

# Public Document Pack



**To: All Members of the Scrutiny Committee**

**R. Groves  
Monitoring Officer**

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Our ref AK/RG

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Dear all,

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **1.00pm** on **TUESDAY, 22ND JULY 2025** in the Liverpool Suite at Fire Service Headquarters, Bridle Road, Bootle.

This meeting is webcast live to YouTube and is available at the following link:

<https://youtube.com/live/G27IJZ-pYIU?feature=share>

Yours faithfully,

*PP – A Kirby*

Monitoring Officer

Encl.

# **MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**22 JULY 2025**

### **AGENDA**

#### **Members**

Councillor Edna Finneran (Chair)  
Councillor Jeanette Banks  
Councillor Dave Hanratty  
Councillor Sam Gorst  
Councillor Doreen Knight  
Councillor Andrew Makinson  
Councillor Kieran Murphy  
Councillor Mike Sullivan  
Councillor Heather Westhead  
Co-opted Member, Anthony Boyle

**1. Apologies**

To consider any apologies for absence.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

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

**3. Minutes of the Last Meeting (Pages 3 - 8)**

To consider the minutes of the last meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

**4. Pathway to Net Zero - Fleet (Pages 9 - 12)**

To consider the report relating to Pathway to Net Zero – Fleet (CFO/03/2526).

**5. Annual Health, Safety and Welfare Report 2024/25 (Pages 13 - 54)**

To consider the Annual Health, Safety and Welfare Report 2024/25 (CFO/04/2526).

**6. Scrutiny Forward Work Plan 2025-2026 (Pages 55 - 58)**

To consider the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan 2025-2026 (MO/11/2526).

## **MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

### **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**10 APRIL 2025**

### **MINUTES**

**Present:** **Councillors Edna Finneran (Chair)**, Tracy Dickinson, Gillian Wood, Dave Hanratty, Jan Grace (substitute) and Andrew Makinson.

<b>In Attendance:</b>	Deputy Chief Fire Officer	Dave Mottram
	Monitoring Officer	Ria Groves
	Head of Finance	James Campbell

**34. Apologies**

Apologies received from Councillors Sam Gorst, Ed Lamb, Jeanie Bell, Doreen Knight and Co-opted Member, Mr Anthony Boyle. Councillor Jan Grace attended as a substitute for Councillor Jeanie Bell.

**35. Declarations of Interest**

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

**36. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025 be agreed as an accurate record.

**37. MFRS' Operational Response To Flood**

Group Manager, Chris Barrett, delivered a presentation on Flood Rescue, explaining that flooding could be categorised into different events including fluvial, pluvial and coastal. It was advised that fluvial flooding happened when rivers overflowed due to heavy rainfall or snowmelt and Merseyside wasn't affected by this. Pluvial flooding was a sudden and intense flood cause by heavy rainfall in a short period, often in urban areas or near dry riverbeds. Members were advised that this was something Merseyside could suffer from in the future. Merseyside had been affected by coastal flooding in the past and it was likely to happen again in the future. This was when ocean water surged onto land due to storms or high tides.

It was noted that global warming could lead to flooding due to melting ice and rising sea levels, more extreme weather such as storms, changing rainfall patterns and warming oceans.

Members were shown some images of recent flooding events in 2024/25 that affected the country which were mainly due to rivers bursting. This wasn't an area of great concern for Merseyside, however, it could affect the area in the

future so being aware was vital. A video was also shown to Members to demonstrate how quickly flooding could occur, along with pictures from local floods that MFRS attended.

Councillor Jan Grace commented on how dirty the water was during a flood. Chris explained that the overflowing drainage resulted in raw sewage entering people's homes and businesses. It usually took around six months for residents to return to their homes.

Members were reassured that all MFRS staff were trained to a minimum standard of still water rescue to give them the skills to respond to water and flood incidents with appropriate PPE. Furthermore, the Search and Rescue Team (SRT) provided a specialist response and could work in and around moving water using specialist rescue equipment and techniques. It was noted that there were 80 trained SRT staff at Aintree and Kirkdale Fire Stations. Councillor Dave Hanratty queried how a national emergency, with some staff being deployed, would affect the Service's local team. Chris Barrett reassured Members that this would not be an issue, as the retained recall to duty system allowed for the deployment of 15 additional staff to provide coverage.

Chris advised Members that the UK Fire Service played a crucial role in responding to flooding nationally, working alongside other emergency services such as the police, ambulance and local authorities. It was acknowledged that the Service had two 'Type B' flood teams registered on the Flood Rescue National Asset Register which were made up from specialist trained SRT staff. The 'Type B' team was a powered boat where all team members were trained Swift Water Technicians and Rescue Boat Operators. It was noted that the Service had been deployed nationally to a number of areas.

It was explained that the Service also helped with flood response internationally, with six staff members being deployed to Malawi in 2023, with 358 rescues taking place. Chris noted that relief aid was also delivered during this time and two of the Service's boats were donated to Malawi.

Councillor Andrew Makinson raised concerns about the incident in 2024 that lead to two fatalities and noted that this area had been a problem for many years with flooding. He queried whether there was a way of feeding back any recommendations to prevent any further fatalities. Members were advised that the Merseyside Resilience Forum was where foreseeable risk was reviewed, with flooding being a major future risk. The Authority's Operational Preparedness Team held the responsibility for looking at foreseeable risk which was where those recommendations were reviewed and agreed. Chris added that work would also be done with Local Authorities if flooding incidents were to happen in the same area on a regular basis to see what issues could be resolved. It was noted that since the tragic incident took place, a level crossing had been put in place to stop entry.

Councillor Dave Hanratty mentioned the need to look into the patterns of the locations where similar incidents had arisen over the last five years. From this, he commented that it was crucial to collaborate with partners to identify the issues and determine potential solutions. Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Dave

Mottram, advised that the Local Resilience Forum operated under the Civil Contingencies Act. When a risk affected more than one partner in Merseyside, there was a requirement for category one responders and blue light responders to collaborate to train and prepare for the situation.

It was raised by Councillor Dave Hanratty whether the Authority could influence the work done with the National Fire Chiefs Council, expressing concerns about unclear legislation regarding the responsibilities of Fire and Rescue Services. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer acknowledged that there was no statutory obligation to respond to floods, which had been an ongoing discussion with Fire and the NFCC. He also emphasised that staff would continue to respond to flooding incidents, addressing the risks in Merseyside and beyond to assist the public.

Councillor Dave Hanratty asked if the Service was confident that all equipment was efficient and up to date. Chris Barrett confirmed that he was satisfied, highlighting that four new boats and engines were purchased last year – two were immediately available, and two were used for training.

Councillor Jan Grace observed that it was the first time she had seen Seaforth or Litherland flooded and asked how much notice the Met Office could provide for such events. Chris Barrett explained that the Met Office provided excellent warning, identifying areas at risk of flooding and predicting when it could occur. This information was then shared with Senior Officers and stations to help them prepare for the timing and locations of potential floods.

It was asked by Councillor Gill Wood whether the Fire and Rescue Service was involved in planning discussions about the potential impact of new housing developments on flooding in green spaces. She also inquired if the Fire Service could help to keep residents informed about safety measures. Chris responded that the Service was notified from a protection perspective, , however, the Authority as a whole was not consulted about the potential flooding risks of new housing projects. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer added that as part of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), prevention advice would extend beyond home fire safety, including guidance for residents in flood-prone areas on what actions to take.

The Chair thanked Chris Barrett for his presentation and the amazing job that the Fire Service had done.

**RESOLVED** that;

- a) the Flood capability in MFRS, as contained within Flood presentation be noted; and
- b) the approached adopted be scrutinised.

### **38. Alternative Fuels and Energy Systems**

Officer, John O'Boyle, took the Members through his presentation acknowledging that alternative fuels were energy sources used to power vehicles and machinery that differed from traditional fossil fuels like petrol and diesel, including electricity biofuels, hydrogen and natural gas. Other alternative fuels were propane, methanol, synthetic fuels and ammonia. John explained that the biggest challenge would be determining which technology would prevail – whether it would be lithium-ion batteries in electric vehicles or hybrid vehicles.

Members were informed of the work John had carried out, including a review of current Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), the revision of eLearning modules, the development of a training package for operational crews, and support in creating command assessments for Crew, Watch, and Station Managers.

It was acknowledged that there had been a rise in e-bike and e-scooter-related domestic fires, resulting in three fatalities since 2023. Members were reassured that the Authority was actively engaged in national efforts to educate the public and promote safety.

It was noted that as part of Home Fire Safety Checks, prevention staff were having conversations with the public to raise awareness of this. As part of a national campaign from the NFCC, the prevention team included questions in their checks to identify households with e-bikes or e-scooters, aiming to pinpoint areas of potential risk.

In order to keep firefighters safe, training had taken place at the Training and Development Academy (TDA), including an electric vehicle event in an underground structure and a session plan had been devised. Fire blankets had been made available to operational crews, and EV Battery Isolators were now part of the SRT and Operational Equipment Team. There has been a demonstration of an Ultra High-Pressure Lance to Senior Officers, which showed benefits for dealing with fires. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the system injected small particulates into the water jet and allowed it to act like a drill to pierce through the casing material to reach the battery. This approach aimed to cool the battery and interrupt the chemical reaction; however, it is difficult to identify which individual battery cell, out of possibly thousands, was in thermal runaway.

John O'Boyle highlighted the development of other vehicles across the region including the deployment of hydrogen-powered buses across the Liverpool City Region and hybrid electric buses throughout Merseyside.

John O'Boyle stated the critical need to educate the public about the dangers of discarding lithium-ion batteries in household waste bins. He also informed Members that efforts were underway to advocate for standardised regulations concerning lithium-ion batteries, aiming to enhance safety and ensure consistent practices across the sector.

It was noted that the NFCC were expected to provide a position statement on Fire Safety Risks in Energy Technology on behalf of the sector. This would first be needed to be reviewed by the sector with the aim of achieving an agreed position. Councillor Dave Hanratty advised that he met with the Electrical Safety First Campaign and expressed his support for their campaign. He proposed that the entire Authority support this campaign to advocate for the implementation of appropriate legislation. He also inquired whether the NFCC report could be presented at the next Authority Meeting. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer assured Members that the report could be shared once feedback had been provided to the NFCC and the position statement was finalised, emphasising the urgency of establishing safety requirements promptly.

Councillor Dave Hanratty commented that the government was pushing e-bikes, e-cars and e-scooters to be the future without thinking of the ramifications that the infrastructure and safety measures were not yet in place. He raised concerns around not knowing the impact of exposing firefighters to toxic fumes. It was acknowledged by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer how quick technology and alternative fuels were progressing, which was a new risk moving forward; however, he assured Members that the firefighters' safety remained the Authority's priority. He emphasised that the Authority was taking this very seriously to ensure that the risk firefighters were exposed to was minimal.

It was raised by Councillor Dave Hanratty the concern about the safety of elderly residents in care homes who stored multiple mobility scooters together in rooms whilst charging. He highlighted the risk that if one scooter caught fire, they could all catch fire, endangering residents. He advocated for educating both residents and landlords about this hazard. John responded that as part of the Sheltered Accommodation Programme, advice was provided to the Responsible Person regarding the risks associated with storing mobility scooters.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer noted that the prevention advice given to residents could be shared with Members and the Scrutiny Committee. He highlighted the importance of training staff to assess each incident individually and make informed decisions based on the specific circumstances. Members were reassured that the Authority's firefighters were exceptional and dealt with incidents with the utmost safety and professionalism.

It was queried by Councillor Gill Wood what the life span of batteries was and the subsequent management of these batteries once they were no longer suitable for vehicle use. John advised that the longevity of a car EV battery was around ten years and then they would be repurposed for less demanding applications.

Councillor Dave Hanratty asked that the NFCC report once finalised be brought to the Authority as a recommendation. This was seconded by Councillor Gill Wood.

