racist, homophobic, and misogynistic behaviour, bullying, and a reluctance to report inappropriate conduct in the sector.

The Chief Fire Officer noted that there were a set of recommendations from HMICFRS, along with the review of London Fire Brigade and other cultural reviews to consider.

The Chief Fire Officer explained that of the 33 national recommendations from the Independent Culture Review of the London Fire Brigade, 16 were relevant to the Authority. Members were advised that 13 of those had already been implemented by the Service, while the remaining three were now part of the Authority's People Plan for 2024-27.

Furthermore, in relation to the HMICFRS recommendations, it was noted that there were 35 national recommendations in total, all of which were relevant to the Authority. Members were advised that 19 of these recommendations had been implemented, with the remaining 16 being incorporated into the 3-Year Cultural Action Plan.

The Chief Fire Officer emphasised that part of the Authority's ongoing review included the introduction of the Authority's Cultural Action Plan which would produce better outcomes for the communities it served.

Members were advised of the Authority's adoption and integration of the Core Code of Ethics in 2022. The Chief Fire Officer provided Members with an overview of each of the values in the code and how they related to organisational culture. It was noted that the July 2023 revisions to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 also outlined new criteria for staff vetting to ensure suitability for all roles.

The Chief Fire Officer noted the importance of management, in terms of setting the organisational culture, with a specific emphasis on leadership and diversity as outlined in the Authority's Cultural Action Plan and People Plan.

Members were advised that staff networks had been expanded on to focus on the viewpoints of Minority Ethnic communities, with an aim of ensuring that every voice was heard. Members were advised that 33 staff members had volunteered to form the Positive Action Team which encouraged people to come and engage with the Authority. Neurodiversity Staff Network was also highlighted as a method of better meeting the needs of staff and encouraging a conversation.

The Chief Fire Officer further discussed the Authority's progress, which included the implementation of a Cultural Dashboard as well as providing cultural leadership training for line and middle managers. Members were advised that the Authority would continue to incorporate the Core Code of Ethics into its training for supervisory of managers.

Additionally, an external review of the Authority's progress against the recommendations which included the Cultural Action Plan and staff networks was also planned. It was noted that as part of the three-year ED&I learning strategy, the Authority wanted to analyse the workforce equality data and strengthen its relationships with diverse communities.

It was noted that the Authority was a key partner in terms of fighting misogyny and violence against women, and as such was seeking a White Ribbon Accreditation as part of its progress towards implementing recommendations.

The Chief Fire Officer noted positive feedback had been received from an external stakeholder who had praised the exceptional facilities, culture, and services from the Authority at the newly opened Training and Development Academy. The Chief Fire Officer suggested that this showed that the staff were engaged with the Authorities values and invested in developing a positive organisational culture.

With regards to staff, the Chief Fire Officer acknowledged that the Authority surveyed its employees to ensure their opinions were considered. It was highlighted that staff survey engagement levels had been positive. Furthermore, the Authority had also displayed the best performance in the last 12 months, with a drop in fatalities and a reduction in primary and accidental fires.

The Chief Fire Officer discussed the Authority's effective succession planning processes across the organisation and Members were advised that since the last HMICFRS inspection, the Authority had established staff development pathways and internal initiatives to enhance ED&I.

The Chief Fire Officer reiterated that "the standards we walk past are the standards that we set" and he emphasised the importance of engaging with the community.

The Chair highlighted the extensive work and engagement efforts conducted by the Authority with regards to culture. The Chair expressed his gratitude to the Chief Fire Officer and staff for their dedication despite national criticism of emergency services.

As part of the discussion, the Chief Fire Officer addressed behaviours that may not meet the Authority's standards, emphasising the Service's commitment to ensuring all staff understood the impact of their actions and the importance of the Authority promptly addressing those concerns. Members were assured that any complaints raised would be handled efficiently by the Authority.

Councillor Finneran shared that during the recent Staff Engagement Day, an employee expressed a desire for promotion but had reservations about their suitability. They explained that their supportive manager had encouraged them to apply, boosting their confidence. Councillor Finneran praised the Authority for its effective leaders who listen and motivate staff.

The Chief Fire Officer highlighted new developmental roles, to help support staff to step into management positions, particularly female employees. It was explained that this approach allowed staff to explore opportunities before advancement, and there had been positive feedback from this initiative.

Councillor Grace praised the Authority's commitment to cultural transformation and ongoing initiatives, emphasising the importance of recognising neurodiversity and recognising that education was key in terms of developing a positive culture. The Chief Fire Officer noted the salience of continuous education and engagement from staff.

Councillor Makinson raised concerns about workplace harassment faced by staff in public-facing roles, emphasising the importance of support from coworkers and the Authority. Councillor Makinson queried the efforts to address these issues noting that firefighters may experience harassment from the public, and Councillor Makinson stressed the need to address the fear that stops individuals from seeking support and sharing their experiences.

With regards to harassment, the Chief Fire Officer advised that such matters would be dealt with in a robust but sensitive manner and the Authority would seek to liaise with its blue light partners as appropriate. The Chief Fire Officer praised the Authority's health and wellbeing initiatives in terms of supporting the staff as outlined in the feedback from staff surveys. The Occupational Health team showed a commitment to supporting those in challenging situations and exemplifying the importance of compassion.

The Chair enquired about the overall number of complaints received by the Authority relating to external harassment. The Chief Fire Officer noted this would form part of the metrics contained within the Cultural Action Plan, which would include compliments, complaints, and resolution procedures.

With regard to female firefighters, Councillor Makinson queried efforts to measure the amount of harassment being experienced. It was explained that the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) carried out a review in response to feedback from the conference based on the results from its surveys. The Chief Fire Officer emphasised the capability to



monitor harassment metrics through the Cultural Dashboard and he noted that the forthcoming staff survey scheduled for November 2024 considered topics related to conduct.

Councillor Makinson discussed the benefit of using surveys to retrieve information regarding harassment from the public. The Chief Fire Officer noted that although this issue would not specifically form part of the next Staff Survey it could be included in future pulse surveys with staff.

*Councillor Ed Lamb left the meeting at 2:14pm.*

Councillor Makinson emphasised the importance of recognising staff within the LGBTQ+ community who may face harassment and racism, noting that a comprehensive understanding of these issues would aid in identifying the necessary support for staff.

The Chief Fire Officer explained that the Authority had a Violence at Work Policy which addressed workplace violence, noting it often manifested as verbal abuse. Members were advised that the Authority had expressed satisfaction with the support provided from the public, hence the low levels of incidents being reported. However, it was noted that incidents tended to increase around the bonfire period.

Councillor Maloney enquired around the progress for retaining and recruiting female firefighters noting this had been an issue in previous years. The Chief Fire Officer highlighted efforts to recruit female firefighters and acknowledged there had been changes in national fitness standards that had previously caused concern for female applicants.

Councillor Maloney mentioned that on a recent station visit to Low-Level Activity Risk (LLAR) sites she had noticed there were not many female firefighters present, and she enquired if this was common for that shift pattern or whether it was a recurring issue.

With regards to duty patterns, the positive feedback from HMICFRS was highlighted by the Chief Fire Officer, noting the importance of utilising family-friendly approaches. This adoption was incorporated within the proposed Community Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

The Chief Fire Officer advised Members that the Authority had sought interest in a flexible working fire engine, but that there had not been enough interest to staff an appliance. It was suggested that the multitude of duty system benefited the firefighters who could seek to find a working pattern that suited their lifestyle at that time in their career.

Councillor Knight noted the importance of staff feeling valued and how impactful training was in terms of young people entering the service. The Chief Fire Officer emphasised that ongoing training, especially for young individuals, was essential to reflect lifelong learning and development. He highlighted the colours training of a way of engaging staff and as a platform to continue their development.

The Chair commended all Members for their exceptional efforts in representing the Authority whilst maintaining fantastic leadership.

The Chair emphasised the importance of addressing cultural issues to improve services, highlighting that ED&I were core values of the Authority. The Chair highlighted that the publication of reviews in other Fire and Rescue Services and the recommendations published had been positive for the Authority to re-examine the way it works. The Chair acknowledged the noteworthy progress made to date by the Authority.

The Chair requested a report be brought back to Members within the next 12-month period to scrutinise and monitor the Authority's progress on the outstanding actions to be achieved.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted., and the accompanying presentation scrutinised.

**26. Scrutiny Forward Work Plan 2023-2025**

Monitoring Officer, Ria Groves, presented the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan covering years 2023-2025. The report contained topics approved by Members, noting that it was a 2-year work plan due to the number of topics to be reviewed.

Members were advised that the current Plan was included within the report, with the highlighted blue sections already scrutinised, and the Monitoring Officer outlined the remaining sections left to scrutinise for the year.

Members were encouraged to suggest any additions, as it was explained and it was noted that a request from Authority Committee, on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024 relating to the provision of smoke alarms relating to HFSC had been selected as a topic for a Learning Lunch later in the year.

**RESOLVED** that Members reviewed the proposed Scrutiny Forward Work Plan 2023-2025.

<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>25 FEBRUARY 2025</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/64/24</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, NICK SEARLE</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, DAVE MOTTRAM</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>AREA MANAGER, KEVIN LONGSHAW</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>LEGAL SERVICES, GROUP MANAGER DAVE WATSON, GROUP MANAGER NICK MCCORMACK</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>UPDATE ON GRENFELL RECOMMENDATIONS</b>		
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>NONE</b>		

### Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with an update regarding the recommendations contained with the Grenfell Tower Inquiry (GTI) phase 1 report.
2. To provide an overview of the work commenced in addressing the recommendations contained within the GTI phase 2 report.

### Recommendation

3. It is recommended that Members:
  - a) note the summary points contained in this report; and
  - b) note the substance of the associated presentation to this report.

### Introduction and Background

4. The GTI phase 1 report was published in October 2019 and contained **46 recommendations** spanning across a number of different areas, namely:
  - Knowledge & Understanding of High Rise Buildings
  - Information gathering under the Fire Safety Act 7.2d
  - Plans
  - Lifts
  - Communications, Fire Control & Incident Command
  - Emergency Calls
  - Command & Control
  - Equipment
  - Evacuation
  - Internal Signage
  - Fire Doors

- Cooperative Emergency Services
5. September 2024 saw the release of the phase 2 report with a further **58 recommendations** contained within it.
  6. To convey the current progress on such matters, this report is supplemented by a presentation that will be delivered at the Scrutiny Committee outlining our extensive progress against phase 1 and the priority actions for phase 2.

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### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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7. The completion of the GTI phase 1 recommendations were specific key deliverables forming part of the Protection Directorate Functional Delivery Plan (FDP) for 2024/25. The remaining outstanding actions have been included as key deliverables in the Protection FDP for 2025/26, in addition to those contained in the phase 2 report. Consequently, all workstreams have been considered from an equality and diversity perspective in the associated Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).

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### **Staff Implications**

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8. The nature of the full impact of the GTI phase 2 recommendations will likely give cause for a dedicated team to be identified from within the Protection function to work closely alongside partner agencies and stakeholders. These personnel will be identified as necessary based on the actions identified from the report and the relevant competencies required.

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### **Legal Implications**

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9. The discharge of actions and recommendations associated with the GTI reports will be undertaken under the regulatory powers afforded to MFRS Protection staff within (but not limited to):
  - The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
  - Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
  - Building Safety Act 2022

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### **Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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10. There are no anticipated additional costs arising from the requirement to address the GTI recommendations. These are very much embedded into our business as usual, with mid and high rise premises already being included for audit purposes within our Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP).
11. MFRS are also in receipt of additional grant funding to support Protection related activities (contained within the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) and Protection Uplift Grants) which supplement our core funding for Protection activities and personnel.

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**Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

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12. Workstreams arising from the GTI reports have been assessed via the embedded risk assessment tools incorporated within the action tracker document, enabling us to prioritise workstreams appropriately.

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**Environmental Implications**

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13. None identified within this report.

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**Contribution to Our Vision: *To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.***

Our Purpose: *Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.*

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14. Our previous approach to the GTI phase 1 recommendations was considered an exemplar approach with other FRS seeking to adopt our methodology. At present, we are one of the most advanced services nationally in regards to progress against the 46 GTI phase 1 recommendations, meaning we have taken proactive steps in working towards ensuring the premises our communities live in, work or visit are safe. Furthermore, we have undertaken extensive work to ensure the personnel charged with Protection, Prevention and Response related activities are trained and effective in their associated areas.
15. We have engaged early with partners across the Liverpool City Region in relation to the forthcoming local remediation acceleration plan (LRAP) workstream and have been identified as a lead partner in driving this workstream forward given its links to the GTI recommendations and the recent Government directives for the Deputy Prime Minister.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**NONE**

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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<b>BSR</b>	<b>Building Safety Regulator</b>
<b>EIA</b>	<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>
<b>FDP</b>	<b>Functional Delivery Plan</b>
<b>GTI</b>	<b>Grenfell Tower Inquiry</b>
<b>LRAP</b>	<b>Local Remediation Acceleration Plan</b>
<b>MFRA</b>	<b>Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority</b>
<b>MFRS</b>	<b>Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service</b>
<b>RBIP</b>	<b>Risk Based Inspection Programme</b>



<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
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<b>DATE:</b>	<b>25 FEBRUARY 2025</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/65/24</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, NICK SEARLE</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>AREA MANAGER, BEN RYDER</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>GROUP MANAGER, GED KNOCK</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>HEALTH &amp; SAFETY DEPT, STRATEGY &amp; PERFORMANCE DEPARTMENT, LEGAL SERVICES, HS&amp;W COMMITTEE. STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>ANNUAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE REPORT 2023/24</b>		

<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>APPENDIX A: ANNUAL HEALTH &amp; SAFETY REPORT 2023/24</b>
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### **Purpose of Report**

1. To request that Members note the contents of the Annual Health, Safety and Welfare (HS&W) report which details the performance of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS) against its Local Performance Indicators (LPI's) for Health and Safety (H&S) during 2023/24.