**RESOLVED** that;

- a) the contents of the report and accompanying presentation be noted; and

- b) the NFC report be shared with Members at Authority once finalised.

### **39. Scrutiny Forward Work Plan**

Monitoring Officer, Ria Groves introduced the report, noting that Members were aware that the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan (SFWP) was a standard item on the Scrutiny Committee, and this was the final meeting of this municipal year. Members noted that the Forward Work Plan was on page 25 of the agenda and all items highlighted in blue had been scrutinised throughout the year. Ria Groves advised that there were three outstanding items yet to cover and she proposed that these be carried forward into the next year. It was acknowledged that Ria had a list of areas that Members had wished to propose for the next Scrutiny Forward Work Plan such as attendance times and staff survey.

It was reported that a Scrutiny Workshop would be arranged for July for Scrutiny Members to discuss items to put forward for the next SFWP. This would then be put forward to the Committee for sign off at the beginning of the next municipal year.

**RESOLVED** that;

- a) the current progress of the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan 2024-2025 to date be noted; and
- b) the outstanding items on the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan be reviewed.

Close

Date of next meeting Tuesday, 22 July 2025.



MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	SCRUTINY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	22 JULY 2025	REPORT NO:	CFO/03/2526
PRESENTING OFFICER	ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, GED SHERIDAN		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	AREA MANAGER, DAVE WATSON	REPORT AUTHOR:	TRANSPORT MANAGER, DAVE SEASMAN
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	AREA MANAGER DAVE WATSON, STEWART WOODS		
TITLE OF REPORT:	PATHWAY TO NET ZERO - FLEET		
APPENDICES:	NONE		

## Purpose of Report

1. To update Members on the forward work plan in relation to Pathway to Net Zero for the service fleet

## Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members note the progress so far and the future intent for fleet vehicles

## Introduction and Background

3. As part of the governments “Reducing Emissions from Road Transport: Road to Zero Strategy”, the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles will cease in 2035. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (“the Authority”) is committed to long term fleet sustainability. In line with this, there is a need to look into the feasibility of reducing the ancillary fleet size and also looking at ways to increase the operational efficiency of the current ancillary fleet.
4. The long-term aim is for the Authority’s ancillary fleet to move to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) in a practical and financially sustainable way. This can be developed over the coming years gradually integrating the vehicles into the Service’s fleet in line with the 5-year Transport Asset Management Plan.

## Progress and Intent

5. The Authority have made the initial steps in reducing tail pipe emissions within the ancillary fleet, by introducing seven, 48-volt, mild diesel/hybrid flexi duty vehicles in 2020. This type of Hybrid can reduce Co2 emissions by up to 15%.

6. In 2024, as part of the 5-year vehicle replacement programme, the Service procured 15 Petrol Hybrid cars for use by the Flexi duty officers, with a further 7 petrol hybrids to be ordered in financial year 2025/2026. These vehicles will significantly reduce emission levels.
7. 2026 will see the introduction of 19 plug-in hybrid electric vehicles or full electric vehicles to the fleet, increasing the number of low emission vehicles to 47.
8. The Estates Department are working towards the introduction of electric charging points throughout the Service's sites. This will facilitate the future introduction of Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs) and Plug in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEVs) into the fleet. BEVs and PHEVs will be gradually introduced and are initially best suited to non-response related roles within departments.
9. Further reductions in fleet are being explored that will assist in the transition to low emission vehicles. This will include:
  - Protection vehicles
  - Prevention vehicles
  - Headquarters departmental vehicles
  - Youth Engagement vehicles
  - Vesty Road vehicles
10. Any vehicle identified for removal from the fleet will either be removed from the capital replacement programme, or its replacement cost used to assist in the move to ULEVs.
11. Currently the cost of BEVs is significantly more expensive than a comparable diesel vehicle. A petrol PHEV is slightly better but still more expensive than its diesel counterpart.
12. The purchase of petrol self-charging hybrids was a preferable option as the cost is comparable to a diesel and will continue the move to a greener fleet, albeit at a more incremental pace.
13. In respect of operational appliances, the emergence of electric vehicle heavy fleet is still in its infancy. The Authority's Transport Manager continues to monitor the market and developments in heavy vehicle capability, through the Transport Officers Group.
14. Technology to advance the driving range, the life of electric vehicle batteries and the performance of vehicles is improving all the time. These vehicles are, however, significantly more expensive to purchase at present and charging infrastructure needs to be implemented before the Authority can move forward.
15. Developments are being made in the fire appliance market with two suppliers developing fully electric B type fire appliances. At present, these are expensive in comparison to their diesel equivalents (2-3 times more expensive).

16. Continued investment will be required to achieve the 2035 targets set out by the Government. Investment is needed in the vehicle capital refresh programme for the ancillary fleet of cars, vans and pumping appliances. Additional investment within the Estates Department will be needed, for the phased implementation of the necessary infrastructure and facilities to charge vehicles at locations across the Authority's estate.
17. All vehicles registered after 1st January 2015 within the Authority fleet must meet Euro 6 emission standards. The appliances purchased over recent years by the Authority have an integrated Euro 6 silencer which contains a full-flow particulate filter which features continuous regeneration and two parallel SCR catalysts with a unique high-precision Adblue dosage system.

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#### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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18. There are no equality and diversity implications in the plan.

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#### **Staff Implications**

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19. There are no staff implications in the plan.

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#### **Legal Implications**

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20. The move to ULEVs is in line with the Governments Road to Zero Strategy and the 2035 legislation regarding the sale of petrol and diesel vehicles.

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

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21. The funding for these vehicles is captured in the current 5-year Transport capital programme.
22. Due to the nature of petrol-hybrids, the eventual increased driving on full electric, along with the cost of petrol being cheaper than Diesel, the day-to-day running cost is greatly reduced.

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#### **Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

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23. Continued risk analysis of alternative fuel technology will be undertaken throughout replacement programme.

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#### **Environmental Implications**

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24. The move to alternative fuelled vehicles will help reduce the carbon footprint of the Service and directly contributes to the Authority's target of achieving Net Zero by 2040.

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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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25. The move to ULEVs will assist our staff utilising the most modern and up to date technology on the market and in turn help deliver the most efficient service to our communities.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**NONE**

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	SCRUTINY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	22 JULY 2025	REPORT NO:	CFO/04/2526
PRESENTING OFFICER	ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, GED SHERIDAN		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	AREA MANAGER, CHRIS BARRETT	REPORT AUTHOR:	GROUP MANAGER, CRAIG WHITFIELD
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	HEALTH & SAFETY, STRATEGY & PERFORMANCE, LEGAL SERVICES, HS&W COMMITTEE, STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM		
TITLE OF REPORT:	ANNUAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE REPORT 2024/25		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A	Annual Health, Safety & Welfare Report 2024/25
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## Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members note and scrutinise the content 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 2024/25.

## Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members note the performance related contents of the report which highlights the positive progress and safety culture within MFRS. This may be compared to the previous year's report.

## 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. The Authority's HS&W Committee meet on a quarterly basis, and membership includes a Principal Officer Chair (ACFO Sheridan), representative bodies, senior managers, department heads and a member 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 Review Group, Road Risk review Group 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 Authority's 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, training, Prevention, Protection and Response activity remains high which is referred to in the main report.
8. A brief overview of the 2024/25 LPI performance for Members to note is contained in the following sections.

### 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	38	G
WR33	21	12	G
WR34	12	9	G
WR22	22	17	G

- ii. All operational staff injuries: (WR13)

There were 38 injuries to operational staff during 2024/25, a reduction of 1 from the previous year. 16 of the 38 recordings (42%) were attributed to sprains/strains, identified as the most common injury.

- iii. Injuries at operational incidents (WR33)

MFRS attended 17,798 operational incidents in 2024/25, which was supported by 33,273 appliance movements.

12 injuries occurred at incidents, the same as the previous year. Of the 12 injured, 4 staff members went off duty however, 2 returned within 7 days and the remaining 2 also returned to work following longer term sickness periods.

The total duty days lost for operational staff incurring injuries whilst at incidents was 62 days: a decrease of 138 on the previous year.

- iv. Injuries at risk critical training (WR34)

In 2024/25, examples of training undertaken included 164 core training courses, 251 realistic training / exercising events which is 14 more than the previous year and included 100 multi pump exercises. MFRS also welcomed 28 Apprentice firefighters.

9 individuals were injured during risk critical training which is an increase of 2 on the previous year. 3 subsequently went off duty and booked sick.

It should be noted that core training courses were down on the previous year due to the opening of the new Training and Development Academy at Long Lane which required a transition period from the old Storrington Avenue site.

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

There was a total of 17 injuries recorded during routine activity which is a decrease of 3 from the previous year and remains 5 under the LPI target of 22.

Of the 17 individuals who were injured, 10 remained on duty highlighting that their injuries were minor in nature. 7 individuals went off duty resulting in 152 duty days lost. This is mainly attributed to long term absence (>28 days).

vi. Non-operational staff injuries (WR32)

There was a total of 7 non-operational staff injuries in 2024/25, which is a reduction of 3 on the previous year. Of the 7 injuries, 1 staff member went off duty due to a sprain injury. 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 2024/25, same as the previous year. 8 'Minor' injuries were reported to the HSE, an increase of 1 from the previous year. The injuries were:

- 5 sprain/strain injuries
- 2 bruising
- 1 pain only

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

9. 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.

### **Dangerous Occurrence**

There was one Dangerous Occurrence recorded which occurred during the wearing of Breathing Apparatus (BA) at an Operational Incident. No injuries were incurred in relation to this event. The cause has been investigated and this was

due to debris within the mask which led to the BA defaulting to the free flowing of air (as per its designed safety feature). The BA wearer did not lose air pressure and left the building safely.

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

MFRA fleet vehicles have covered well in excess of 1 million miles during 2024/25. 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	60	G
RR31	30	29	G
RR32	27	27	G
RR33	Quality Assurance	0	G
RR34	17	4	G
RR35	Quality Assurance	5	G
HBOV	Quality Assurance	15	G

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

RTC's involving all types of Service vehicles was 60, a reduction of 6 on the previous year and 12 below the LPI target.

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

MFRA fire appliances responded on 33,273 occasions in 2024/25 to 17,798 incidents. This driving activity is deemed as the Services most risk critical category.

There were 29 collisions involving appliances responding under blue lights, the same as the previous year and 1 below target.

The trend for this LPI was moving forward under 10mph with 17 (58%) of the 29 collisions being in this category.

The Service has progressed 53 new EFAD qualified drivers during 2024/25.

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

MFRA appliances were involved in 63,540 routine movements in 2024/25. This is 2,318 more movements than the previous year.

The total number of appliance collisions whilst engaged in routine activities decreased by 10 to 27 from the previous year. This is in line with the predicted



target. For the upcoming year, H&S will focus on trialling parking sensors, introduce training videos / packages and conduct assurance by audit of reversing and low speed procedures.

The trend for this LPI was moving forward at low speed (<10mph) with 19 (70%) of the 27 incidents falling into this category.

The Service has progressed 48 new LGV drivers into the operational environment during 2024/25. There is no direct correlation between newly qualified drivers and RTC's.

v. Collisions involving light vehicles (RR33 & RR34)

There were 4 light vehicle collisions, a reduction of 3 (75%) on the previous year and 13 below the target of 17.

In analysing the data for trends, 1 of the 4 collisions occurred whilst moving forward (<10mph), and 3 whilst reversing (<10mph).

Collisions involving light vehicles whilst responding e.g. Senior Officer / specialist response, remained at 0 for another 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 reduced since 2023/24 by 12 occurrences to 5. HBOV has reduced by 6 to 15 since 2023/24.

### **Near miss reporting (WR31)**

123 near miss reports / safety observations were recorded for 2024/25, a small decrease from the previous year of 148. The near miss reporting still reflects:

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

### **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 2024/25, MFRS have completed the following:

#### Occupational Health Appointments

• Health Screenings	149
• LGV medicals	34
• Early Intervention	248
• Management Referrals	84
• Uniformed pre-employments	72
• Non uniformed pre-employments	51
• Other (Long term sick review/Clinical Check/Other duties reviews etc.)	1149
• <b>Total medical appointments</b>	<b>1787</b>

Other referrals include:

• MRI/Scan Referrals	11
• Physiotherapy appointments	459
• Fitness Tests	551
• Nutritionist appointments	68
• Safety Glasses issued	9
• Eyesight vouchers issued	30
• Ill Health Retirements	3

The CISM mechanism has resulted in the following:

• Critical Incidents (CI) declared	135
• CI Defusing sessions	175
• CI Debriefs (elevated support)	13

The Occupational Health team also provide professionally trained counsellor services, the full detail of which can be found in the main HSW report.

#### **Reducing exposure/contaminants project**

10. Reducing exposure to firefighting contaminants is well embedded within H&S and the Service. It forms part of the H&S Functional Plan; has a station manager lead and is constantly developing. Further detail in relation to this area is contained in the annual report.

#### **H&S objectives 2025/26**

11. The Health and Safety department will use the findings of the annual report to continue to effectively manage performance and strengthen the positive H&S culture that already exists within the organisation. The detail of the H&S departments future objectives are contained within the full annual report.

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**Equality and Diversity Implications**

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12. 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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13. 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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14. 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.
15. 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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16. 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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17. 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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18. 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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19. 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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**NONE**

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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



# Annual Health, Safety & Welfare Report 2024/25

## Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service

Compiled by GM Craig Whitfield  
Health & Safety Manager



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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Annual Health, Safety & Welfare (HS&W) report for the period of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. This report provides detailed data of the Health, Safety & Welfare 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 HS&W 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, and targets may be reduced or increased based on this governance to ensure they remain in line with our risk profile.

***“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.



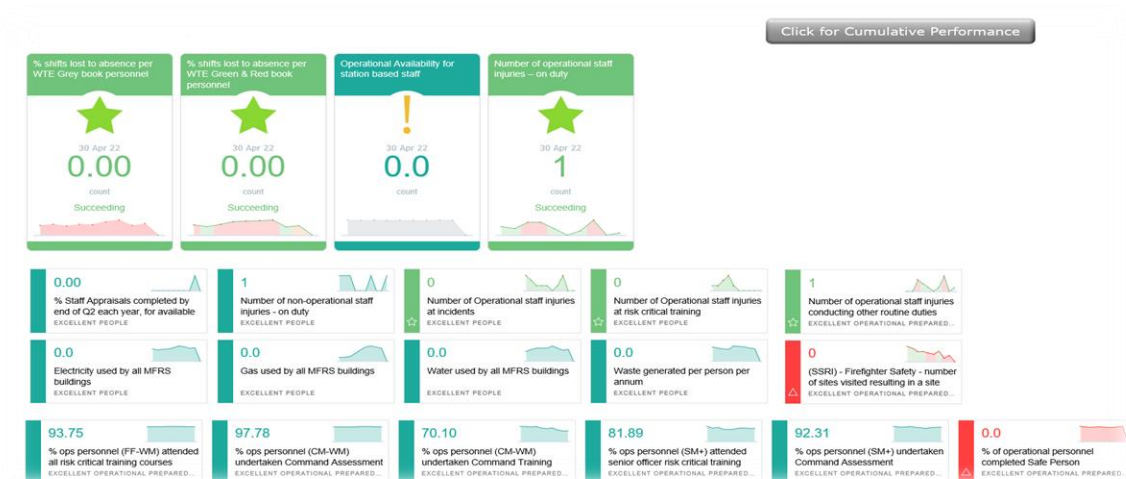
# Health & Safety Performance

## 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)



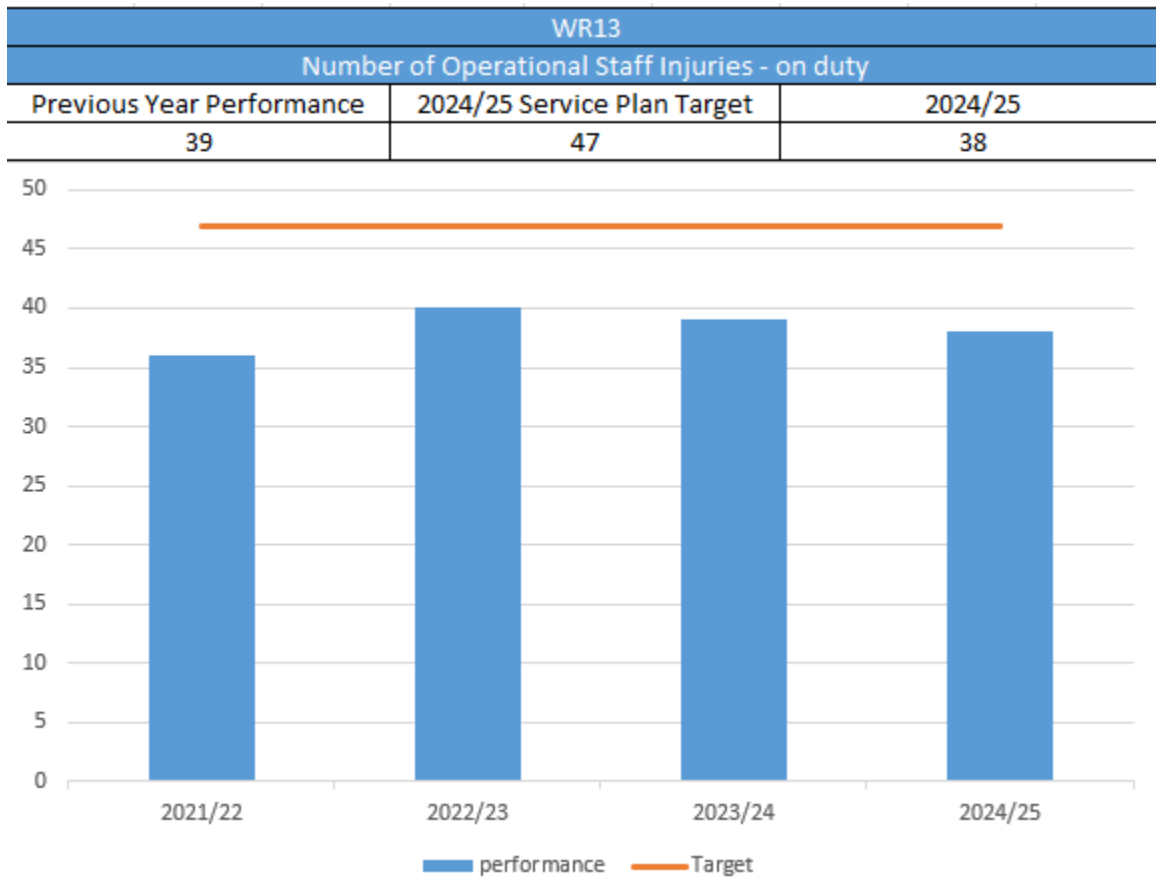
### LPI Monitoring

- 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 2024/25 there were a total of 38 injuries to operational staff, which is a decrease of 1 on the previous year. A total of 24 of the 38 members of staff injured remained on duty and of those who went off duty, 7 returned to work within 7 days.

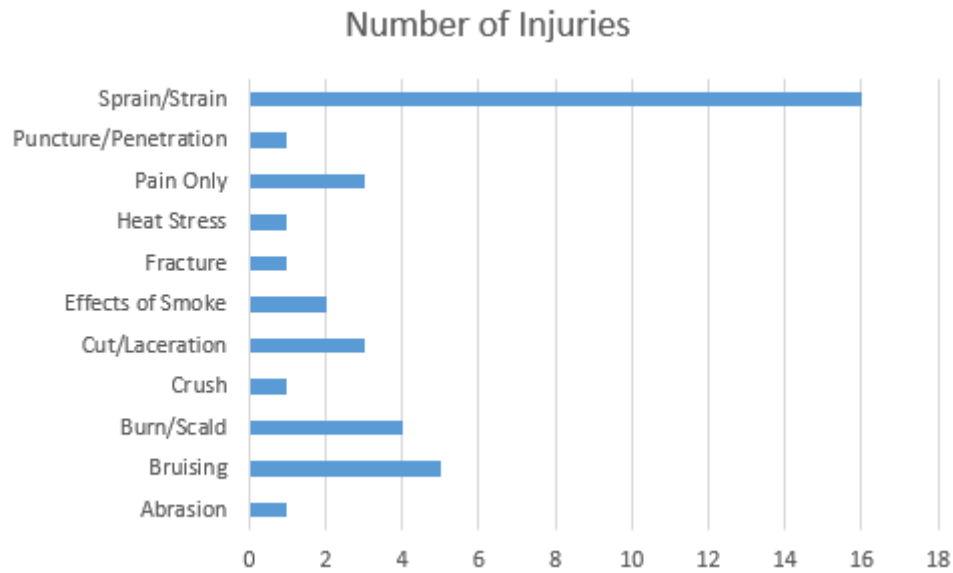


A total of 234 duty days were lost through staff injuries, which is a decrease of 93 on the previous year. 189 of the days lost were related to 5 members of staff being absent through long term sickness and the remaining days related to 9 other members of staff.

Trend analysis shows that all age ranges were similarly affected, and that 16 of the 38 injuries (42%) were due to sprain or strain, which is the most common recorded injury.

The full break down of injury type amongst operational staff for 2024/25 is detailed below:

# Injuries

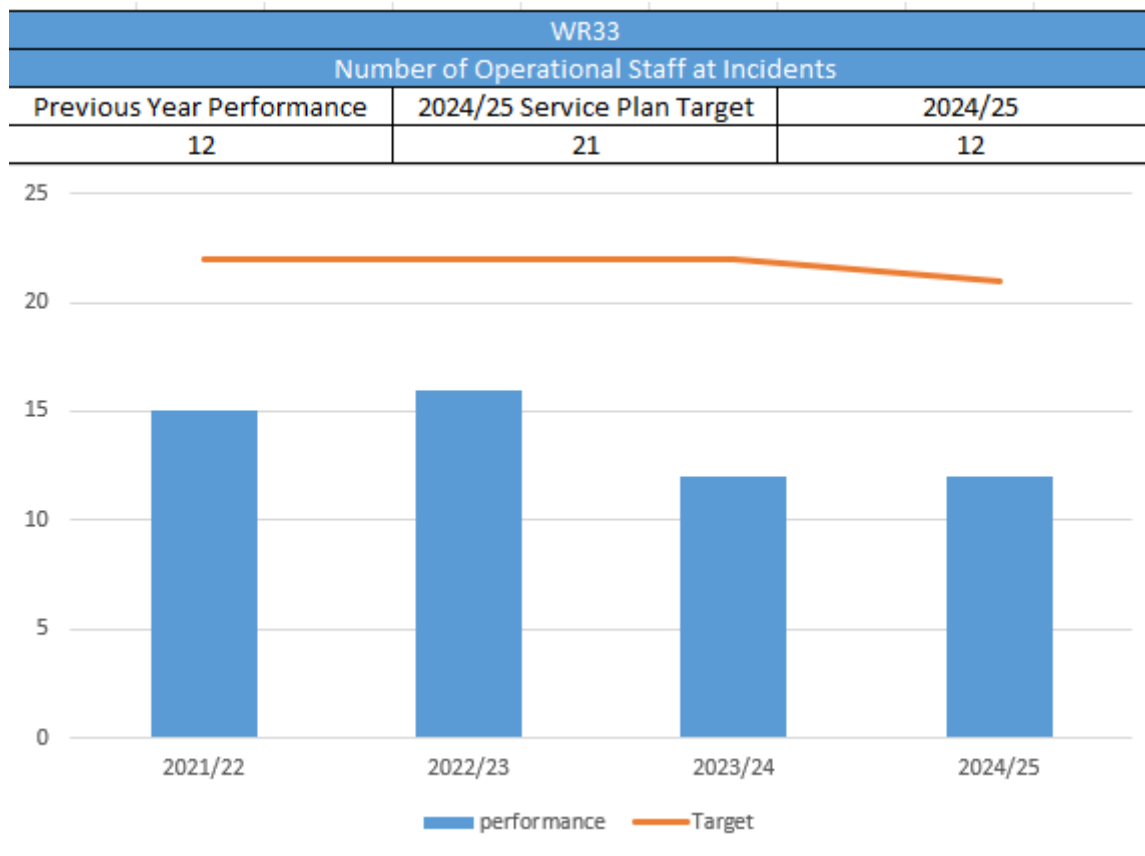


MFRS has an established positive reporting culture, with staff comfortable and confident in reporting injuries without reprisal, even when minor in nature. For example, 3 members of staff reported 'Pain Only' injuries. These primarily related to a muscular discomfort during the course of their duties. 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 38 operational staff injuries whilst on-duty, 12 occurred at operational incidents. This is the same figure as last year. However, this amount remains significantly below the Service Plan Target (SPT) of 21. This is one of the LPI's where we have reduced the SPT based on previous years data.