### **Recommendation**

2. It is recommended that Members note the performance related contents of the report and presentation which highlight the positive progress and safety culture within MFRS.

### **Introduction and Background**

3. The Annual HS&W Report ensures that Members are informed in regard to HS&W performance and can be assured of compliance with corporate policy, legal and performance requirements.
4. This report has been prepared using data from the Authority's Health, Safety & Welfare Management System; OSHENS.
5. MFRS HS&W Committee meet on a quarterly basis, and membership includes a Principal Officer Chair (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Dave Mottram), representative bodies, senior managers, department heads and Members of the Fire Authority. The LPI's for HS&W are jointly reviewed and scrutinised at each meeting with actions taken to maintain or improve performance. Sub-meetings such as Workplace, Road Risk and Legal meetings also contribute to the overall H&S performance.

- 6. LPI's are set by the H&S Manager on behalf of the Authority, and in line with the MFRS service plan. The figures are drawn from empirical data and statistics and are approved and governed through the Performance Management Group (PMG).
- 7. It should be noted that when reviewing this data there has been a significant increase in training, Prevention, Protection and Response activity which is referred to in the main report.
- 8. A brief overview of the 2023/24 LPI performance for Members to note is contained in the following sections.

9. Staff injuries

- i. An overview of LPI performance is shown below. Performance is Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rated with Green identifying positive performance.

LPI	Predicted Annual Performance	Actual Annual Performance	RAG rating
WR13	47	39	G
WR33	22	12	G
WR34	8	7	G
WR22	21	20	G

- ii. All operational staff injuries: (WR13)

There were 39 injuries to operational staff during 2023/24, a reduction of 1 from the previous year. 11 of the 39 recordings were attributed to sprains/strains, identified as the most common injury.

- iii. Injuries at operational incidents (WR33)

MFRS attended 17345 operational incidents in 2023/24, which was supported by 36240 appliance movements.

12 injuries occurred at incidents, a reduction of 4 from the previous year. Of the 12 injured, 4 staff members went off duty however, 3 returned within 12 days. 1 remained on long term sickness. 8 staff remained on duty.

The total duty days lost for operational staff whilst at incidents was 200, although 148 are attributed to the single individual on long term sickness.

- iv. Injuries at risk critical training (WR34)

In 2023/24, examples of training undertaken included 343 core training courses, 74 off-site station exercises, 45 high rise/hazmat exercises, and the successful delivery of 3 recruit courses.

7 individuals were injured during risk critical training. 2 subsequently went off duty and booked sick. Performance is as the previous year.



v. Injuries related to staff conducting routine duties (WR22)

There were a total of 20 injuries recorded during routine activity which is an increase of 3 from the previous year but remains one under the LPI target of 21.

Of the 20 individuals who were injured, 16 remained on duty highlighting that their injuries were minor in nature. 4 individuals went off duty resulting in 21 duty days lost.

vi. Non-operational staff injuries (WR32)

There were a total of 10 non-operational staff injuries in 2023/24, the same recorded performance against 2022/23. All 10 individuals remained on duty. All injuries were classed as minor in nature. This is a monitoring LPI only and not included in the table.

vii. RIDDOR reportable injuries; Major & Minor

There was one RIDDOR reportable 'Major' injury during 2023/24, a 50% reduction on the previous year. 7 'Minor' injuries were reported to the HSE, also a decrease of 50% for the previous year. The injuries were:

- 5 sprain/strain injuries
- 1 minor burn/scald
- 1 bruising

Analysis of statistics shows that there is no significant age group who are receiving more injuries amongst the overall workforce.

10. MFRS accident and injury figures are submitted to the Home Office (HO) annually. The HO collates figures from all FRS's which are published in annual data tables enabling H&S Manager's to measure and benchmark performance nationally. Annual data tables are published in October of each year and therefore are not included in this report. The National benchmarking accident and injury data will be analysed and provided to Authority in a supplementary presentation to support this report.

11. Safety Events

There was one significant safety event in 2023/24 involving a Firefighter at an operational incident who received injuries following an appliance collision at scene. The incident was investigated by H&S/IIT. The injury was recorded in statistics and following consultation with HSE, was classed as a major injury.

12. Road Traffic Collisions (RTC's) involving Authority vehicles.

MFRA fleet vehicles have covered in excess of 1 million miles during 2023/24. The following figures include both blue light response fleet vehicles, including routine driving activity:

- i. An overview of LPI performance is shown below. Performance is RAG rated with Green identifying positive performance, Amber to indicate an area for attention and Red as an area for improvement.

LPI	Predicted Annual Performance	Actual Annual Performance	RAG rating
RR23	72	66	G
RR31	28	29	A
RR32	27	37	R
RR33	Quality Assurance	0	G
RR34	17	7	G
RR35	Quality Assurance	17	G
HBOV	Quality Assurance	21	G

- ii. The total number of RTC's (RR23)

RTC's involving all types of Service vehicles was 66, a reduction of 13 on the previous year and 6 below the LPI target.

- iii. Appliance collisions whilst responding to incidents (RR31)

MFRA fire appliances responded on 36,240 occasions in 2023/24 to 17,354 incidents. This driving activity is deemed as the Services most risk critical category.

There were 29 collisions involving appliances responding under blue lights, a decrease of 17 on the previous year but 1 above target. This performance indicator has seen a noticeable improvement, however, has been RAG rated to Amber for attention.

The trend for this LPI was moving forward under 10mph with 22 (75%) of the 29 collisions being in this category.

The Service has progressed 23 new EFAD qualified drivers during 2023/24. There is no direct correlation between newly qualified drivers and RTC's.

- iv. Appliance collision whilst engaged in routine activities/movements (RR32)

MFRA appliances were involved in 61,222 routine movements in 2023/24. This is 12,687 more movements than the previous year.

The total number of appliance collisions whilst engaged in routine activities increased by 15 to 37 from the previous year. This is ten above the predicted target and the focus of H&S for the coming year in introducing parking sensors, training videos / packages and assurance by audit of reversing or low speed procedures.

The trend for this LPI was moving forward at low speed (<10mph) with 22 (59%) of the 37 incidents falling into this category.

The Service has progressed 38 new LGV drivers into the operational environment during 2023/24. There is no direct correlation between newly qualified drivers and RTC's.

v. Collisions involving light vehicles (RR33 & RR34)

There were 7 light vehicle collisions, a reduction of 5 (29%) on the previous year and 10 below the target of 17.

In analysing the data for trends, 3 of the 7 collisions occurred whilst moving forward (<10mph), and 4 whilst reversing (<10mph).

Collisions involving light vehicles whilst responding e.g. Senior Officer / specialist response, remained at 0 for the second consecutive year.

Other vehicle damage whilst MFRS vehicles are stationary (RR35) and Hit by Other Vehicle (HBOV) are both monitoring LPI's only. RR35 has increased since 2022/23 by 10 occurrences. H&S are researching if high visibility markings would reduce risk in this area. HBOV has reduced by one occurrence since 2022/23.

13. Near miss reporting (WR31)

i. 148 near miss reports/safety observations were recorded for 2023/24, an increase from the previous year (117) and likely attributable to:

- Positive reinforcement of Health and Safety Culture across the Service.
- Evidence that near misses reduce likelihood of actual events.
- Improved working relationships between departments and functions.

14. Welfare performance:

In addition to previous year's reports, 2023/24 includes detail on welfare performance. Occupational Health services and Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) trained personnel provide mental and physical support to all staff to ensure wellbeing and safety measures are in place. Highlights of performance include:

• Health Screenings	132
• LGV medicals	57
• Driver Validation/Non-Uniform Health Screening	102
• Early Intervention	322
• Management Referrals	68
• Uniformed pre-employments	39
• Non uniformed pre-employments	70
• Other (Long term sick review/Clinical Check/Other duties reviews etc)	1686
• <b>Total medical appointments</b>	<b>2476</b>

Other referrals include:

• MRI/Scan Referrals	29
• Physiotherapy appointments	487
• Fitness Tests	421
• Nutritionist appointments	73
• Safety Glasses issued	9
• Eyesight vouchers issued	3
• Ill Health Retirements	3

The CISM mechanism has resulted in the following:

• Critical Incidents (CI) declared	99
• CI Defusing sessions	191
• CI Debriefs (elevated support)	18

#### 15. Reducing exposure/contaminants project

A dedicated project lead (Station Manager) has been appointed to oversee progress in relation to reducing exposure of Firefighters to fire contaminants. This work is aligned to a national strategic gap analysis which details the required measures.

The project has led to additional PPE and cleaning products being provided, additional decontamination procedures, zoning of fire stations to reduce spread of contaminants and the creation of learning packages/education for operational staff and those who may come into contact with used fire kit.

The project will continue to keep Merseyside Firefighters safe and support a regional focus on training and competence as a national requirement.

16. The detail within this report and the annual report provides evidence of a positive health and safety culture within the Service, which continues to be the focus of the H&S Department and SLT.

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### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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17. This report informs the Authority's performance under its HS&W Policy and supporting procedures, which are subject to current Equality Impact Assessments.

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### **Staff Implications**

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18. All staff are managed under aspects of H&S legislation which requires the employer or employee to fulfil duties against their role. The report is intended to confirm performance only.

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**Legal Implications**

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19. The Authority has a legal duty of care for its employees. The HS&W Report provides evidence of compliance with the 'Health and Safety at Work Act 1974' and Regulations made pursuant to that Act, and other associated H&S legislation.
20. A failure in compliance may lead to a litigation claim with a financial impact on the Authority budget.

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**Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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21. The positive work undertaken by the H&S Department affects the amount of litigation and repair costs that the Authority is liable for. In being proactive and working closely with other internal stakeholders in reducing accidents and injuries, it provides a safer work environment and avoids the indirect costs of a poor H&S culture – staff absence, sick pay, legal costs, claims, reputational impacts, etc.

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**Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

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22. The report is intended to reflect performance of the previous year only. The H&S department continue to maintain workstreams to ensure risk management is suitable and sufficient.

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**Environmental Implications**

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23. The report is intended to reflect performance of the previous year only. The H&S department continue to maintain workstreams to ensure risk management is suitable and sufficient.

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**Contribution to Our Vision: *To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.***

Our Purpose: *Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.*

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24. By ensuring staff are the safest they can be through suitable and sufficient provision of information, instruction, training, and supervision, in line with legal and moral compliance.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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N/A

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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<b>MFRA</b>	Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority
<b>MFRS</b>	Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service
<b>H&amp;S</b>	Health and Safety
<b>HS&amp;W</b>	Health Safety & Welfare
<b>LPI</b>	Local Performance Indicator
<b>PMG</b>	Performance Management Group
<b>RAG</b>	Red, Amber, Green
<b>HO</b>	Home Office

<b>RFF</b>	Recruit Firefighter
<b>CISM</b>	Critical Incident Stress Management
<b>PPE</b>	Personal Protective Equipment
<b>EFAD</b>	Emergency Fire Appliance Driving
<b>LGV</b>	Large Goods Vehicle



# Annual Health & Safety Report 2023/24

## Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service

Compiled by GM Ged Knock  
Health & Safety Manager

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Annual Health & Safety (H&S) report for the period of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. This report provides detailed data of the Health, Safety & Welfare (HS&W) performance of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MFRS) against its pre-determined Local Performance Indicators (LPI's).

This report ensures that the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) and the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority (MFRA) are informed of the current HS&W performance and provides assurance that the Service complies with its corporate policy, legal obligations and overall H&S performance requirements.

This report has been prepared using data from the Authority's HS&W Management System, 'OSHENS', and data from the Business Intelligence Department. The data is presented in detailed charts/graphs and covers LPI's, which are either performance led or are monitoring only.



LPI figures are set by the H&S Manager on behalf of the Authority and in line with the MFRS Service Plan. The figures are drawn from empirical data/statistics and are approved and governed through the Performance Management Group (PMG). LPI's are reviewed annually.

***“MFRA, the Chief Fire Officer, and the Strategic Leadership Team, through visible leadership, ensure that Health, Safety and Welfare is a priority.”***

# Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority Health, Safety & Welfare Management Arrangements

MFRA and the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) are fully committed to ensuring the Health Safety and Welfare of all MFRS employees and the communities MFRS serve to deliver Our Purpose; *'Here to serve. Here to protect. Here to keep you safe'*.

The Authority achieves this by ensuring that duties under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 are met, in order to prevent injury or illness to employees, contractors and members of the public who may be affected by MFRS work activities.

MFRA are fully committed to compliance with all relevant Health and Safety legislation, Statute, Regulations, Directives and Approved Codes of Practice and regard compliance as the basic minimum standard. MFRA recognise that a 'positive safety culture' in the workplace only exists when Health and Safety is understood and accepted as a high priority.

MFRA and the CFO are responsible for ensuring that the HS&W policy is implemented and that responsibilities are assigned, accepted and fulfilled at all levels within MFRS.

The MFRA, CFO and the Strategic Leadership Team, through visible leadership, ensure that Health, Safety and Welfare is a priority and, in doing so, encourage shared beliefs, practices, values and attitudes within the organisation to promote a positive safety culture.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) maintains overall responsibility for MFRS Health and Safety Management on behalf of the CFO. The H&S Manager and the Occupational Health (OH) Manager are responsible for the day-to-day management of HS&W on behalf of the MFRA and the CFO.