MFRS attended 17,798 operational incidents in 2024/25, which incurred 33,273 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, 2 returned to work within 7 days and the remaining 2 also returned to work following longer term sickness periods.

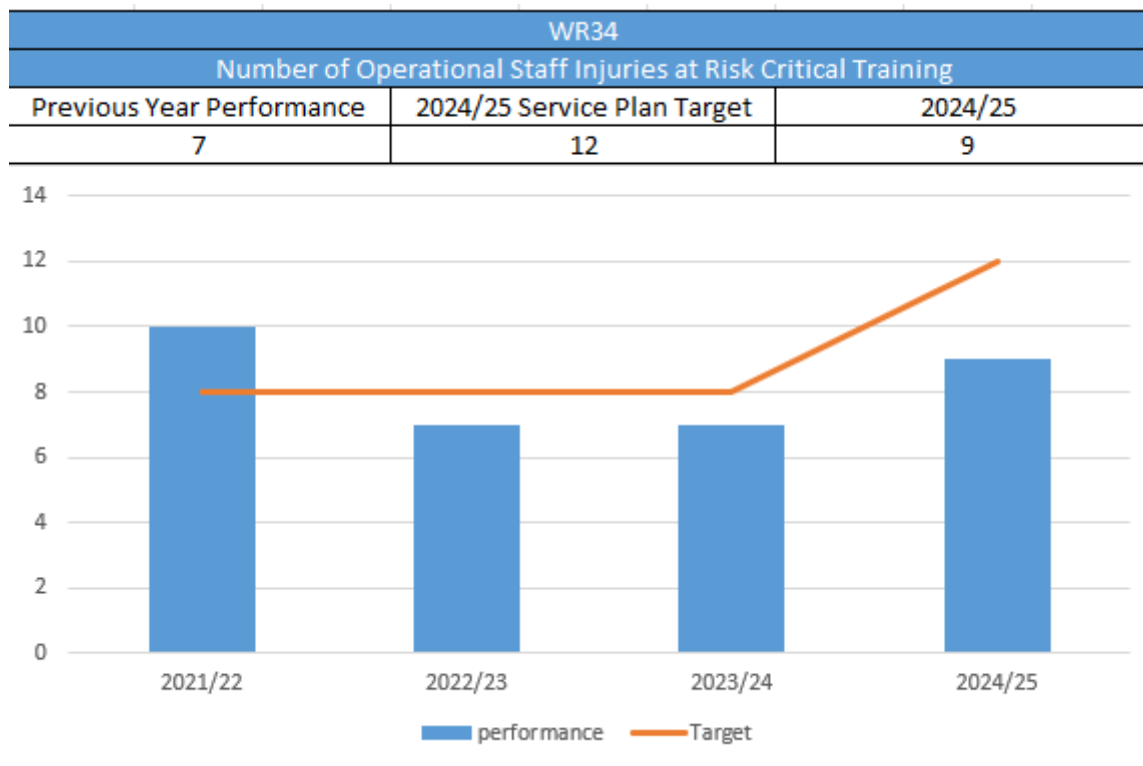
The total duty days lost for operational staff incurring injuries whilst at incidents was 62 days: a decrease of 138 on the previous year.

## 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, 9 individuals were injured during risk critical training, which is an increase of 2 on the previous year. Of those who were injured, 3 went off duty. The SPT has been amended following review. This is line with the increased training undertaken by the service over the last 3 years.

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 through the supervision of operational managers.



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 2024/25, the following training took place:

A total of 164 core training courses were completed in the year 2024/25 which is a reduction on the previous year. This is due to the opening of the new Training and Development Academy at Long Lane in June 2024, which meant that core training was halted for a short period during the transition. The core training courses that ran consisted of:

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

In 2024/25 MFRS completed 251 realistic training / exercising events which is 14 more than the previous year. This continues the trend of improving the number and quality of training and exercising since the pandemic. The largest increase within the training events is within the Specialist Station Training exercises (Marine, HazMat, MTA, CPL, HVP), this demonstrates the increased specialisms that are spread across the service.

As part of our exercising events, we have completed 100 multi pump exercises. These include Station based exercises at locations around Merseyside. We have also completed 'Cross Border' training events with colleagues from neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services to further enhance our interoperability. The new facilities at the TDA have allowed us to improve our training and exercising provision and our current 'Saturday Exercise' focus is high rise firefighting.



*Safe Working at Height Exercise*



*Multi Agency training with H.M. Coastguard*



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

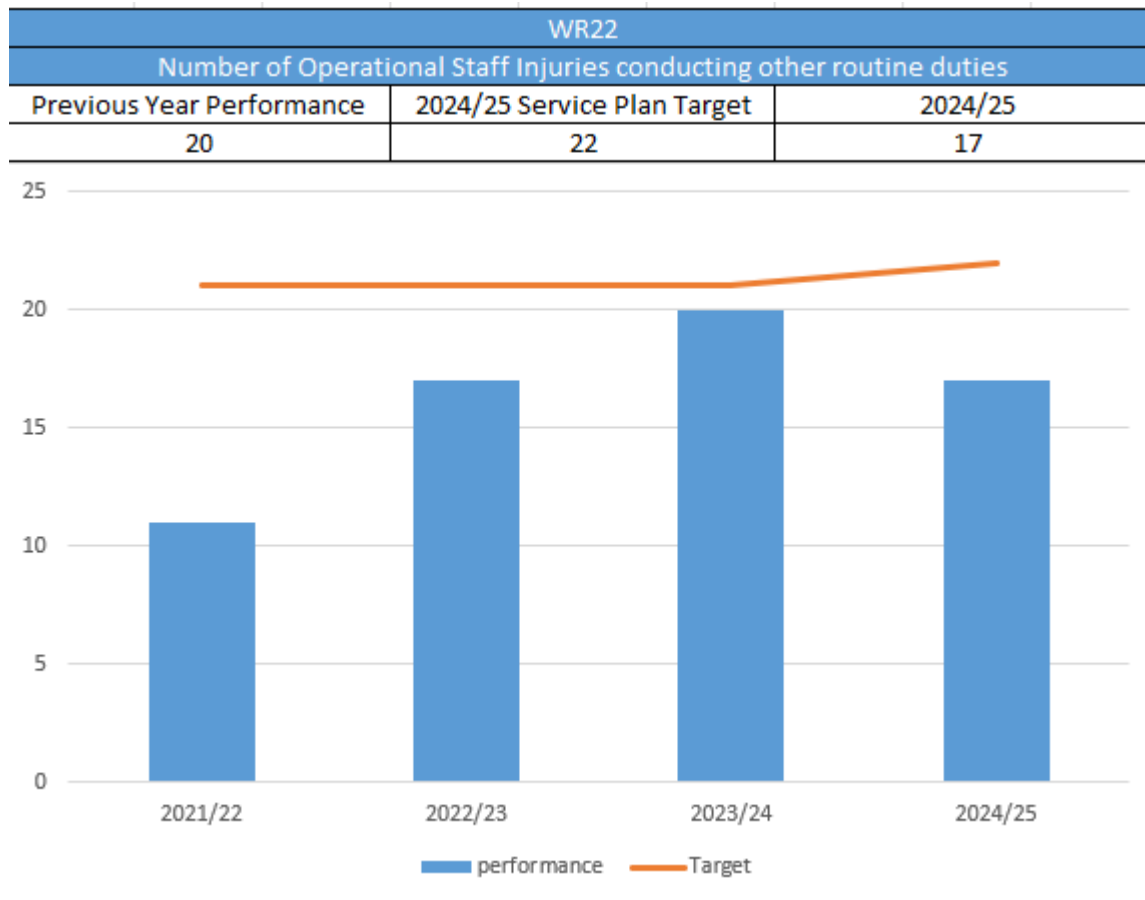
During the year we have welcomed 28 Apprentice Firefighters into the Service. They completed a 16-week training course and have now moved to Community Fire Stations across the service.

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 2024/25, 17 injuries occurred which sees a decrease of 3 on the previous year. This has stopped the trend of this LPI increasing over the last three years and it remains below the increased Service Plan target.



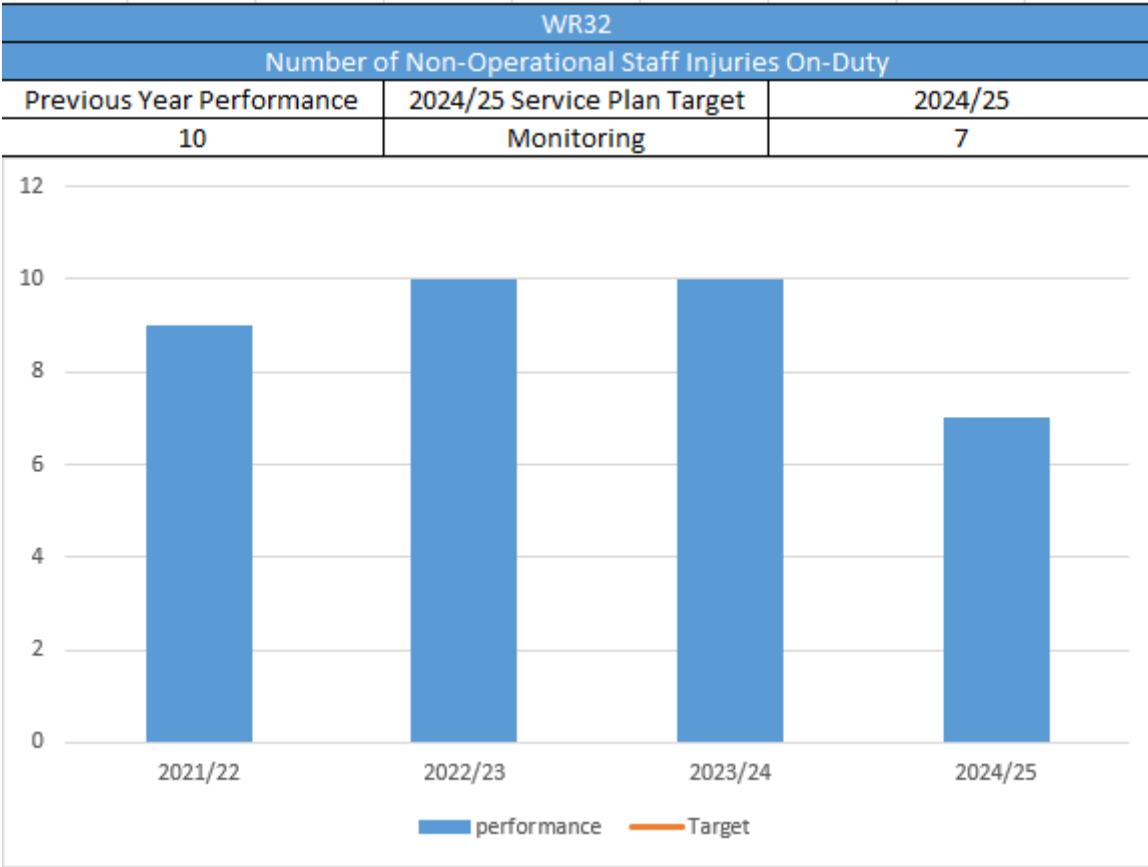
Of the 17 individuals who were injured, 10 remained on duty, highlighting that their injuries were minor in nature. The remaining 7 individuals went off duty.

The 7 injuries, where individuals went off-duty, resulted in 152 duty days lost. Within this there have been injuries classed as long-term sickness (over 28 duty days lost). 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 were a total of 7 non-operational staff injuries in 2024/25, which is a reduction of 3 on the previous year. Of the 7 injuries, only 1 staff member went off duty due to the injury (sprain).



There were a variety of minor injuries recorded. These include abrasions, bruising, sprain/strain, cuts, scalds, burns and pain only. 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.

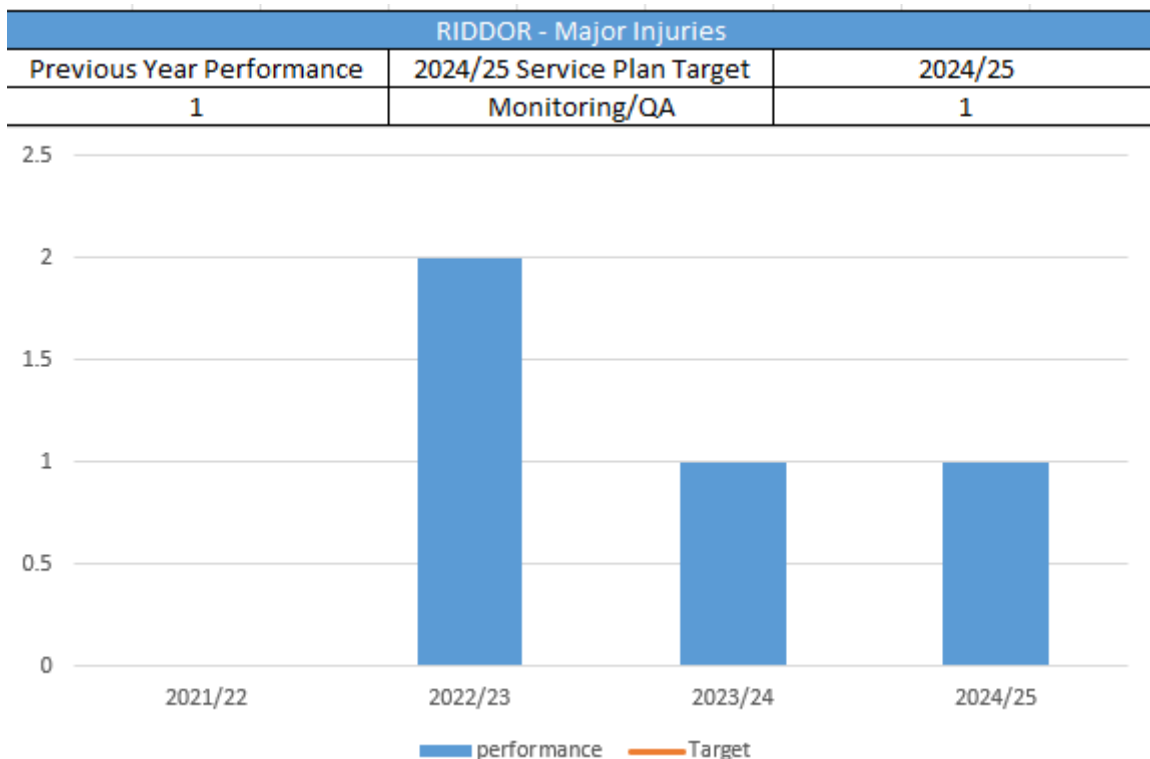
# Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations - RIDDOR

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.



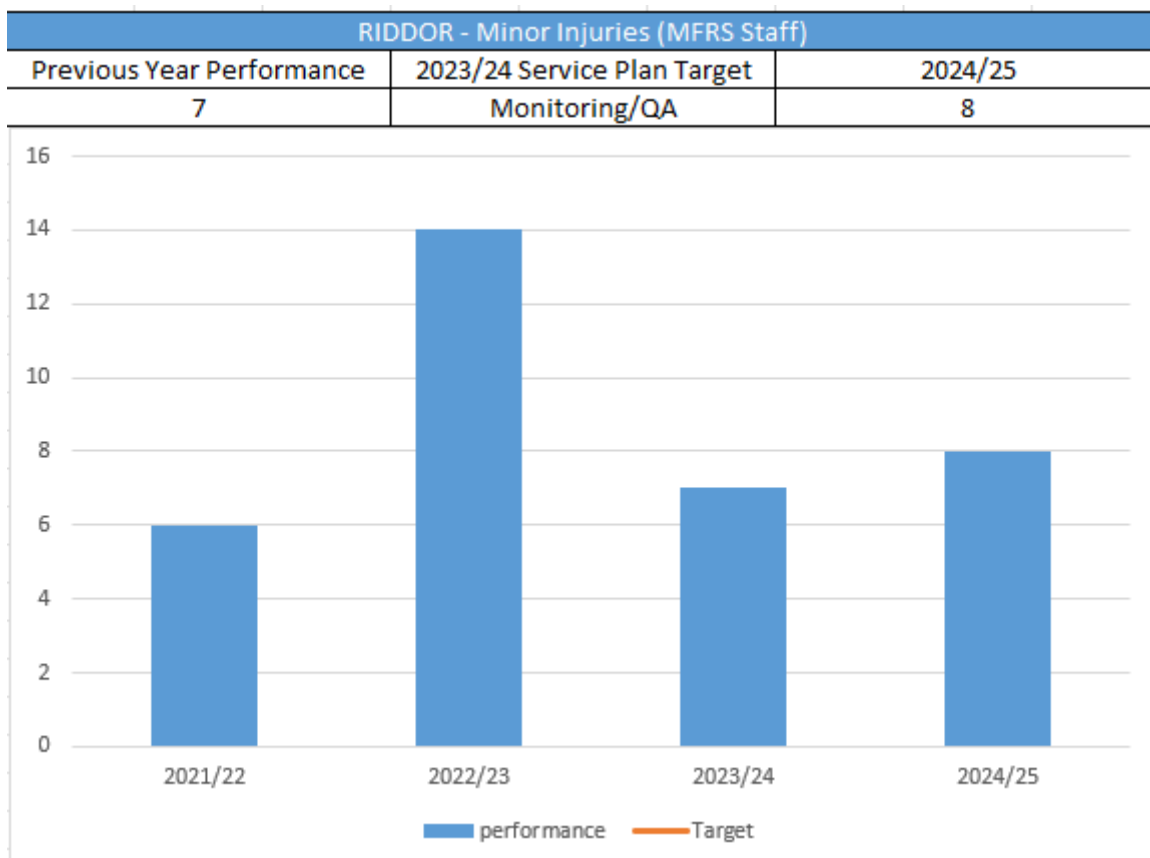
There was one reportable **Major** injury during 2024/25.



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 8 **minor** injuries affecting MFRS staff reported to the HSE during 2024/25, an increase of 1 on the previous year. 5 were sprain or strain injuries, 2 were bruising and 1 recorded as pain only.

MFRA reported one Dangerous Occurrence which occurred during the wearing of Breathing Apparatus (BA) at an Operational Incident. No injuries were incurred in relation to this event. The cause has been investigated and this was due to debris within the mask which led to the BA defaulting to the free flowing of air (as per its designed safety feature). The BA wearer did not lose air pressure and left the building safely.



## 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 123 Near Misses were recorded during 2024/25. This is a decrease of 25 reports, when compared to previous year.

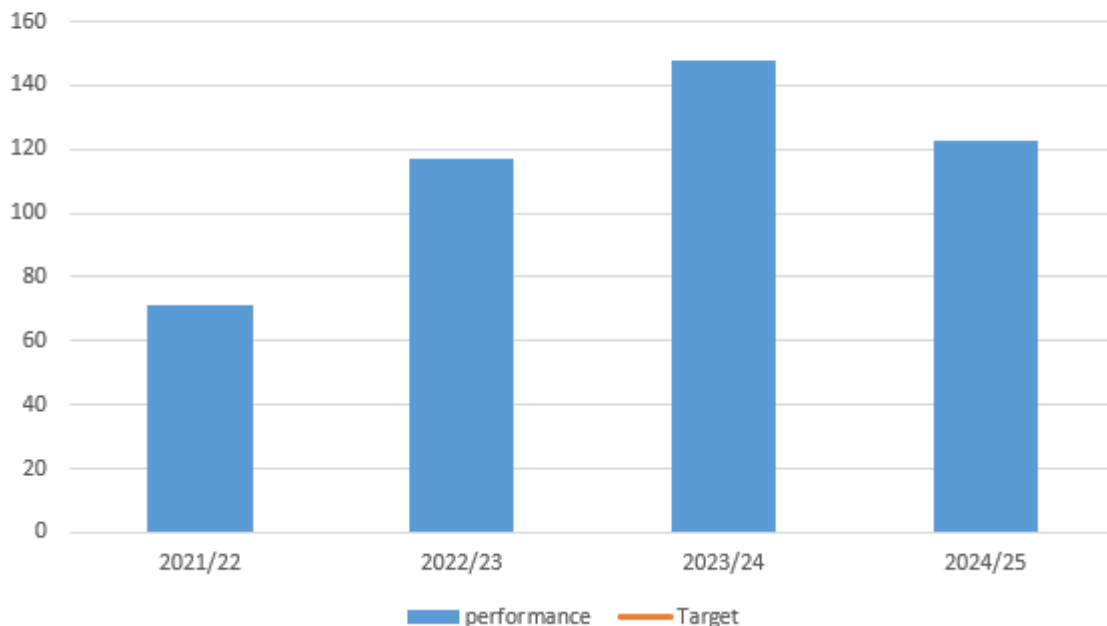
MFRS Health and Safety department, continue to promote positive reporting as part of workplace culture and respond to all submissions. MFRS continues to monitor Near Misses for any potential trends that arise.