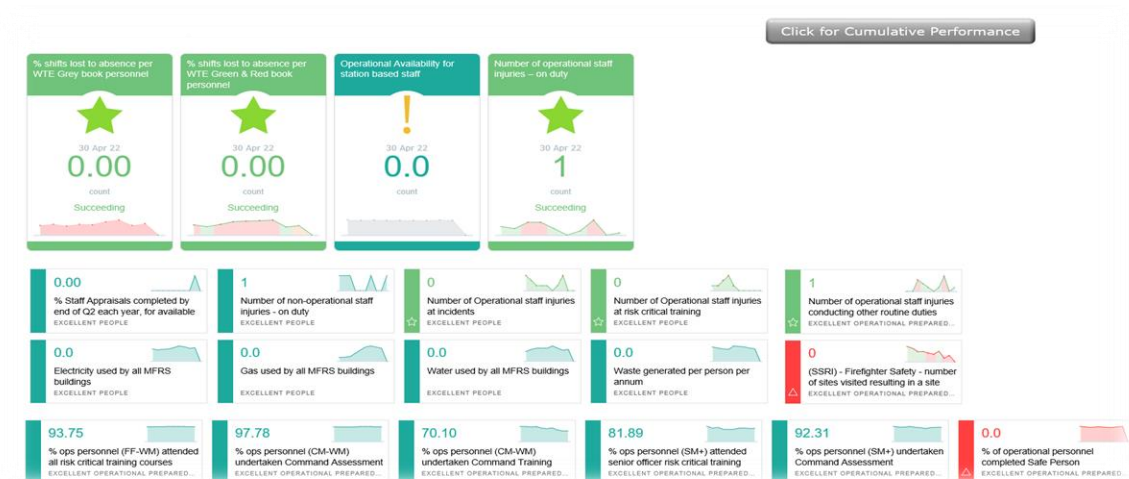
# Health & Safety Performance

## Workplace

Workplace performance monitors accidents and injuries in the workplace and is managed via six key LPI's. Four of the LPI's are performance managed and the remaining two are for monitoring only. The governance for Workplace is managed via the Workplace Review Group (WPRG) which has cross departmental membership. The performance led LPI's are broken down into the following four areas:

### LPI Performance

- Number of operational staff injuries on-duty (LPI WR13)
- Number of operational staff injuries at incidents (LPI WR33)
- Number of operational staff injuries at risk critical training (LPI WR34)
- Number of operational staff injuries conducting other routine activities (LPI WR22)



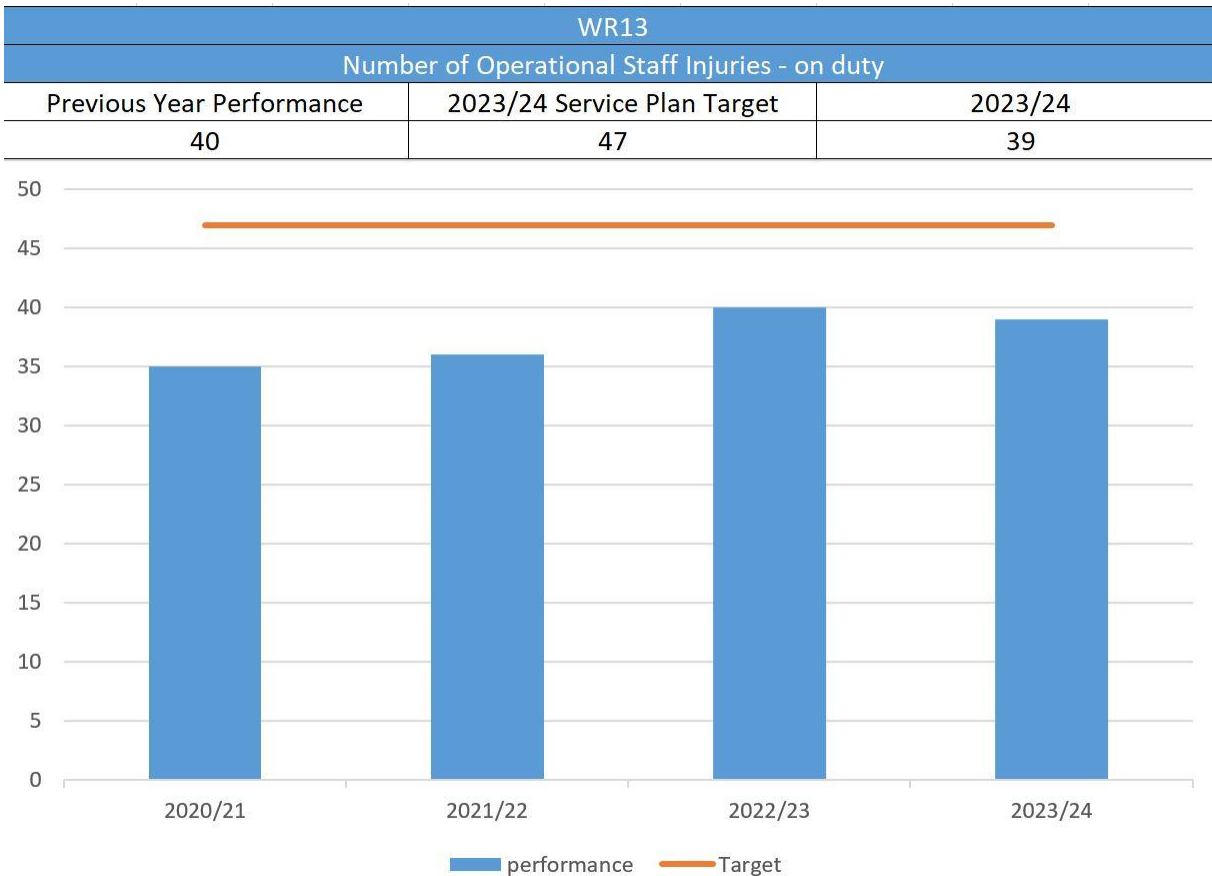
### LPI Monitoring

- Number of non-operational staff injuries on-duty (LPI WR32)
- Reporting of the levels of Near Miss reports recorded by the Service (LPI WR31)

The Health and Safety Department also monitor and manage additional areas of performance and H&S compliance during the year, delivered via audit, inspection, and active monitoring; the details of this are also contained within this report.

## Overall Number of Operational Staff Injuries On-duty

During 2023/24 there were a total of 39 injuries to operational staff, which is a decrease of 1 on the previous year. A total of 28 of the 39 members of staff injured remained on duty and of those who went off duty, 4 returned to work within 7 days.

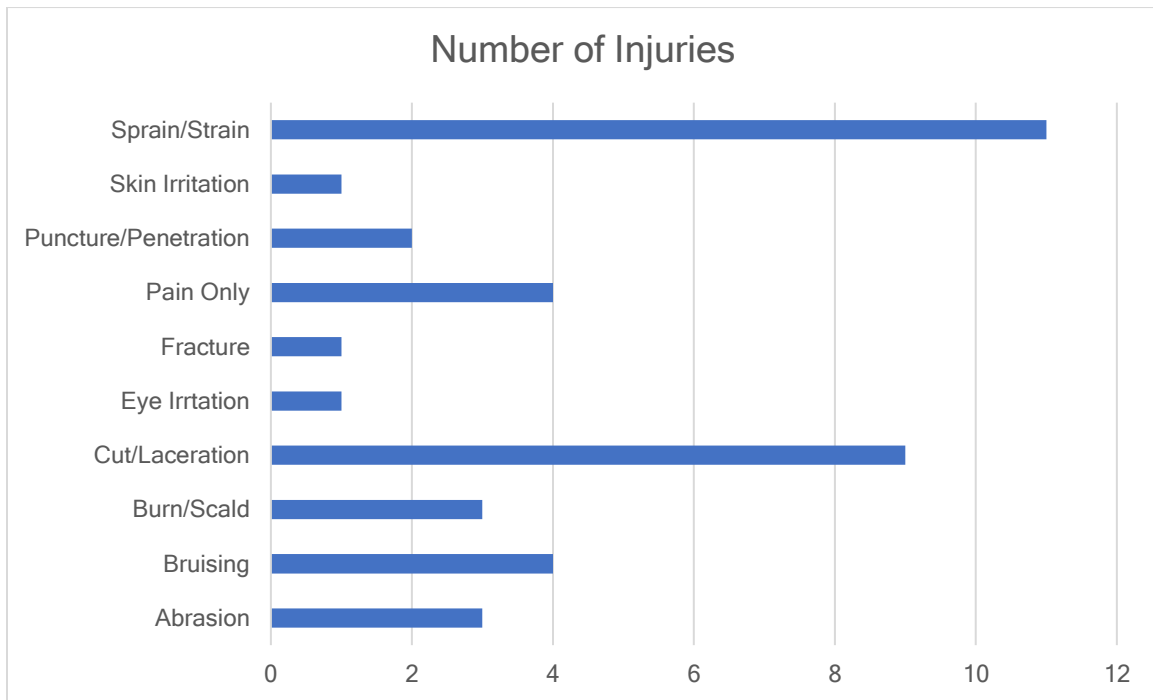


A total of 327 duty days were lost through staff injuries, which is a decrease of 28 on the previous year, with 317 of the days lost were related to 6 members of staff absent through long term sickness and the remaining 10 days related to 4 other members of staff.

Trend analysis shows that all age ranges were similarly affected, and that 11 of the 39 injuries (28%) were due to sprain or strain, which is the most common recorded injury. There is no identifiable age range amongst these injuries, with the lowest age recorded being 24 and the highest 51.

The full break down of injury type amongst operational staff for 2023/24 is detailed below:

## Injuries

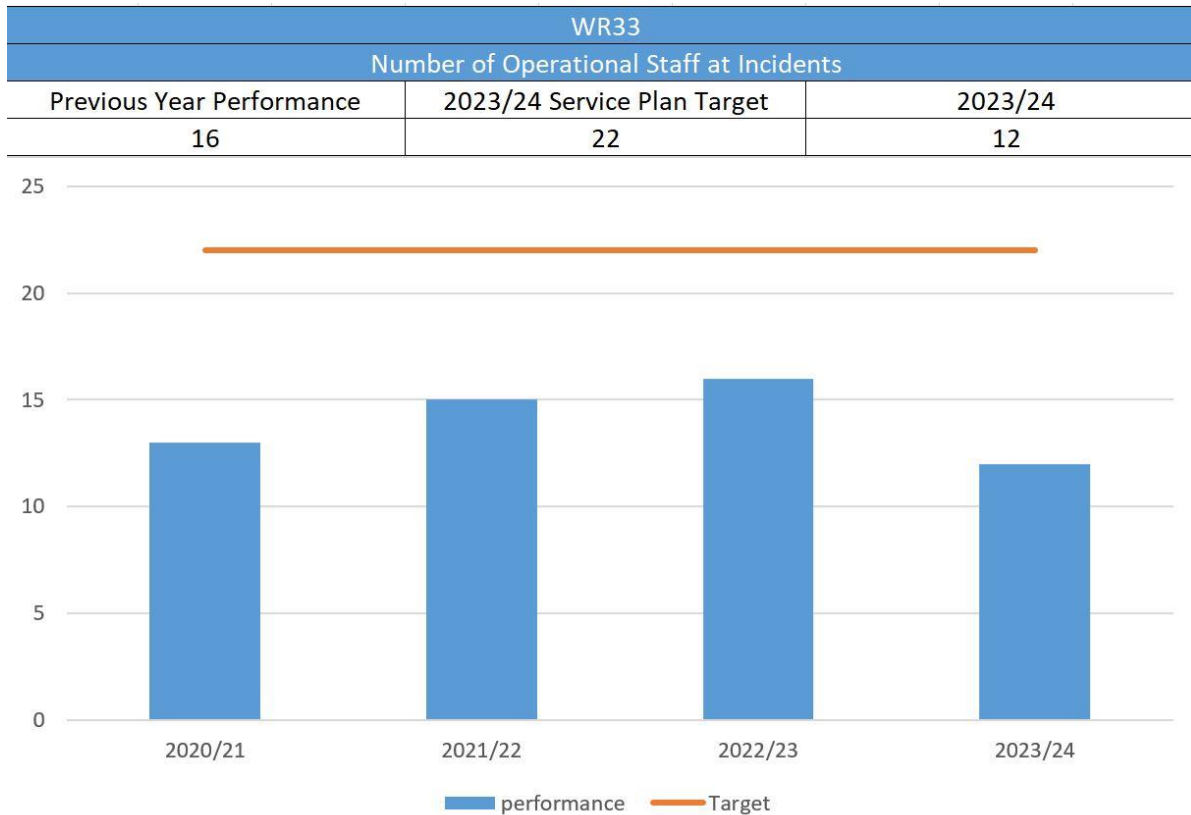


MFRS has an established positive reporting culture, with staff comfortable and confident in reporting injuries without reprisal, even when minor in nature. For example, 4 members of staff reported 'Pain Only' injuries. These primarily related to a muscular discomfort during the course of their duties. All remained on duty and did not suffer any long-lasting effects. Historically, this is something that may not have been reported.

The breakdown of injuries into the individual Workplace LPI's, both performance-led and monitoring only, are displayed on the following pages.

## Number of Operational Staff Injuries at Incidents

Of the total 39 operational staff injuries whilst on-duty, 12 occurred at operational incidents. This is a decrease of 4 from the previous year. However, this amount remains significantly below the predicted target of 22.



MFRS attended 17,345 operational incidents in 2023/24, which incurred 36,240 appliance movements. Of the total 12 operational injuries, 8 remained in work, which indicates the injury was minor in nature and further highlights the positive reporting culture amongst staff. Of the 4 who went off duty, 3 returned to work within 12 days and the remaining 1 member of staff is absent through long term sickness.

The total duty days lost for operational staff incurring injuries whilst at incidents was 200 days; an increase of 25 on the previous year. Of the 200 days, 148 relate to one staff member.

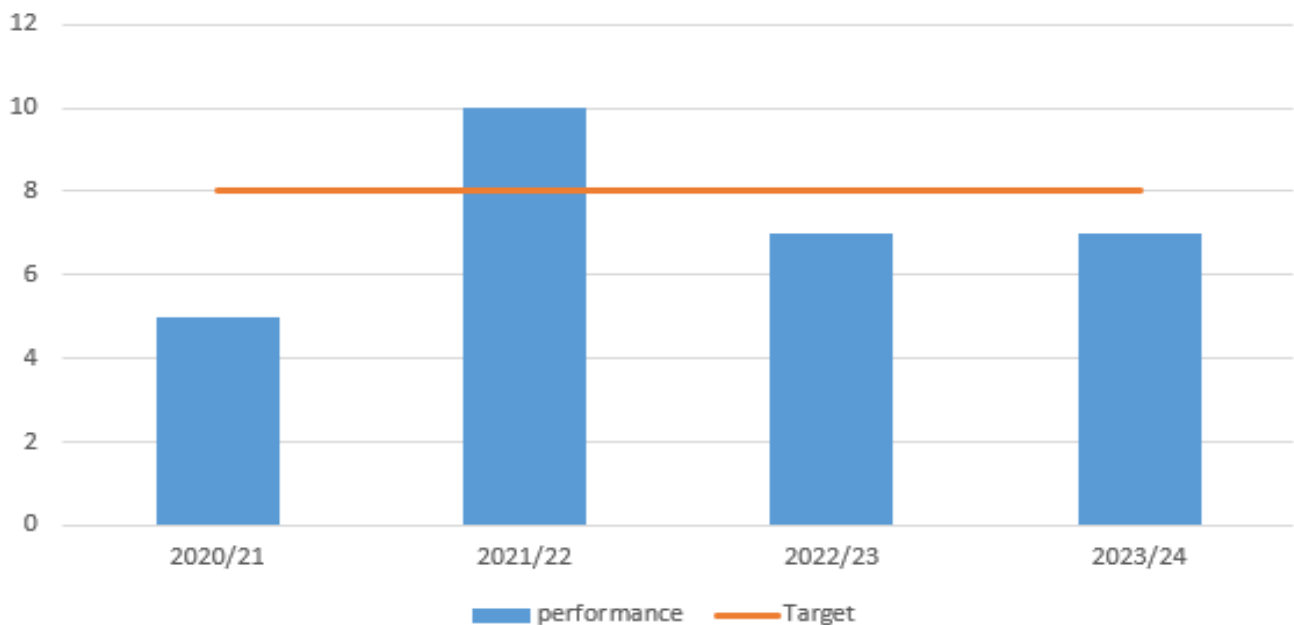
# Number of Operational Staff Injuries at Risk Critical Training

The Health and Safety Department have monitored injuries at risk critical training as a standalone LPI since 2018/19. Prior to this, it was included in the operational injuries at incidents LPI.

During this reporting period, 7 individuals were injured during risk critical training, 2 of whom went off duty.

The figures indicate that the majority of injuries were minor in nature and that the training environment is being managed well through risk assessment and by operational managers.

WR34		
Number of Operational Staff Injuries at Risk Critical Training		
Previous Year Performance	2023/24 Service Plan Target	2023/24
7	8	7



MFRS is fully committed to its vision, *“to be the best Fire and Rescue Service in the UK”* and as such, devotes a substantial amount of time to risk critical training, ensuring firefighters and commanders can perform to the best of their ability. This ensures staff are safe and effective whilst at work, improving attendance and increasing overall wellbeing.



# Operational Training

In 2023/24, the following training took place:

A total of 343 core training courses were completed in the year 2023/24 which is a 10% increase on the previous year. These consist of:

- 42 Breathing Apparatus (BA) courses with 8-10 attendees per course
- 21 Compartment Fire Behaviour Training (CFBT) courses with approx. 8-10 attendees per course
- 64 Road Traffic Collision (RTC) courses with approx. 5 attendees per course
- 60 Safe Working at Height (SWAH) courses with approx. 5 attendees per course.
- 73 Hazardous Materials Response courses with approx. 10 attendees per course
- 65 Water courses with approx. 5 attendees per course
- 18 FREC courses with approx. 10 attendees per course

In 2023/24 MFRS completed 237 realistic training / exercising events which is 35 more than the previous year. This continues the trend of improving the number and quality of training and exercising since the pandemic:



- 74 Off-site station exercises
- 35 Tactical exercises, organised by stations
- 2 'Control of Major Accident Hazards' (COMAH) live exercises
- 27 Cross Border exercises with our regional FRS colleagues
- 54 Specialist Station Training exercises (Marine, HazMat, MTA and Command)
- 45 Saturday exercises (RTC/HazMat and High Rise)





*Multi Agency training with H.M. Coastguard*



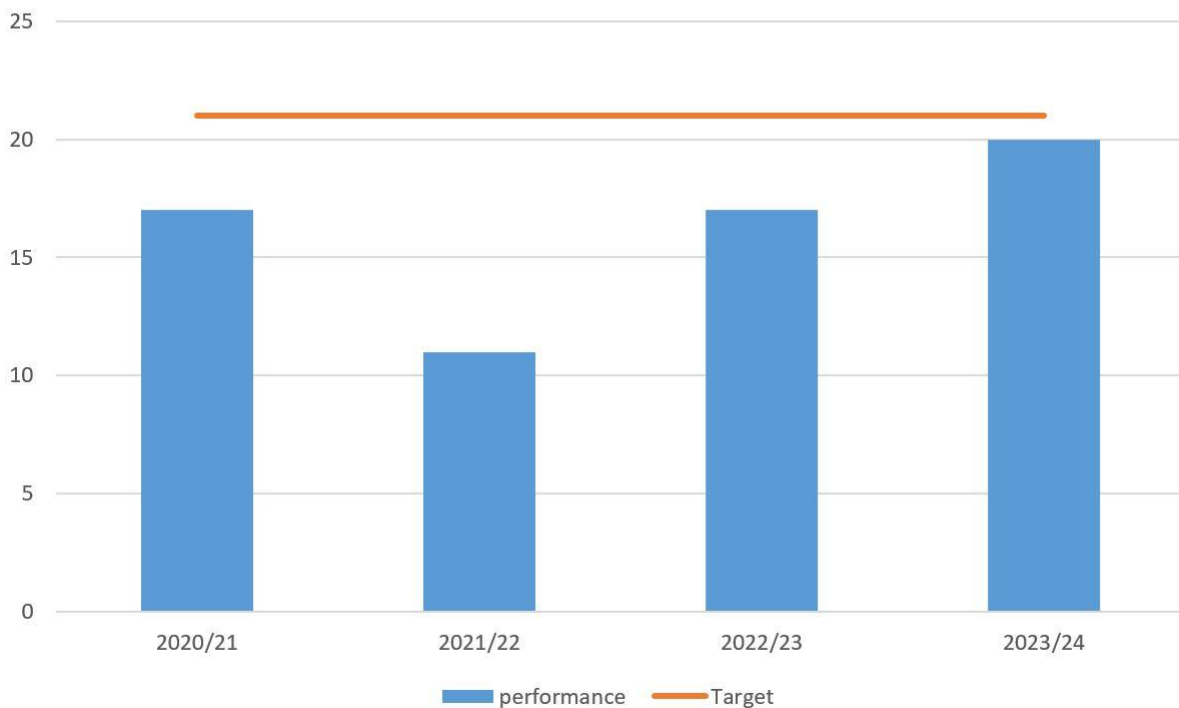
*Off Station Exercises working with local partners to improve Operational Response.*

During the year we have welcomed 42 Apprentice Firefighters and 11 Apprentice Firefighter Control staff into the Service. They completed recruit courses of 16 weeks and 10 weeks respectively. Individual training blocks are aligned to the daily training planner across all stations and equate to approximately 8,000 x 2-hour 45 minute training periods per year.

# Number of Operational Staff Injuries Conducting Other Routine Activities

During routine activity in 2023/24 20 injuries occurred which sees an increase of 18% (or 3 injuries) on the previous year. This area has seen an increase in the last two years; however, it remains below the Service Plan target.

WR22		
Number of Operational Staff Injuries conducting other routine duties		
Previous Year Performance	2023/24 Service Plan Target	2023/24
17	21	20



Of the 20 individuals who were injured, 16 remained on duty, highlighting that their injuries were minor in nature. The remaining 4 individuals went off duty.

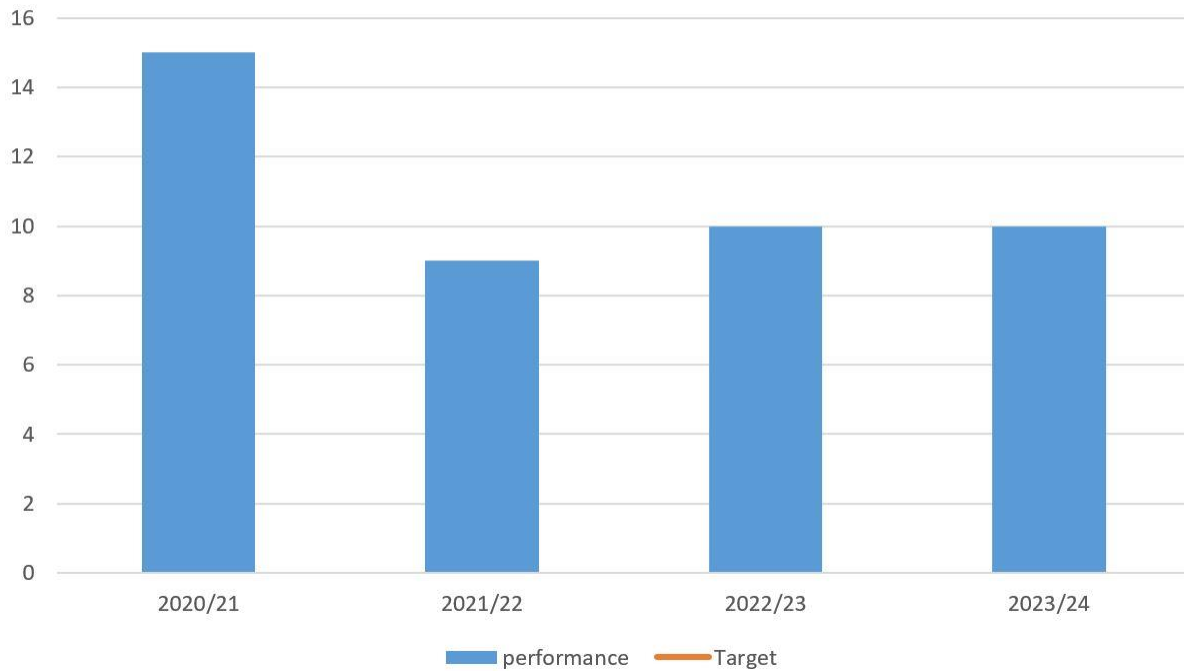
The 4 injuries, when individuals went off-duty, resulted in 21 duty days lost. As MFRS policy defines 28 days sickness as long term for one individual, it is clear to observe that no long-term absences were attributed to this indicator. The indicator shows an overall decrease of 123 days lost in comparison to the previous year. MFRS operate and support a positive reporting culture which contributes to the reduction of injury through raising awareness.

There are a variety of age ranges amongst the individuals. There is no significant trend identified amongst this area.

# Number of Non-operational Staff Injuries On-duty

There was a total of 10 non-operational staff injuries in 2023/24, this is the same amount as last year. The 10 individuals involved remained on duty.

WR32		
Number of Non-Operational Staff Injuries On-Duty		
Previous Year Performance	2023/24 Service Plan Target	2023/24
10	Monitoring	10



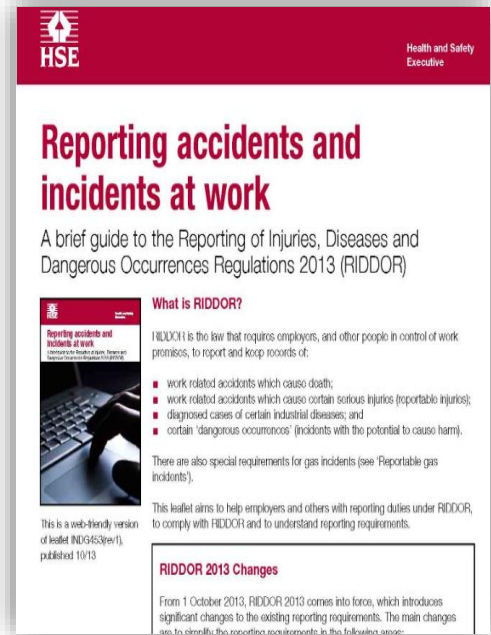
Specific age ranges for this category were varied with no significant trend identified.

There were a variety of minor injuries recorded. These include abrasions, bruising, sprain/strain, cuts, scalds, eye irritation and a dog bite. The positive reporting of near miss events substantially reduces the potential for injuries as staff are encouraged to submit observations as part of the overall Health and Safety culture.