### 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	2024/25 Service Plan Target	2024/25
148	Monitoring	123



# Road Risk

Road Risk performance monitors all vehicle collisions and is managed via seven key LPI's. Five 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

- Road Traffic Collisions involving Fire Service Vehicles (RR23)
- The number of Road Traffic Collisions (RTC's) where a Fire Appliance hit another 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)

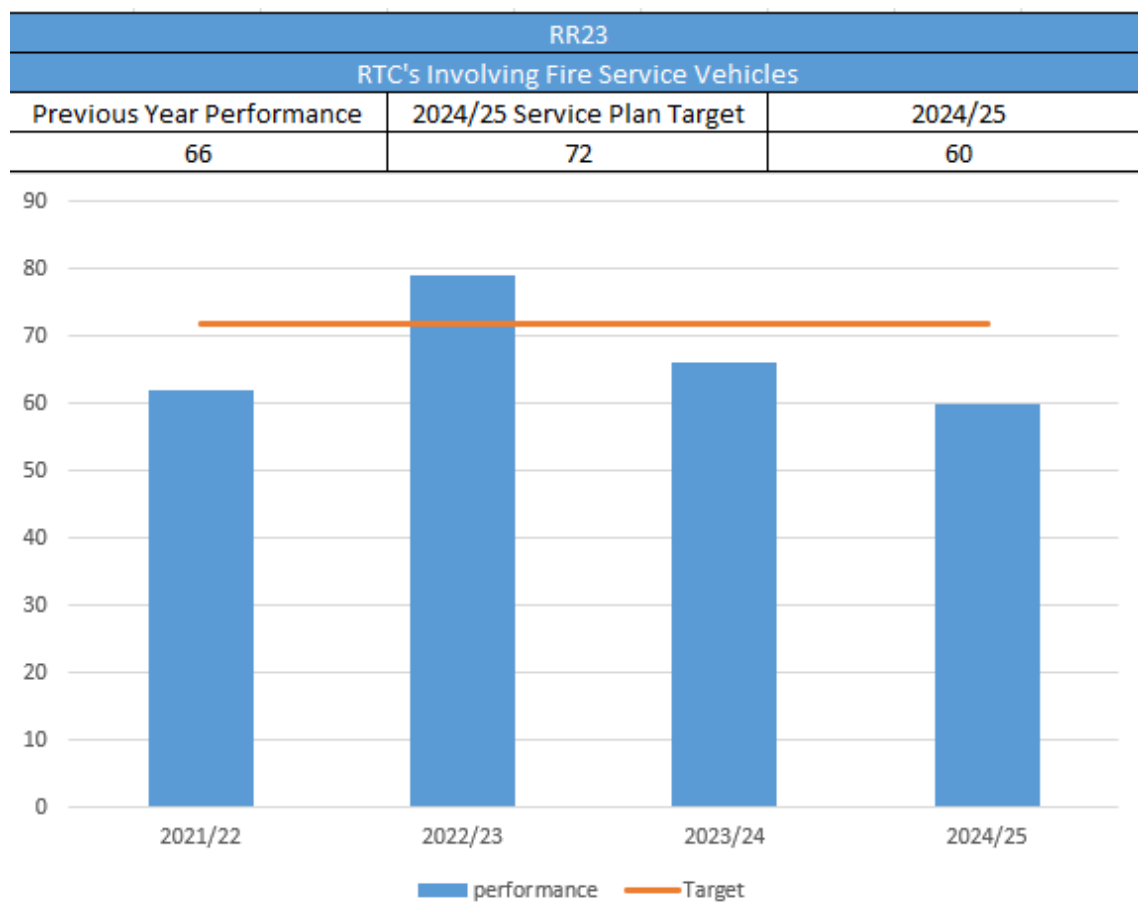
## LPI Monitoring

- 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.

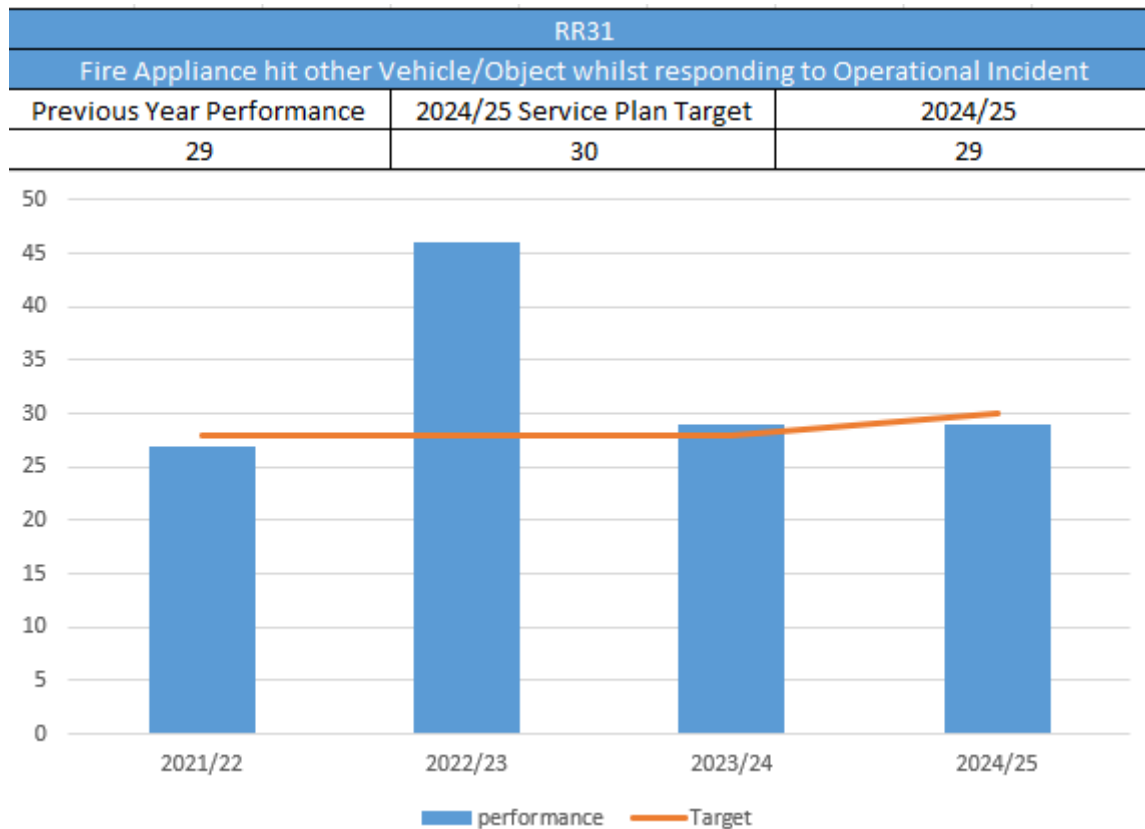
The total number of RTC's involving all types of Service vehicles was 60 in 2024/25, this is a reduction of 6 compared to last year's data. We have seen a three-year reduction in the overall number of vehicle collisions.



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 had 33,273 appliance movements whilst responding to 17,798 incidents in 2024/25, with this activity deemed as the Services most risk critical driving category. Although appliance movements have decreased by 8% when compared to last year, our activity levels equate to 1 collision per 1,147 appliance movements.

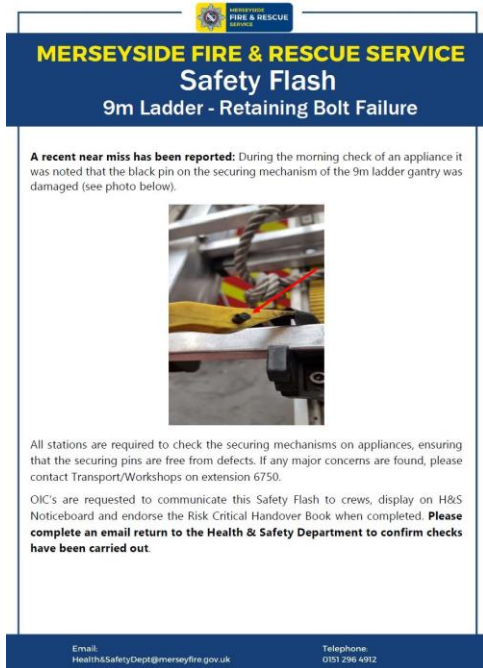


There were 29 collisions involving appliances responding under blue lights, which is the same as the previous year. Due to the overall increase in appliance movements over the last few years the SPT has been raised following review.

RRRG feedback, actions and support have contributed to this reduction, complementing improved communications on vehicle driving and training packages. Options such as parking sensors are being trialed. 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 trend for this LPI is moving forward under 10 mph, as 17 of the collisions (58%) 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. The other 5 collisions all occurred whilst reversing under 5 mph.



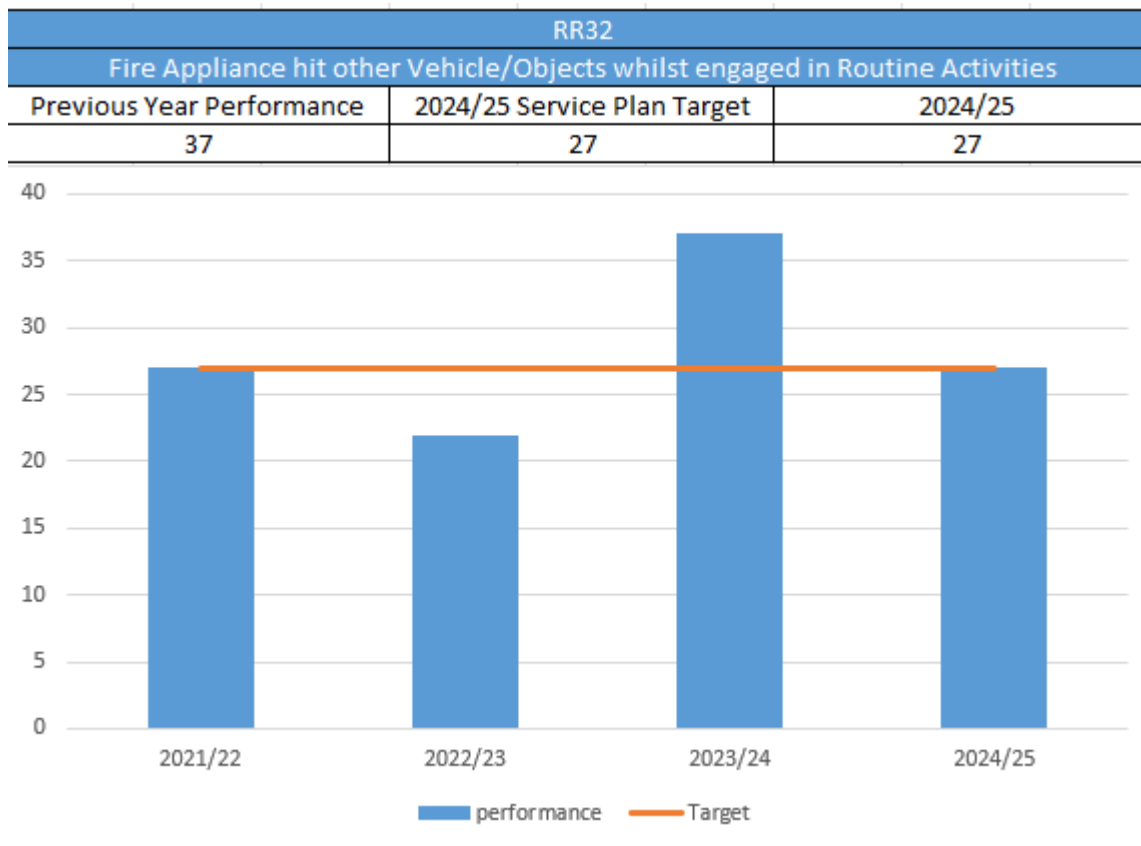
The Service introduced 53 newly qualified Emergency Fire Appliance Drivers (EFAD) in 2024/25.