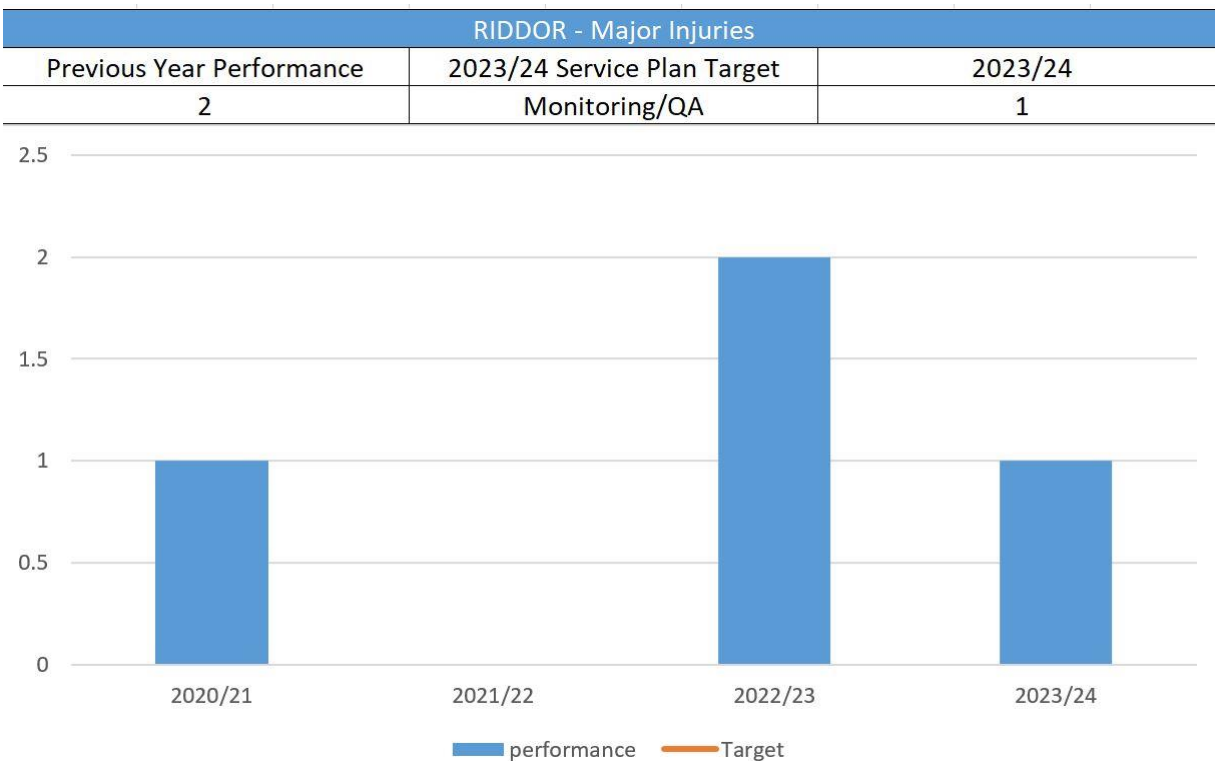
# Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations - RIDDOR

RIDDOR puts duties on employers, the self-employed and people in control of work premises (the Responsible Person) to report certain serious workplace accidents, occupational diseases and ‘specified’ dangerous occurrences (near misses).

Under RIDDOR, MFRA must report the specific categories under ‘Major Injury’ to the enforcing Authorities, where occurrences happen ‘out of or in connection with work’. The Health & Safety Department reports these occurrences to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE), on behalf of MFRA.



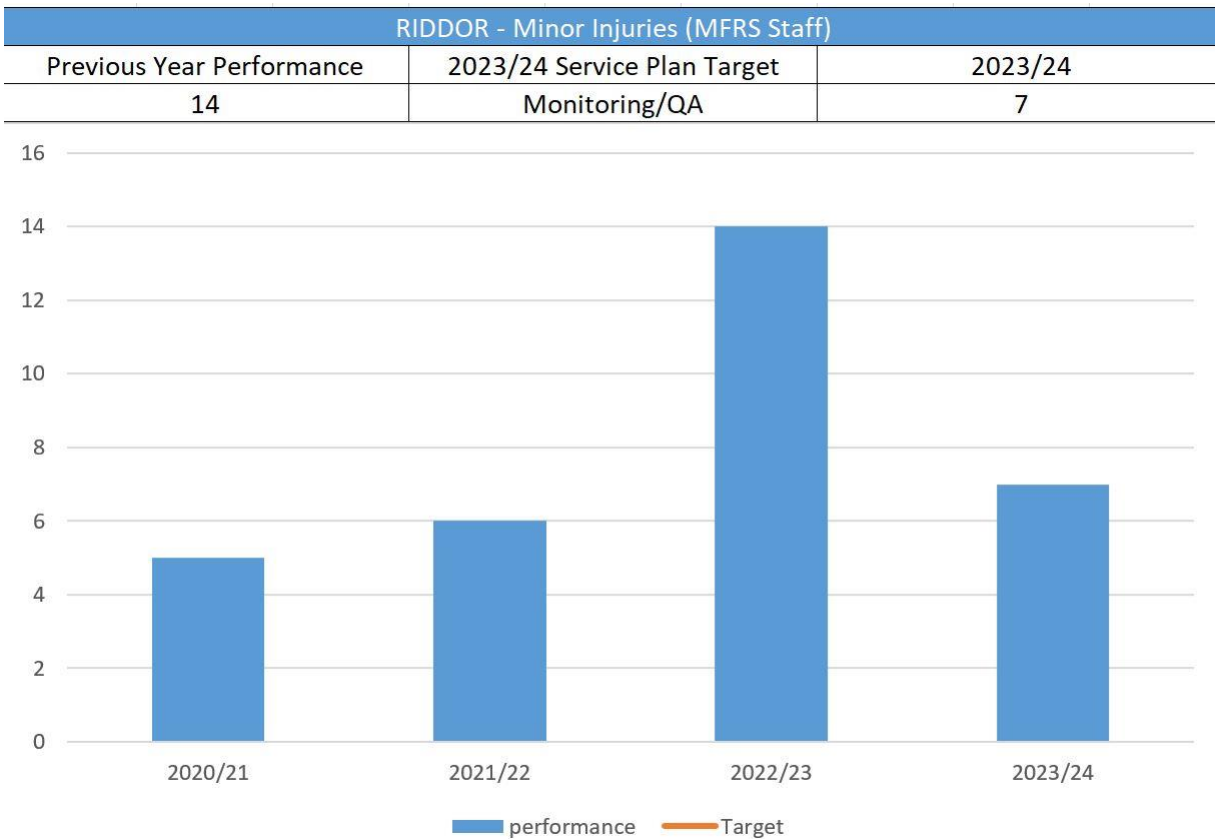
There was one reportable Major injury during 2023/24, which is one less than last year.



Under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 2013, MFRA must report specific categories where an ‘over 7-day absence’ occurs when the cause is ‘out of or in connection with work’. The Health & Safety Department reports the occurrences to the HSE on behalf of MFRA.

There were 7 minor injuries affecting MFRS staff reported to the HSE during 2023/24, a decrease of 7 on the previous year. 5 were sprain or strain injuries, 1 was bruising and 1 minor burn. Additionally, we also had an injury to an NWS member of staff (fractured finger) based at Croxteth Community Fire Station.

MFRA reported one Dangerous Occurrence which was a loss of BA Telemetry at an Operational Incident. No injuries were incurred in relation to this event. The cause has been investigated and further control measures have been put in place to minimise the chance of this issue reoccurring.



# Reporting of the Levels of Near Miss Reports Recorded by the Service

A near miss is an incident that would have resulted in a loss, such as an injury or property damage, under only slightly different circumstances.

Near Misses in MFRS are recorded through the OSHENS system and can be accessed by any member of staff. They help highlight safety issues when injury does not occur, helping prevent any future occurrence. Near Miss reporting is actively encouraged by the H&S Department, as it contributes to a positive H&S culture within the Service.

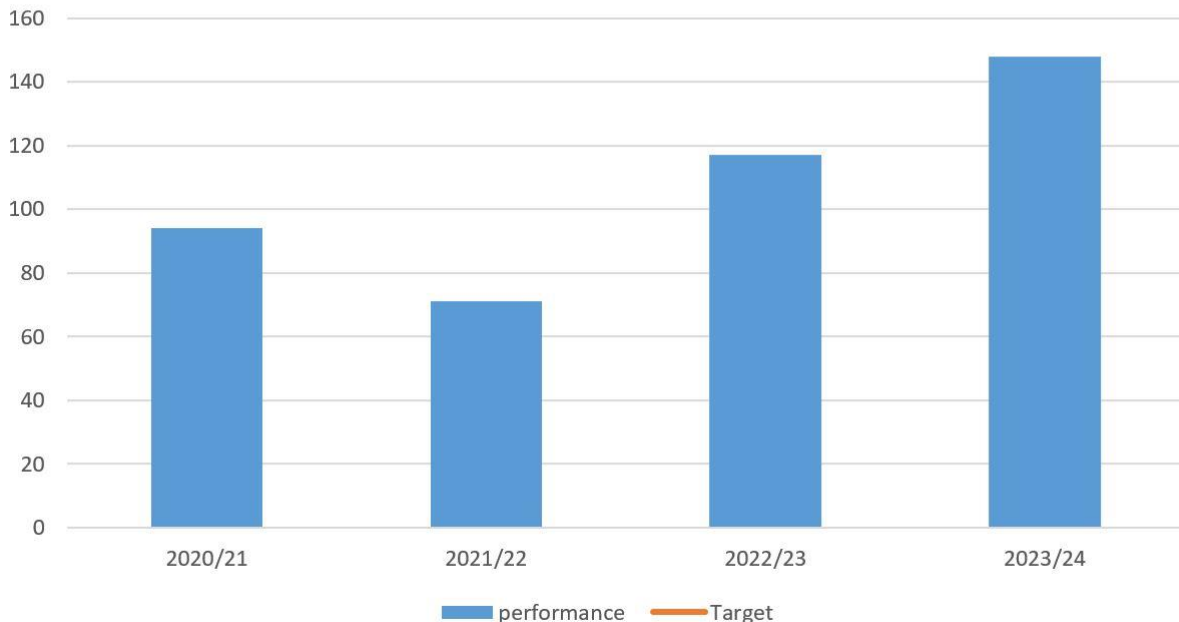
A total of 148 Near Misses were recorded during 2023/24. This is an increase of 27% (or 31 reports) when compared to previous year. MFRS Health and Safety department promote positive reporting as part of workplace culture and respond to all submissions. MFRS continues to monitor Near Misses for any potential trends that arise.

## SAFETY PYRAMID

It is far better to be reporting and learning from Near Misses, Minor Incidents and Hazards, where there is little or no loss, than to be reporting actual serious losses.



WR31		
Near Miss Reports Recorded by the Service		
Previous Year Performance	2023/24 Service Plan Target	2023/24
117	Monitoring	148





# Road Risk

Road Risk performance monitors all vehicle collisions and is managed via six key LPI's. Four of the LPI's are performance led and the remaining two are for monitoring only. The governance for road risk is managed via the Road Risk Review Group (RRRG) which has cross departmental membership. LPI's are broken down into:



## LPI Performance

- The number of Road Traffic Collisions (RTC's) where a Fire Appliance hit other vehicle or object whilst responding to an operational incident (**RR31**)
- The number of RTC's where a Fire Appliance hit other vehicle or object whilst engaged in routine activity (**RR32**)
- The number of RTC's where a light vehicle hit another vehicle or object whilst responding to an operational incident (**RR33**)
- The number of RTC's where a light vehicle hit other vehicle or object whilst engaged in routine activity (**RR34**)

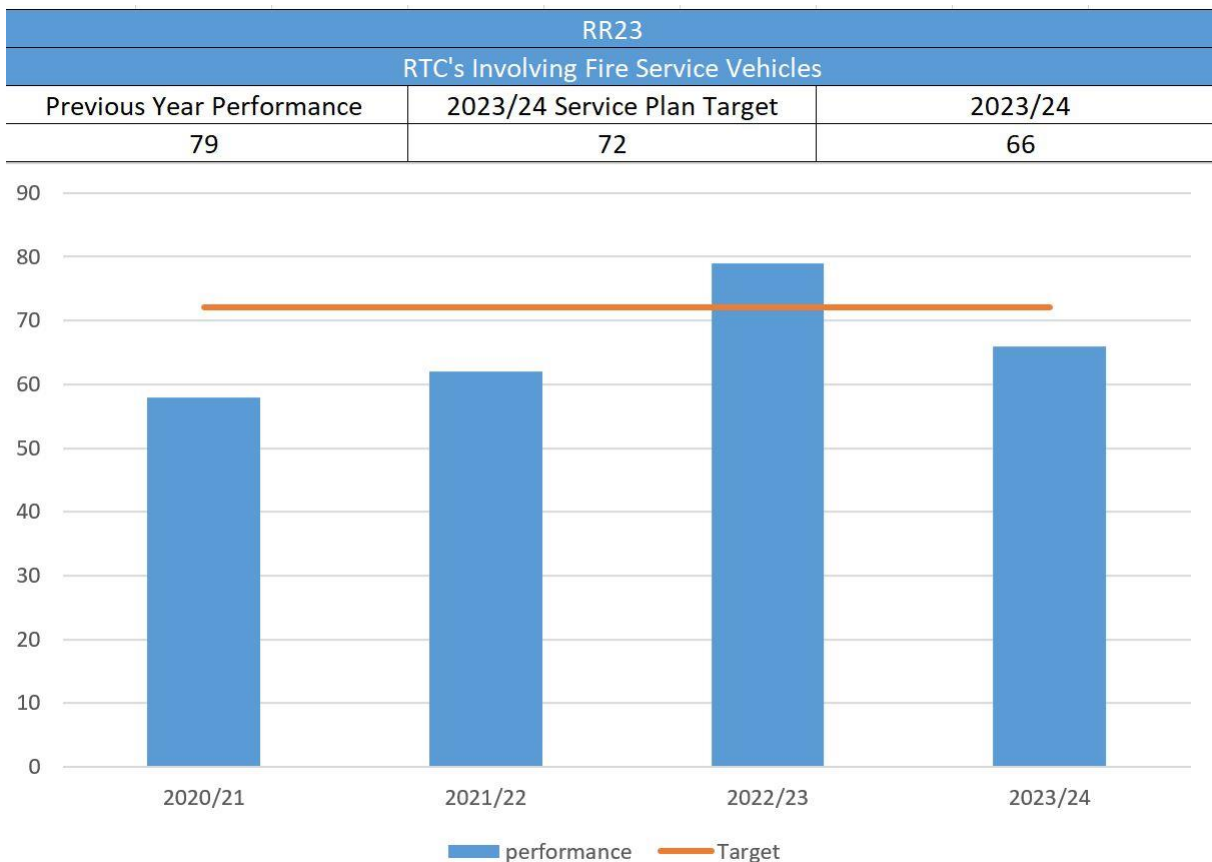
## LPI Monitoring

- Other vehicle damage caused whilst any vehicle is stationary during response or routine activity (**RR35**)
- Service vehicle hit by other 3<sup>rd</sup> party vehicle (**HBOV**)

## Total Number of RTC's Involving Service Vehicles

MFRA operate over 150 vehicles from light vehicle types/vans through to emergency fire appliances, specialist vehicles and combined platform ladders (CPL) with individual capability of 28m, 34m and 45m reach. The vehicle fleet is maintained by Workshops who ensure readiness for routine and emergency activity.

The total number of RTC's involving all types of Service vehicles was 66 in 2023/24, this is a reduction of 19.6% (or 13) compared to last year's data.



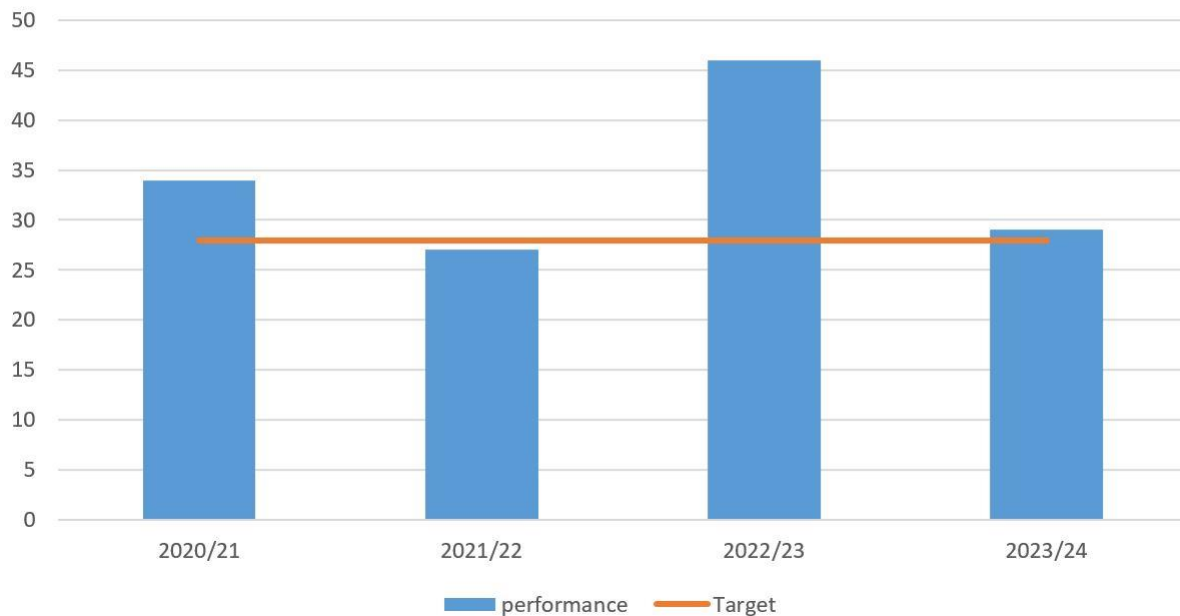
All road traffic collisions are reviewed at the RRRG which is chaired by the H&S Manager. The group, in conjunction with line management, determine the appropriate course of action for each incident, if required. This may result in support/development put in place for the individuals involved in the collisions. Mitigating factors such as responding under pressure, third party actions and driving conditions are always considered. This is with the aim of preventing further occurrence.



## Fire Appliance Hit Other Vehicle/Object Whilst Responding to Operational Incidents

MFRA fire appliances responded on 36,240 occasions to 17,354 incidents in 2023/24, with this activity deemed as the Services most risk critical driving category. The following figures relating to RTC's involving fire appliances should be read in the context of a 10% increase in appliance movements in this category. Although appliance movements have increased, collisions have significantly reduced by 36.94% (46 down to 29) during the year.

RR31		
Fire Appliance hit other Vehicle/Object whilst responding to Operational Incident		
Previous Year Performance	2023/24 Service Plan Target	2023/24
46	28	29



There were 29 collisions involving appliances responding under blue lights, a reduction of 17 on the previous year. This reduction is despite an overall 10% increase in appliance movements.

RRRG feedback, actions and support have contributed to this reduction, complementing improved communications on vehicle driving and training packages. Options such as parking sensors or improving vehicle visibility through marking are considered during meetings. The group continually seek to improve against this indicator and are investigating other teaching methods including visual aids/videos to support all learning styles.

When reviewing the 29 blue light collisions it was identified that the overwhelming trend for this LPI is moving forward under 10 mph, as 22 of the collisions (75%) were in this category. We had 4 collisions that occurred when travelling forward over 10 mph, 3 collisions occurred whilst moving forward with the speed unknown, due to CCTV reporting anomalies.

**MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**  
**Safety Flash**  
 9m Ladder - Retaining Bolt Failure

**A recent near miss has been reported:** During the morning check of an appliance it was noted that the black pin on the securing mechanism of the 9m ladder gantry was damaged (see photo below).



All stations are required to check the securing mechanisms on appliances, ensuring that the securing pins are free from defects. If any major concerns are found, please contact Transport/Workshops on extension 6750.

OIC's are requested to communicate this Safety Flash to crews, display on H&S Noticeboard and endorse the Risk Critical Handover Book when completed. **Please complete an email return to the Health & Safety Department to confirm checks have been carried out.**

Email: [HealthSafetyDept@merseysidefire.gov.uk](mailto:HealthSafetyDept@merseysidefire.gov.uk) Telephone: 011 236 4402

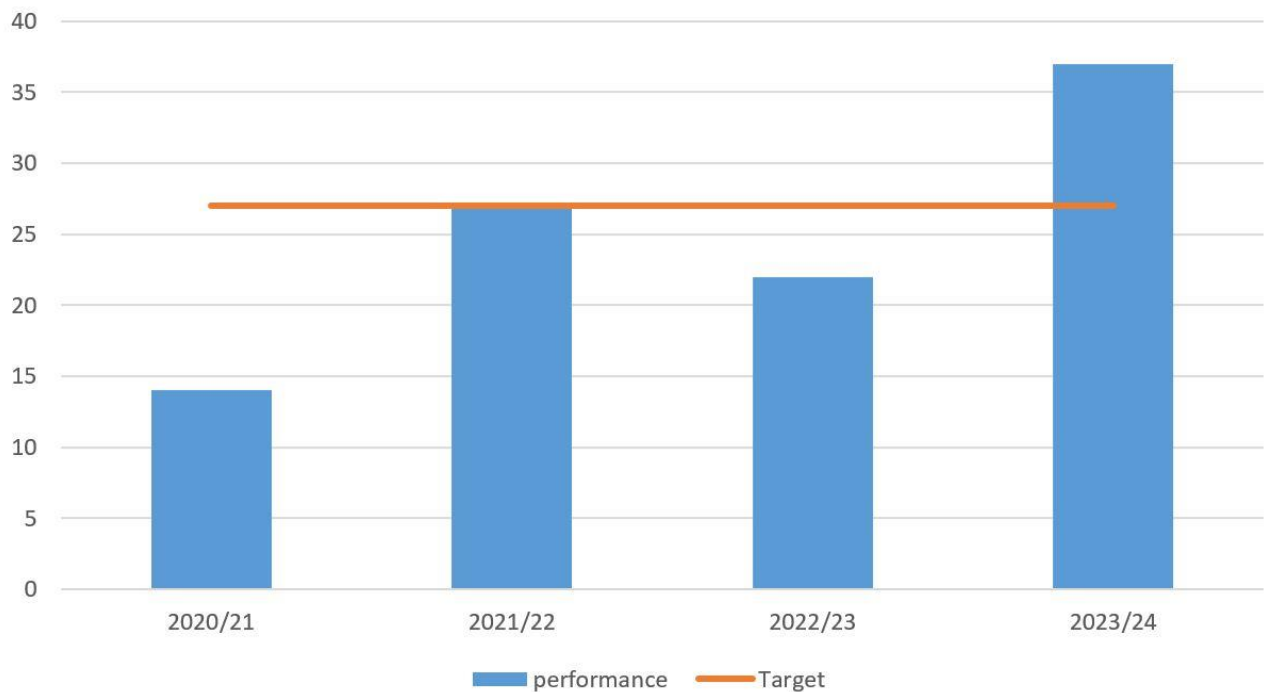
The Service introduced 23 newly qualified Emergency Fire Appliance Drivers (EFAD) in 2023/24.

Frequent communications from the Health and Safety department are circulated, highlighting the identified trends and areas of learning with the aim of reducing the number of incidents.

Station-based Station Managers (SM's) work closely with supervisory managers and staff to help educate and monitor Service drivers. Findings are discussed via monthly standardisation meetings and actioned through the RRRG. Improved working relationships and a culture of trust, support and education have been recognised as the key factor in reducing collisions. Staff are offered supportive goals and monitoring which will aim to reduce the causes of collisions while improving overall driving standards. This has been one of the primary objectives of the Health and Safety department and we are proud to report the overall reductions in collisions for the financial year.

## Fire Appliance Hit Other Vehicle/Object Whilst Engaged in Routine Activities

RR32		
Fire Appliance hit other Vehicle/Objects whilst engaged in Routine Activities		
Previous Year Performance	2023/24 Service Plan Target	2023/24
22	27	37

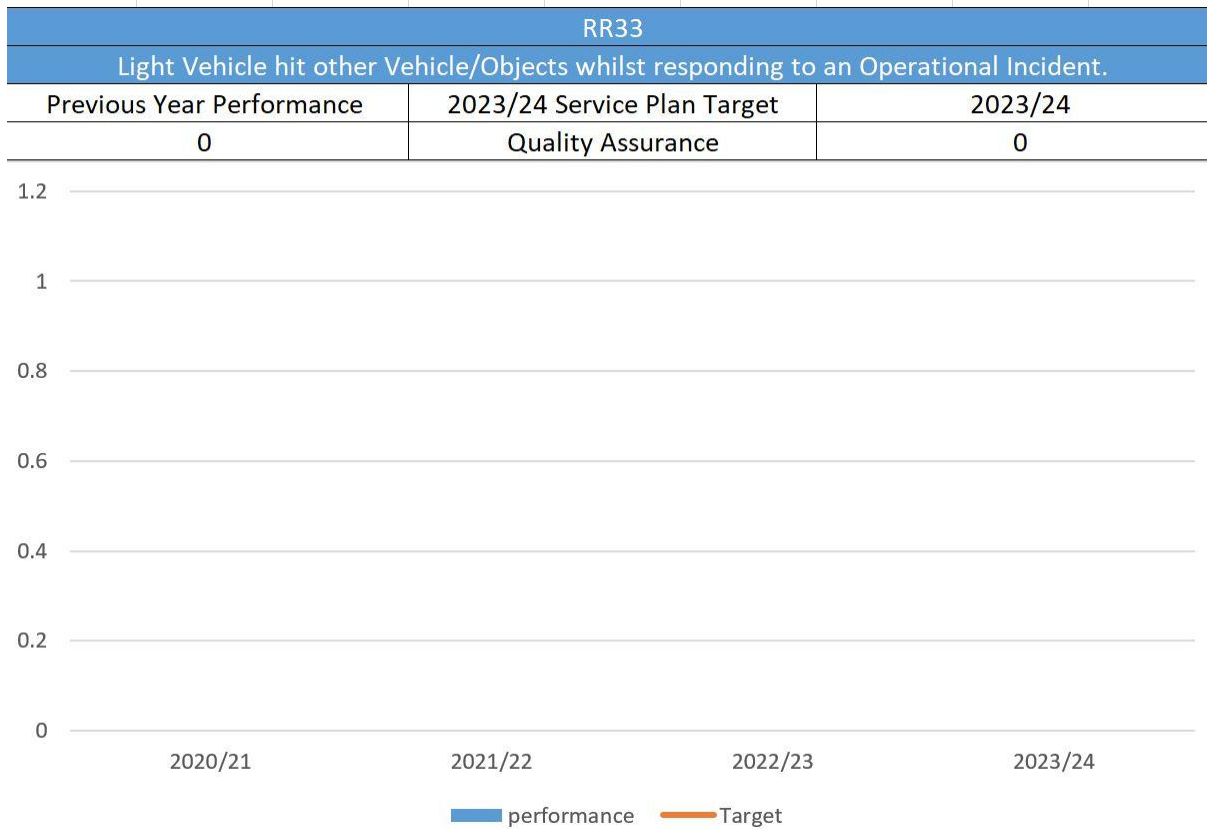


MFRA fire appliances were involved in 61,222 routine movements in 2023/24. The total number of appliance collisions whilst engaged in routine activities was 37. This is an increase of 15 in comparison to last year and 8 above the predicted target.

Similar to blue light collisions, the trend for this LPI is moving forward at a low speed with 22 (59%) of the collisions occurring under 10 mph whilst moving forward. The Service had 5 collisions, which occurred at speeds above 10 mph and 3 occurred whilst travelling forward at an unknown speed. The other 7 collisions all occurred whilst reversing under 10 mph. The RRRG review all incidents of collision for this indicator and provide support to line managers and drivers through support plans, progress reports and evidence supplied via the Health and Safety Management monitoring system.

The Service has progressed 38 new LGV drivers into the operational environment during the 2023/24 period. There is no significant indication that the new driver cohort have disproportionately contributed to the overall reported figure, as the collisions are spread in equal measures across drivers with a range of experience.

# Light Vehicle Hit Other Vehicle/Object Whilst Responding to Operational Incident



This category covers the blue light response by the Service in light vehicles, which is generally the Senior Officer group during emergency response activity. This category is not aligned to a target but is monitored for trends.