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



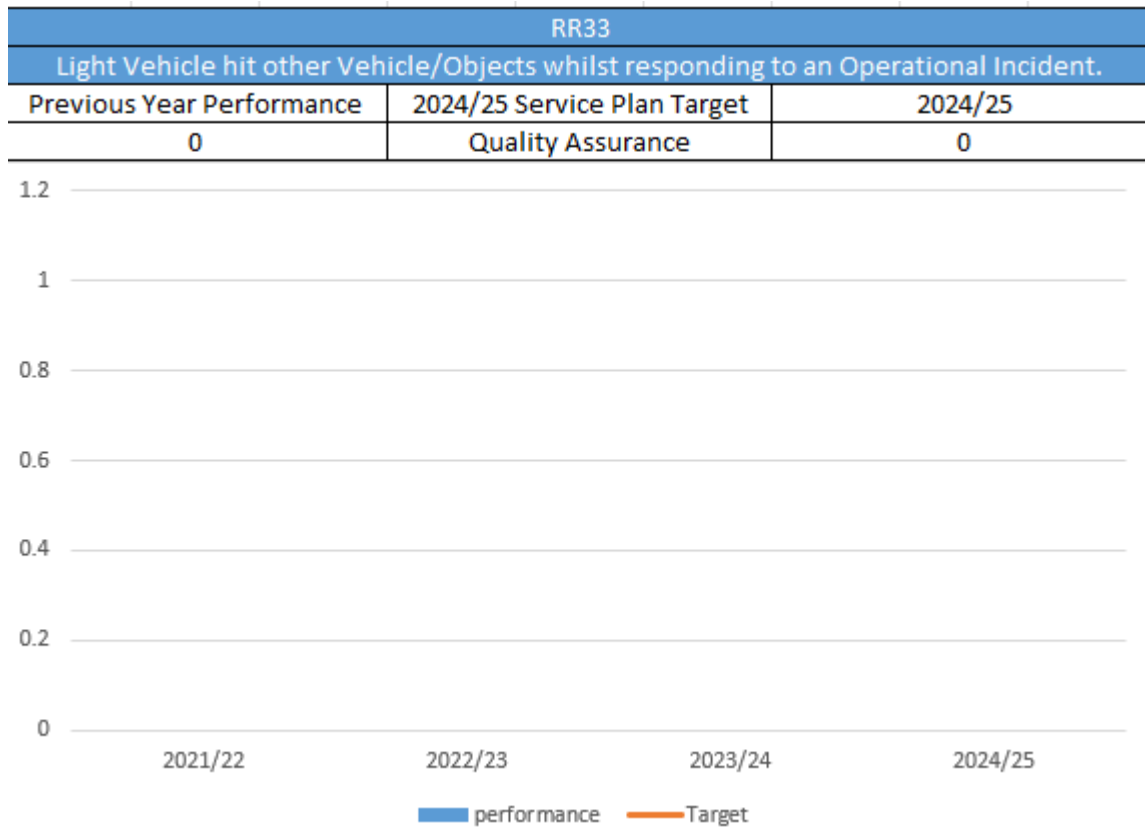
MFRA fire appliances were involved in 63,540 routine movements in 2024/25. The total number of appliance collisions whilst engaged in routine activities was 27. This is a decrease of 10 in comparison to last year and is at the SPT.

Similar to blue light collisions, the trend for this LPI is moving forward at a low speed with 19 (70%) of the collisions occurring under 10 mph whilst moving forward. The Service had 2 collisions, which occurred at speeds above 10 mph. The other 6 collisions all occurred whilst reversing under 5 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 48 new LGV drivers into the operational environment during the 2024/25 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



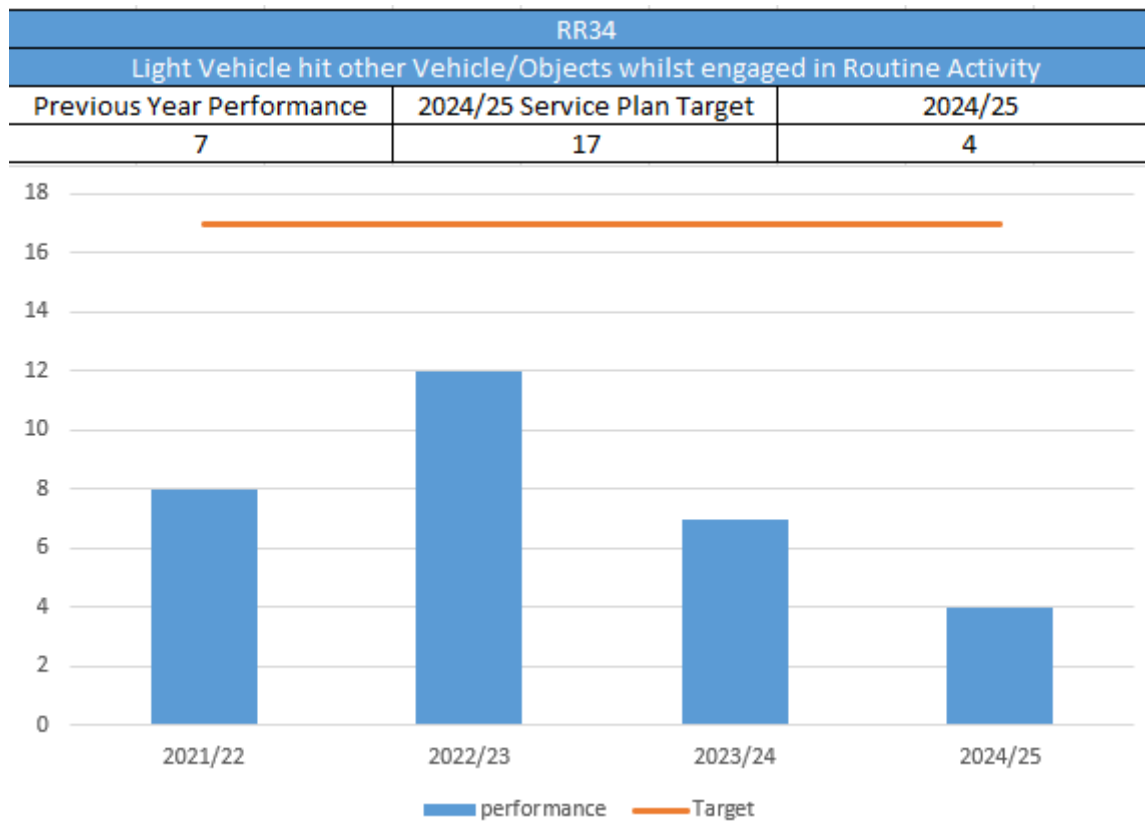
This category covers the blue light response by the Service in light vehicles, which is generally the Senior Officer group during emergency response activity. This category is not aligned to a target but is monitored for trends.

Senior Officers mobilised to operational incidents on 4,713 occasions in 2024/25. For the ninth 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 4, a decrease of 3 on the previous year. This LPI has seen a three yearly reduction in collisions.

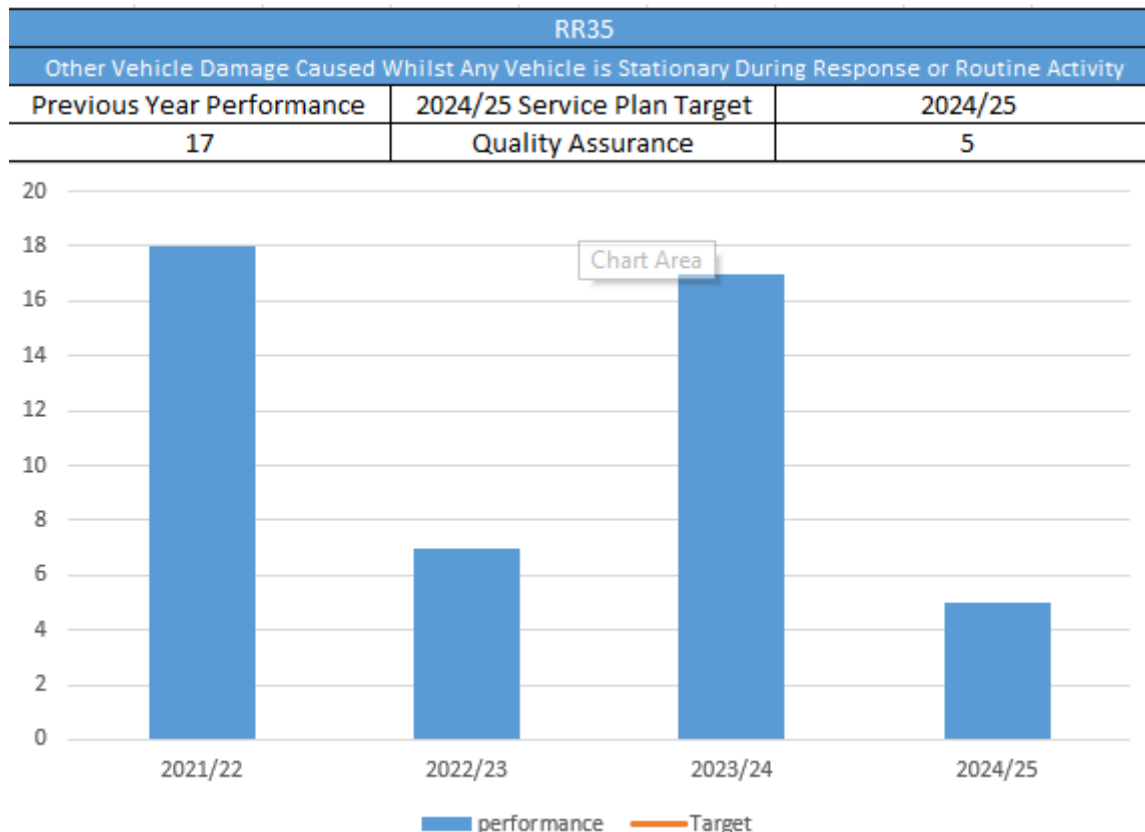


In analysing the data for trends, 1 of the 4 collisions (25%) occurred whilst moving forwards, while 3 (75%) occurred during reversing. All collisions in this category occurred at speeds below 5 mph. To qualify to drive a Service vehicle, staff must have a full and valid UK licence which is recorded 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 6 years.

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

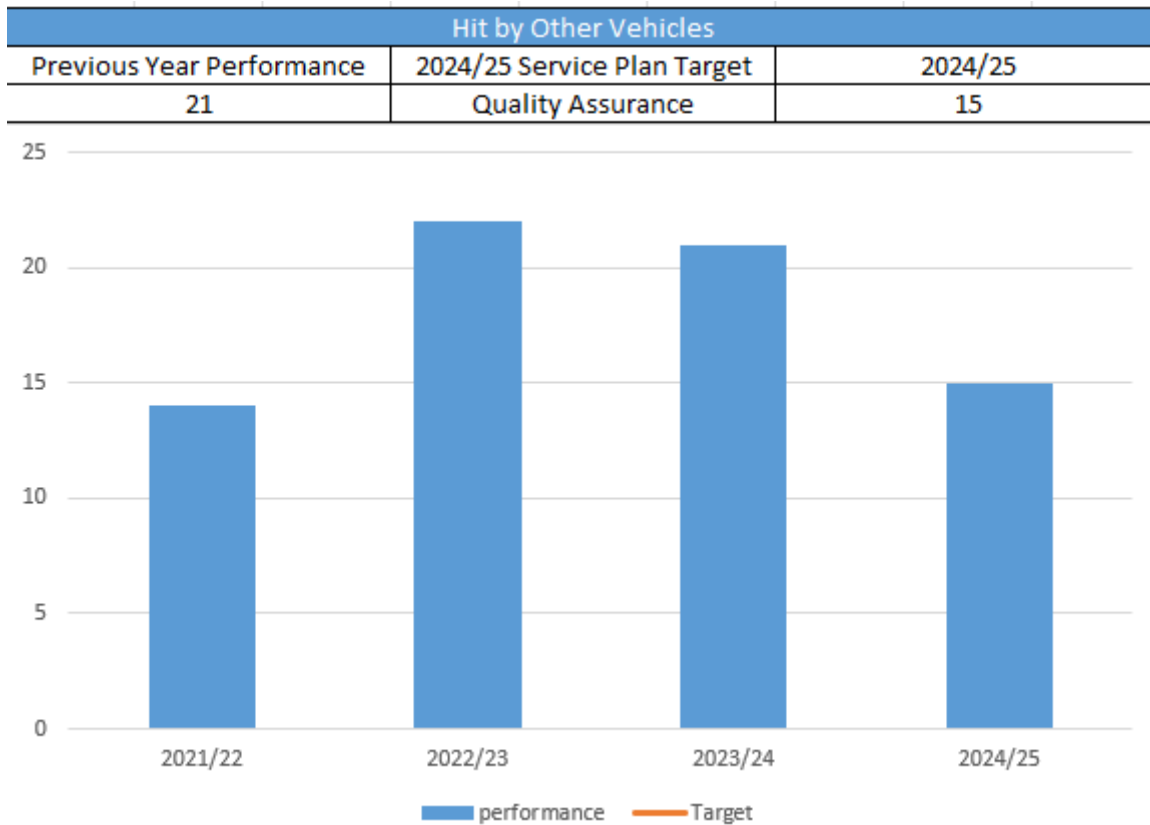
This category was introduced in April 2019 to capture vehicle damage which was not caused by a collision, for both fire appliances and light vehicles. This category is not given a target but is monitored for trends.