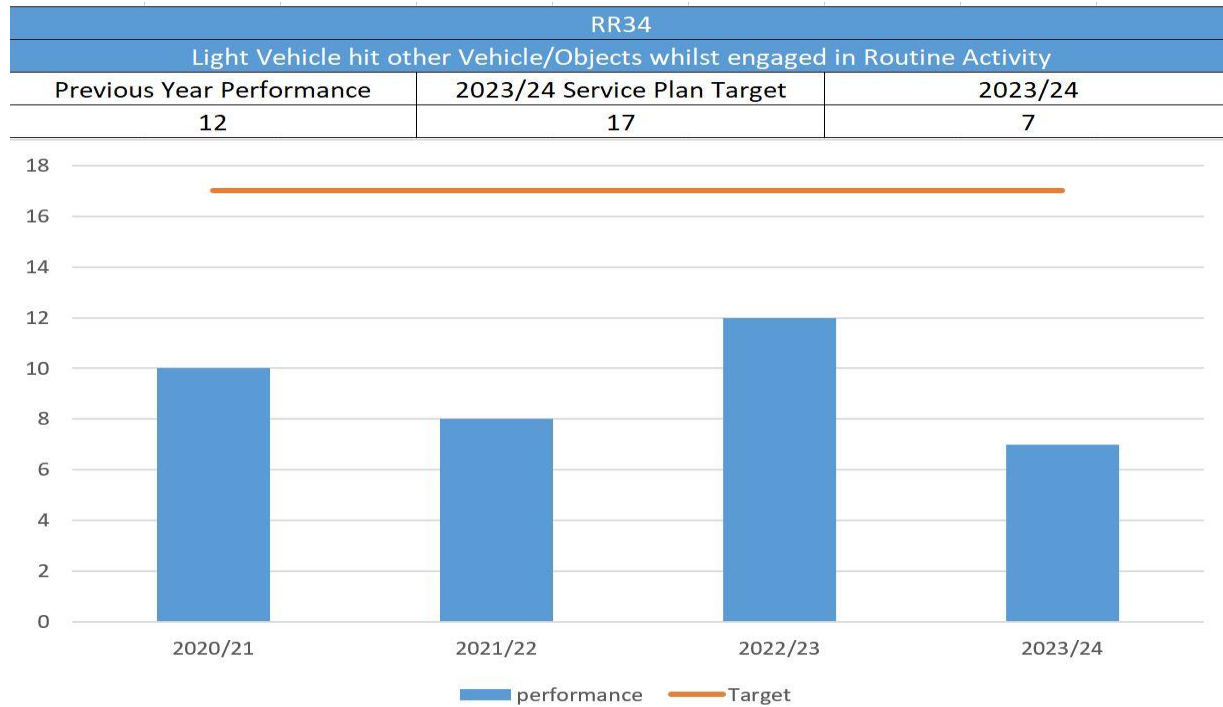


Senior Officers mobilised to operational incidents on 4,641 occasions in 2023/24. A 15% increase on last year and for the eighth

year in succession, there have been no collisions recorded in this category. All senior officers attend Emergency Light Vehicle Driving (ELVD) training refresher days once every two years.

## Light Vehicle Hit Other Vehicle/Object Whilst Engaged in Routine Activity

The number of vehicle collisions involving light fleet vehicles was 7, a decrease of 5 on the previous year.

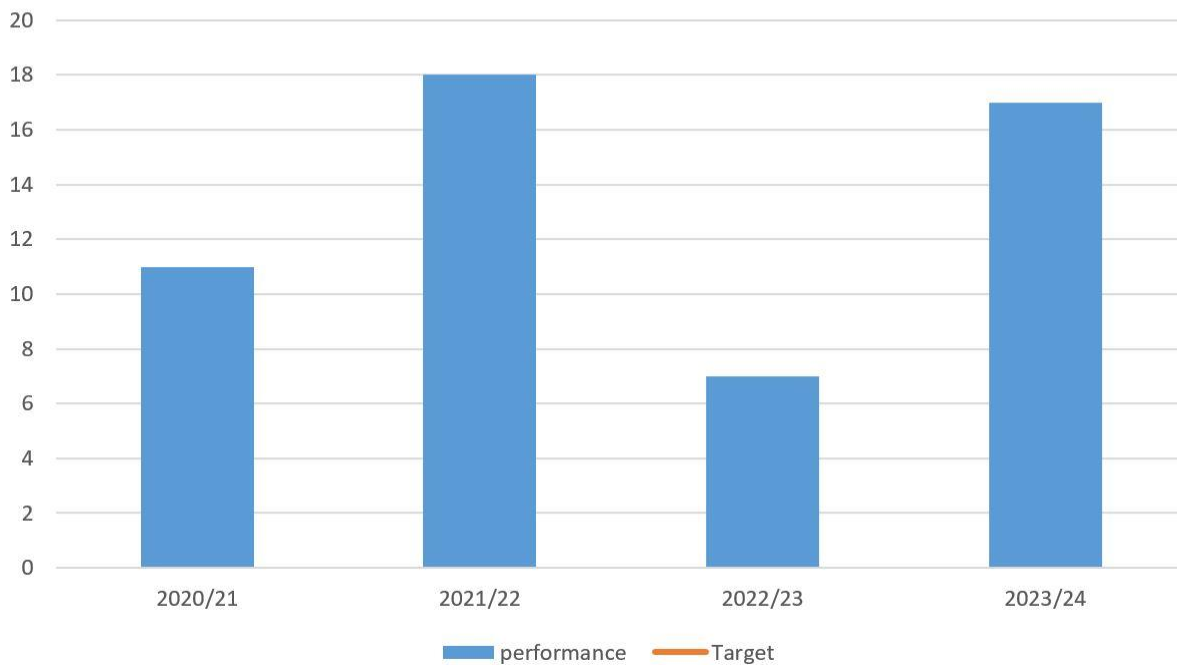


In analysing the data for trends, 3 of the 7 collisions (43%) occurred whilst moving forwards, while 4 (57%) occurred whilst reversing. All collisions in this category occurred at speeds below 10 mph. To qualify to drive a Service vehicle, staff must have a full and valid UK licence which is recorded via MFRS training driving school staff. In addition to training and validation, they must also complete Service medicals and be of sufficient capability to operate vehicles.

This category has been consistently under target for the previous 5 years.

## Other Vehicle Damage Caused Whilst Any Vehicle is Stationary during Response or Routine Activity

RR35		
Other Vehicle Damage Caused Whilst Any Vehicle is Stationary During Response or Routine Activity		
Previous Year Performance	2023/24 Service Plan Target	2023/24
7	Quality Assurance	17

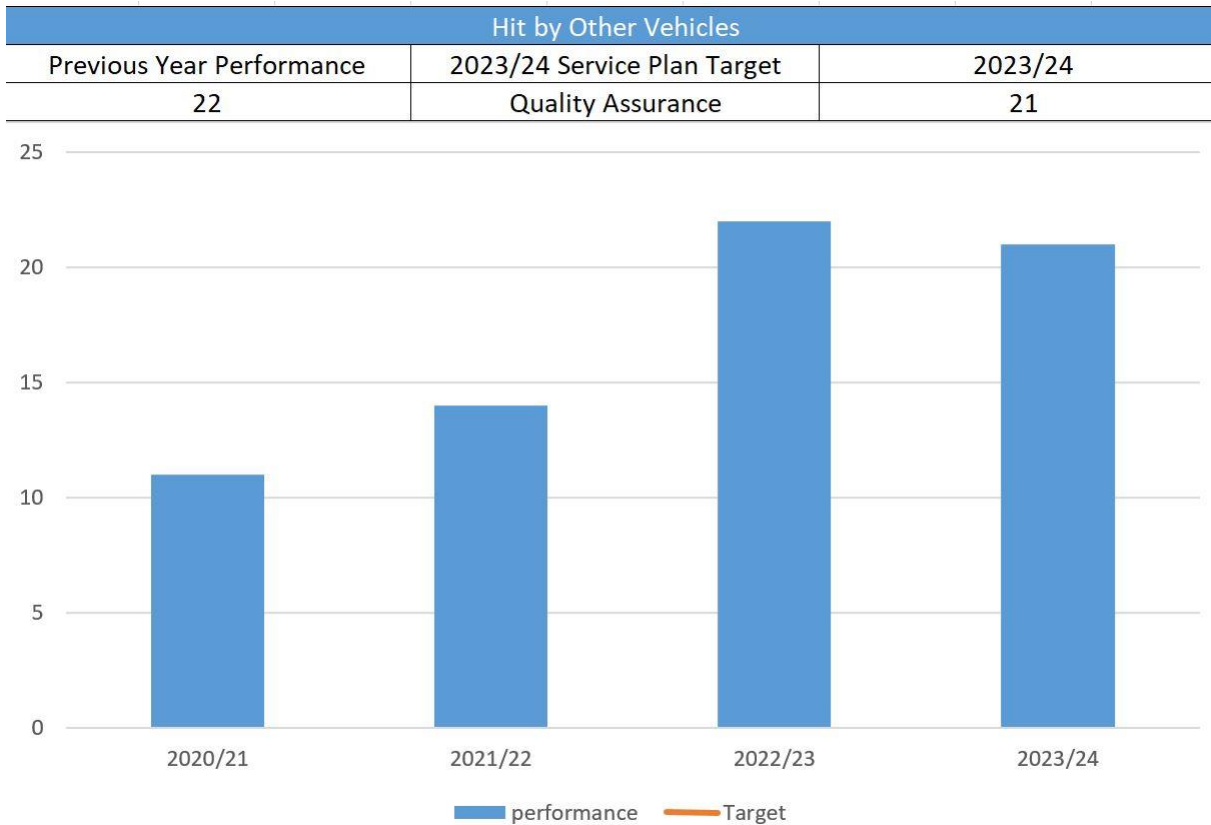


This category was introduced in April 2019 to capture vehicle damage which was not caused by a collision, for both fire appliances and light vehicles. This category is not given a target but is monitored for trends.

There have been 17 reports of vehicle damage whilst the vehicle is stationary during 2023/24. Investigative evidence such as Service or local CCTV, driver statements, logbooks and vehicle inspections are used to determine root causes where possible. Whilst often difficult to establish a cause, the H&S Department proactively investigate all vehicle damage.

This type of vehicle damage is often only picked up at the time of taking ownership of vehicle, when conducting an 'A' routine inspection or when the vehicle attends Workshops.

## Service Vehicle Hit by Other 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Vehicle



The RRRG monitors all collisions involving Service vehicles where a 3<sup>rd</sup> party has been at fault. There were 21 collisions during 2023/24 which is decrease of 1 from last year.

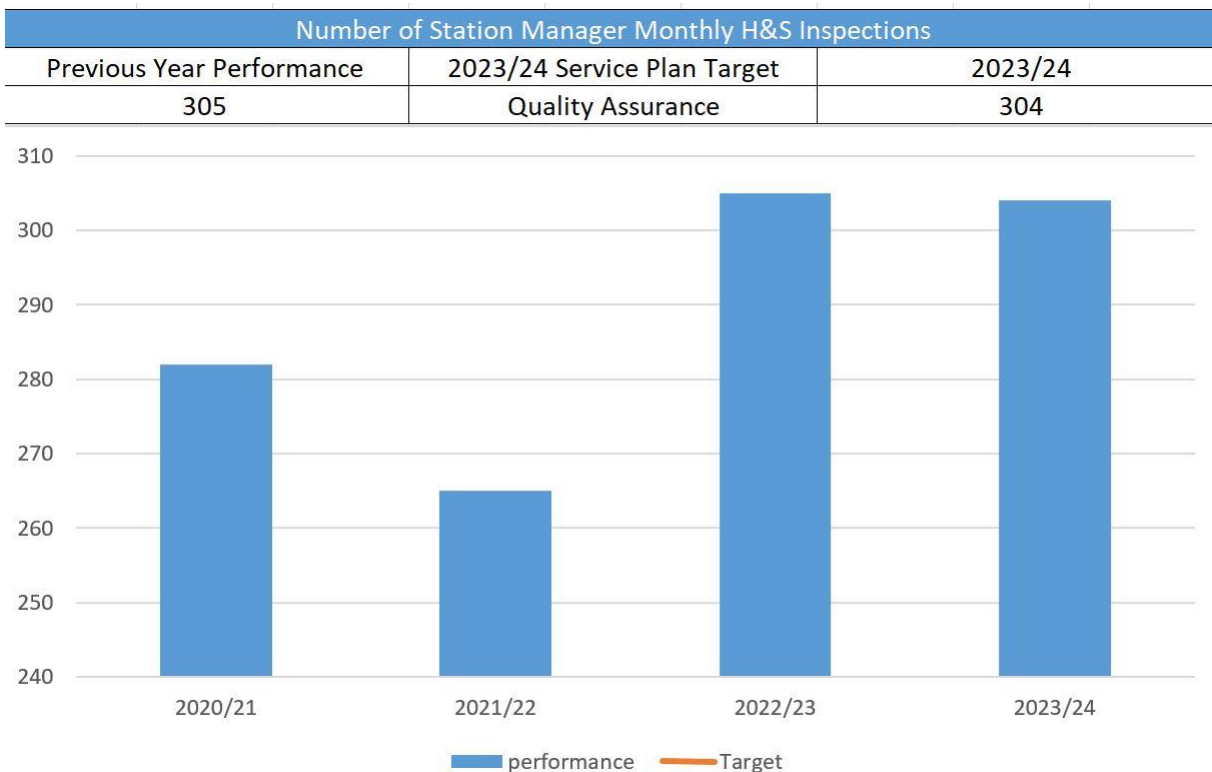
3<sup>rd</sup> party collisions are closely monitored by the H&S Department to ensure the welfare of staff members involved is looked after.

Collisions where a Service vehicle is hit by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party are discussed during each RRRG meeting.



## Number of Station Manager Monthly H&S Inspections

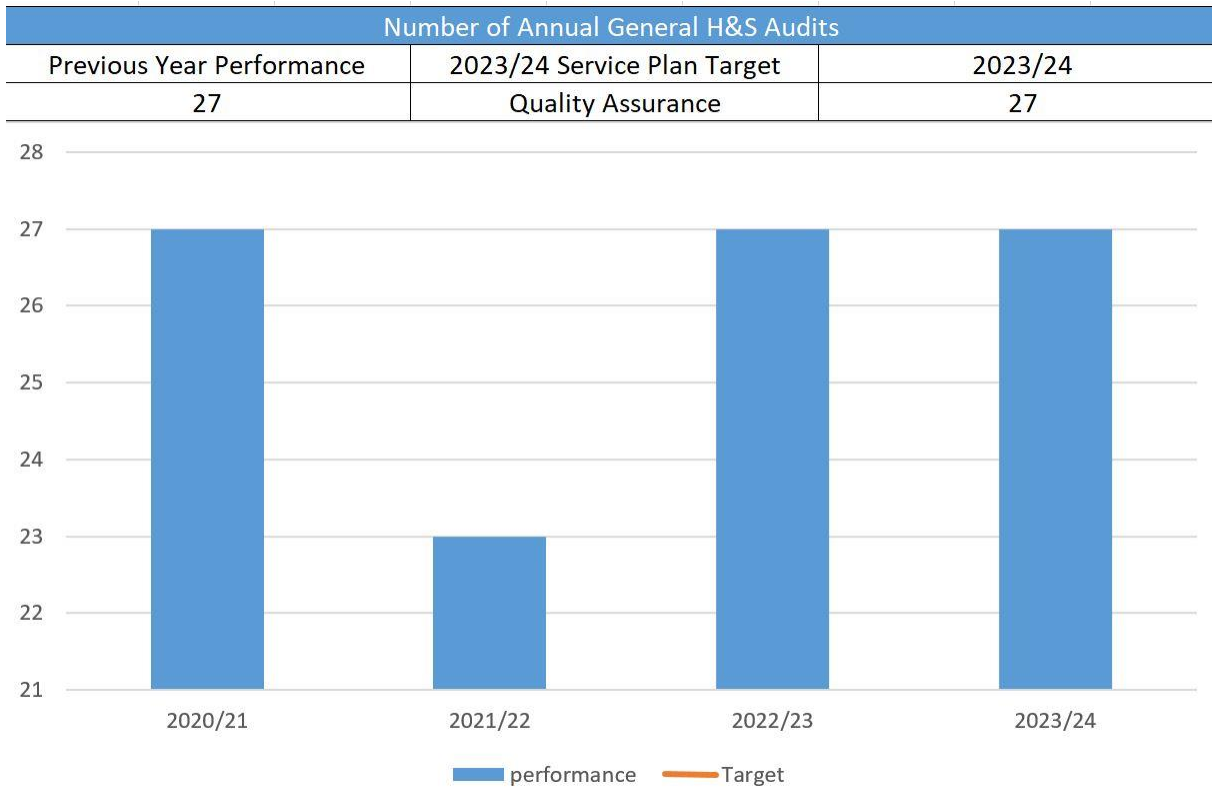
The Station Manager's Monthly Health & Safety Inspection monitors station records, operational readiness, station accommodation and preparedness of appliances and equipment. The Inspection is recorded as a management audit on the OSHENS software and monitored by the Health and Safety department. There is no target for this indicator it is quality assurance only.



For the period of 2023/24, there have been 304 Station Manager H&S Inspections. No significant trends were identified from the inspections. The fact that no significant trends were identified is a positive. However, it is important to continue with regular inspections to ensure that the required safety standards are maintained.

## Number of Annual General H&S Audits

The Health and Safety department have the responsibility of carrying out General H&S Audits annually across the 27 MFRS sites. All locations were audited in 2023/24. There is no target for this indicator it is quality assurance only.



Findings from all audits are logged through the normal fault reporting process to the relevant facilities management company and staff are encouraged to report issues with immediate safety implications through the OSHENS near miss/safety observation software. All findings are then considered and reported through the Workplace Review Group for discussion on a six-weekly basis.

## Welfare Performance

The Health and Safety department work closely in conjunction with Occupational Health to support the robust welfare arrangements that are in place for members of staff. MFRS staff operate in diverse roles and not only are required to maintain high levels of fitness but will occasionally be exposed to traumatic situations. Occupational Health provide mental and physical health support and have the expertise to refer staff to specialist care when appropriate. MFRS utilise Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) trained officers to defuse and debrief staff following operational exposure to traumatic or difficult experiences and can request further counselling through Occupational Health Services.

As an overview for the period 2023/24, MFRS have completed the following:

### Occupational Health Appointments:

There were a total of 2476 Occupational Health medical appointments undertaken in the financial year 2023-2024. These can be broken down into:

Health Screenings (Operational Staff)	132
LGV medicals	57
Driver Validation/Non-Uniform Health Screening	102
Early Intervention	322
Management Referrals	68
Uniformed pre-employments	39
Non uniformed pre-employments	70
Other (Long term sick review/Clinical Check/Other duties reviews etc)	1686
<b>Total medical appointments</b>	<b>2476</b>

Additionally, through Occupational Health, referrals for the following were made:

MRI/Scan Referrals	29
Physiotherapy appointments	487
Fitness Tests	421
Nutritionist appointments	73
Safety Glasses issued	9
Eyesight vouchers issued	3
Ill Health Retirements	3

As referenced above, the CISM mechanism has resulted in the following:

Critical Incidents (CI) declared	99
CI Defusing sessions	191
CI Debriefs (elevated support)	18

The Occupational Health team provide professionally trained counsellors. During 2023/24, the following sessions were provided by the staff below:

Kelly Patterson (Internal Counsellor)	221 appointments
Vicky Moore (External Counsellor)	187 appointments
Janine Unwin (External CBT)	174 appointments
<b>Total therapy appointments</b>	<b>582</b>

The welfare support offered by MFRA, contributes to overall staff wellbeing in the workplace and provides an encompassing level and range of services to ensure that the physical and mental health of employees is sustained.

## Reducing Exposure to Contaminants Project:

MFRA recognise the reported findings of recent years in relation to firefighting being deemed a “carcinogenic” risk. The Health and Safety department have a dedicated Station Manager project lead who has, in conjunction with the Health and Safety Manager, made significant progress in this area. Highlights of progress include:

- Specific decontamination measures for the incident ground and methods of safely containing and storing kit on return to station and prior to laundry.
- Enhanced education, products, and training on exposure to “fire effluents”, including self-care, hygiene, and improved discipline both at the incident and post incident, to remove surface products and reduce overall exposure.
- Signage, instruction, and education for contaminant identification.
- Enhanced Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) provision, in particular, an increase in flash hood supplies.
- Appliance cleaning routines with key understanding for staff.

The project is monitored through a strategic gap analysis in accordance with academic reports and NFCC guidance. The present gap analysis for MFRA is managed via the H&S team and project lead. Areas to explore for 2024/25 include:

- Zoning of fire stations, workshops and training facilities to further reduce any residual risk of exposure to contaminants by prohibiting internal wearing/use of fire kit.
- Training and competence packages for staff in accordance with local, regional and national guidance.
- Additional guidance for staff who may come into contact with fire kit/equipment but who do not fulfill operational roles.
- The design of a specific operational assurance programme to embed compliance of service policies and procedures in reducing potential exposure to contaminants.

We will continue to work with internal and external stakeholders including, Representative Bodies and the NFCC North West contaminants working group, in our response to reducing exposure. The North West region, as part of the NFCC project into contaminants will focus specifically on training and competence.

## A Look Forward to 2024/25

The Health and Safety department will use the findings of this report to continue to effectively manage performance and strengthen the positive H&S culture that already exists within the organisation.

We will:

- Look to further reduce the number of work-related accident & injuries, and any associated absence.
- Continue to maintain the positive culture of Near Miss reporting.
- Use an intelligence led approach and data analysis to help minimise appliance collisions, with a real focus on collisions during blue light response.
- Produce a Low-Speed Manoeuvre (LSM) video and associated mandatory Mersey Learn modules to increase awareness of responsibilities to raise standards.
- We will trial the use of parking sensors on a number of appliances based on 3 years of collision data.
- We will continue to engage and support H&S representatives at Service locations, and those of Trade Unions, to achieve Organisational and Departmental objectives and common H&S goals.
- Ensure learning identified through H&S related incidents is used to improve the safety of staff.
- Work closely with H&S practitioners through established NFCC Regional and National structures, ensuring shared learning and understanding of H&S matters.
- Implement Zoning Plans and signage on our Community Fire Stations to further reduce the potential exposure to contaminants.
- Ops Assurance will monitor compliance and adherence to policies and procedure for reducing exposure to fire contaminants.
- Work with colleagues from the Command Department to fully embed Command validations during Off Station Exercises.

Furthermore, and in line with the Operational Response Functional Plan, we will work to achieve in the following areas:

- **Reduce Exposure:** Continue our work on reducing firefighter contamination, enhancing our procedures to provide the most current information, instruction, and training for reducing exposure to firefighter contamination from toxic fire effluents. As a part of the NFCC North West Contaminants working group which reports to the North West Operational Resilience Committee, we will continue to work together with our North West regional colleagues in this area.
- **OSHENS System:** Review the functionality of the MFRS H&S management software system (OSHENS) to inform on long term suitability. In support of this we will, explore applications available for Health and Safety management to improve or replace the current Health and Safety recording system.
- **Subsurface Incidents:** Support our colleagues from Operational Preparedness to explore the expansion of our Operational Response to subsurface incidents.

Finally, the team will continue to deliver against the H&S commitments made within the Operational Response Functional Plan for 2024/25.



GM Ged Knock - Health and Safety Manager

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SM Kev Hollis - Health and Safety Team

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<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>25 FEBRUARY 2025</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/66/24</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>MONITORING OFFICER, RIA GROVES</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>MONITORING OFFICER, RIA GROVES</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>MONITORING OFFICER, RIA GROVES</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PLAN</b>		

<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>APPENDIX A: SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PLAN 2024-2025</b>
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### **Purpose of Report**

1. To request that Members review the proposed Scrutiny Forward Work Plan for 2024-2025.

### **Recommendation**

2. It is recommended that Members
  - a) note the current progress of the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan 2024-2025 to date and;
  - b) review the outstanding items on the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan.

### **Introduction and Background**

3. A draft Forward Work Plan was considered at the Scrutiny Committee on the 14th September 2023 and approved by the full Authority on the 12th October 2023.
4. At the meeting of the Authority in October 2023, it was agreed the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan would span the municipal year 2024-2025 due to the number of items contained in the Plan.
5. The current and approved Scrutiny Forward Work Plan is contained in appendix A.
6. Those items Members have been presented to scrutinise to date have been marked in blue on the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan.

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**Equality and Diversity Implications**

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7. There are no direct equality, diversity or inclusion implications for the proposed plan and no requirement for an equality impact assessment. However, the scrutiny topic itself will have an equality impact assessment or one will be drafted if necessary if the scrutiny topic is at inception stage.

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**Staff Implications**

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8. The Democratic Services team will work with Members and arrange meetings accordingly.

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**Legal Implications**

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9. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

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**Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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10. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

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**Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

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11. There are no direct implications arising out of this report. However, as the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan contains topics which may include actions taken by the Authority that can affect the Authority's risk management, health and safety and response to the environment, any potential impacts will be addressed within the relevant scrutiny topic as it is scrutinised.

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**Environmental Implications**

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12. There are no environmental implications arising from this report. However, as the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan contains topics which may include actions that can affect the environment, any potential impacts will be addressed within the relevant scrutiny topic as it is scrutinised.

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**Contribution to Our Vision: *To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.***

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Our Purpose: *Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.*

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13. The scrutiny of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Services actions contained on the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan, provides a transparent and accountable process.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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NONE

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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NONE



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**SCRUTINY FORWARD PLAN 2023-2025**

<b>Item</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION &amp;TYPE OF ACTION</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>Proposed Scrutiny Meeting</b>
Management of Contaminates	Scrutiny of the Authority’s management of contaminants and hazardous materials.	Response	TBC
Staff Sickness	A review of the impact of staff sickness over the last 3 years and how this is managed by MFRA.	POD	25 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
Employee work/life balance	Scrutiny of the Authority’s working practices which offer staff a greater work life balance (including hybrid and family friendly policies) and the impact they have for the Authority to become an employer of choice when tackling retention, recruitment and development of staff.	POD	25 <sup>th</sup> April 2024
Enforcement and Prosecution Action	Scrutiny of the Authority’s prosecution and enforcement powers and how they are used.	Protection	10 <sup>th</sup> April 2025
Culture, Inclusivity and Behaviours	Scrutiny of how the Authority has progressed in development of culture and inclusivity over the past two years and how it plans to progress it in the future.	POD	23 <sup>rd</sup> July 2024
The environment and the impact on MFRS’s operational response (broken down into smaller topics through the two years)	A review of how environmental changes and developments are impacting the Authority in terms of wildfires, alternative fuels, the fleet management, pathway to net zero and flooding.	Response Preparedness Estates SLT	Operational response to Wildfires – 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 Update on Pathway to Net Zero including Fleet Management – TBC Alternative Fuels - TBC Operational response to flooding - TBC

Actions from Staff Survey and Preparation for 2024	Scrutiny of the actions undertaken from the 2022 Staff Survey and preparation for the staff survey in 2024.	S&P	25 <sup>th</sup> April 2024
Protections adaptation to new legislation and the response to and actions from the Grenfell Tower and Manchester Enquiry	Scrutiny of the Authority's response to new legislation resulting from Grenfell Tower and the Manchester Enquiry with a focus on the actions arising and how they are implemented.	Response	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2025

*Standing Items:*

Health and Safety

Forward Work Plan