There have been 5 reports of vehicle damage whilst the vehicle is stationary during 2024/25. 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



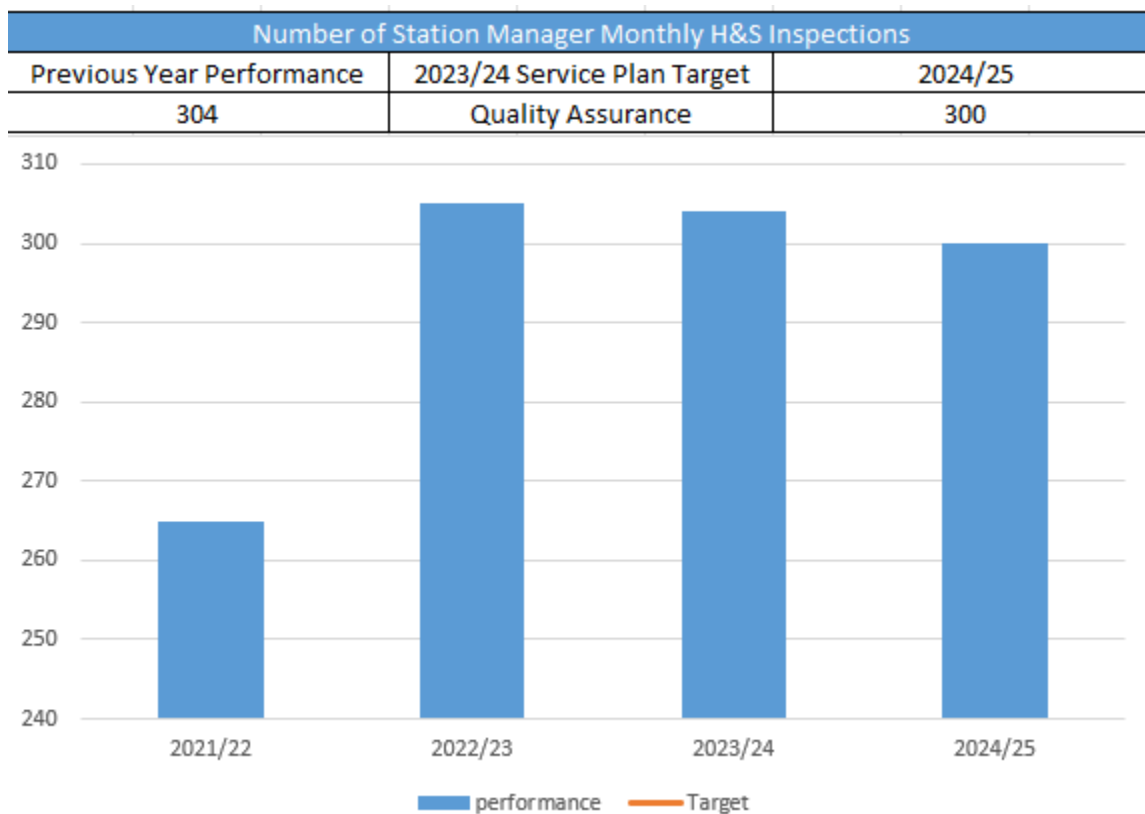
The RRRG monitors all collisions involving Service vehicles where a 3<sup>rd</sup> party has been at fault. There were 15 collisions during 2024/25 which is decrease of 6 from last year.

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. This group also includes monthly inspections completed at Vesty Road / Workshops and TDA.

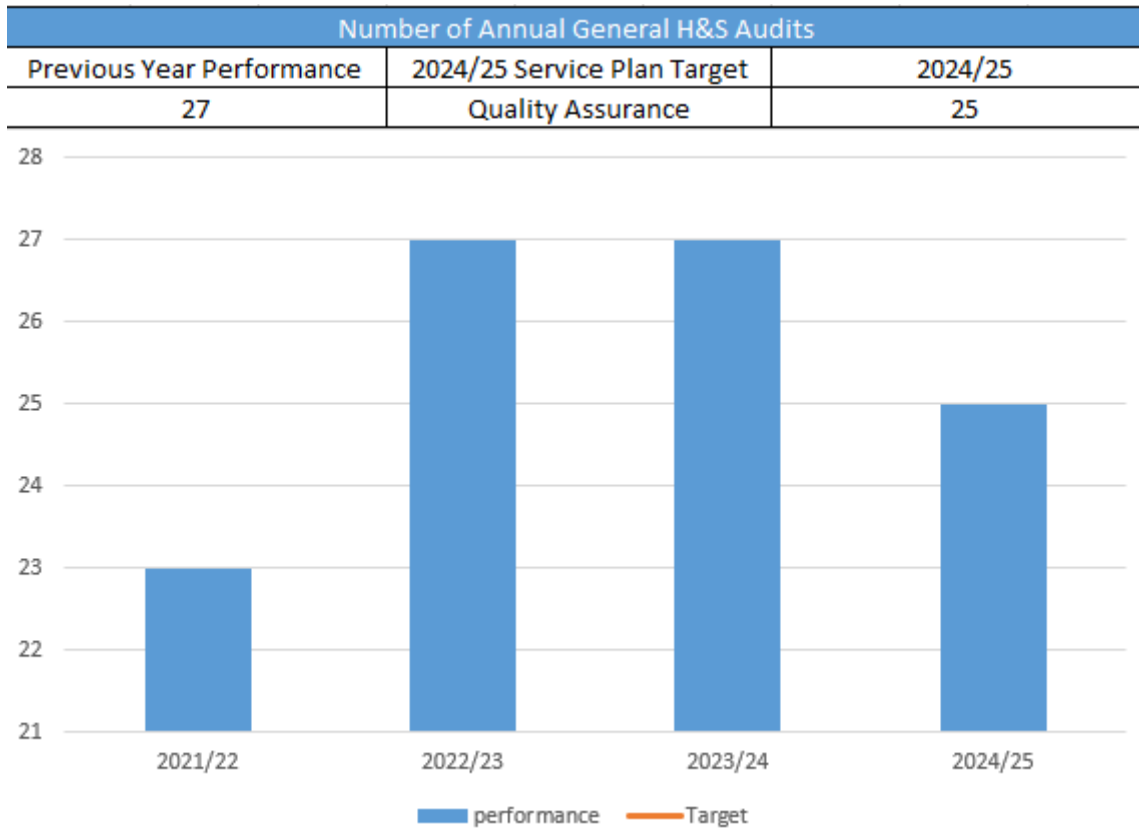


For the period of 2024/25, there have been 300 Station Manager H&S Inspections. No significant trends were identified from the inspections. The fact that no significant trends were identified is a positive. However, it is important to continue with regular inspections to ensure that the required safety 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 25 MFRS sites. There was a reduction in the number of sites due to the opening of the new TDA and the subsequent relocation of NR / ISAR from Unit 5a Vesty Road. The number of Community Fire Stations was reduced followed the combining of Aintree (Long Moor Lane) and Croxteth to the new Aintree Community Fire Station.



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 2024/25, MFRS have completed the following:

### Occupational Health Appointments:

There was a total of 1,787 Occupational Health medical appointments undertaken in the financial year 2024-2025. These can be broken down into:

Health Screenings (Operational Staff)	149
LGV medicals	34
Early Intervention	248
Management Referrals	84
Uniformed pre-employments	72
Non uniformed pre-employments	51
Other (Long term sick review/Clinical Check/Other duties reviews etc.)	1,149
<b>Total medical appointments</b>	<b>1,787</b>

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

MRI/Scan Referrals	11
Physiotherapy appointments	459
Fitness Tests	551
Nutritionist appointments	68
Safety Glasses issued	9
Eyesight vouchers issued	30
Ill Health Retirements (Non-Ops)	3

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

Critical Incidents (CI) declared	135
CI Defusing sessions	175
CI Debriefs (elevated support)	13

The Occupational Health team provide professionally trained counsellors. During 2024/25, the following sessions were provided by the staff below:

Kelly Patterson (Internal Counsellor)	249
Vicky Moore (External Counsellor)	163
Janine Unwin (External CBT)	172
Claire Crilly (Internal Counsellor)	53
Kelly McAvoy (External Counsellor)	55
<b>Total therapy appointments</b>	<b>692 Sessions</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 the activity of firefighting being deemed a “carcinogenic” risk. The Health and Safety department have a dedicated Station Manager lead who has, in conjunction with the Health and Safety Manager, made significant progress in this area. Highlights of progress for 2024/25 include:

- Zoning of community fire stations to further reduce residual risk of exposure to contaminants.
- Production of Service Instruction 0998: Reducing Exposure to Fire Contaminants.
- Introduction of a monthly “Reducing Exposure” station inspection. This is to quality assure that guidance is being followed.
- Appointed SM lead.
- MFRS being embedded in the regional NFCC group.

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 in this area.

## A Look Forward to 2025/26

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.
- Assess the use of parking sensors on trial at Kirkdale Community Fire Station. The trial is now in phase 2 following assessment of the initial phase. At the end of the trial, we will evaluate feedback from the station and assess the suitability of the system and a potential roll out to further appliances.
- 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.
- Monitor compliance and adherence to policies and procedure, through Ops Assurance with the aim of reducing exposure to fire contaminants.

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

- **OSHENS System:** Work with Data & Technology Department to Procure a Suitable Health and Safety Software System. Engaging with internal and external stakeholders to establish the most appropriate product / solution and route to market.
- **Develop and Deliver Health and Safety Training:** Further enhance staff's knowledge / competence of HS&W before, during and after incidents in line with the NFCC leadership framework (leading self, others, function, and service)

GM Craig Whitfield - H&S Manager



SM Kev Hollis - H&S Team




MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	SCRUTINY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	22 JULY 2025	REPORT NO:	MO/11/2526
PRESENTING OFFICER	MONITORING OFFICER, RIA GROVES		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	MONITORING OFFICER, RIA GROVES	REPORT AUTHOR:	MONITORING OFFICER, RIA GROVES
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEMBERS, ACFO GED SHERIDAN, STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM		
TITLE OF REPORT:	SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PLAN 2025-2026		
APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A	SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PLAN 2025-26	

## Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members review the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan for 2025-26.

## Recommendations

2. It is recommended that Members;
  - a) review the proposed Scrutiny Forward Work Plan 2025-26; and
  - b) recommend the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan in Appendix A be submitted to the Authority (or another Committee as appropriate) for approval.

## Introduction and Background

3. Further to the Annual General Meeting on 12th June 2025, Members of the Scrutiny Committee attended a Scrutiny Workshop on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2025. The Monitoring Officer and the Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented an update on the three items being carried over from the previous Scrutiny Forward Work Plan (2023-25) as agreed at the Authority meeting in May and an overview of additional areas Members have proposed to scrutinise.
4. Appendix A contains the draft Scrutiny Forward Work Plan based upon the feedback from Members at the Scrutiny Workshop and from Committee meetings in the last year.
5. The proposed Scrutiny Forward Work Plan can be added to throughout the year and therefore the plan remains a living document.

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## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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6. There are no direct equality and diversity and inclusion implications for the proposed plan and no requirement for an EIA. However, the scrutiny topic itself may have an EIA 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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7. The staff from the relevant department would produce the report on the scrutiny topic for Members to scrutinise.

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## **Legal Implications**

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8. There are no direct Legal implications arising from this report.

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

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

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## **Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

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10. There are no direct risk management and health & safety 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 and health & safety, 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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11. Any potential environmental 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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12. 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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<b>MFRA</b>	<b>Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority</b>
<b>MFRS</b>	<b>Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service</b>
<b>EIA</b>	<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>



**SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PLAN 2025-2026**

Item	DESCRIPTION & TYPE OF ACTION	DEPARTMENT	Proposed Scrutiny Meeting
Management of Contaminates	Scrutiny of the Authority's management of contaminants and hazardous materials.	Response	April 2026
Enforcement and Prosecution Action	Scrutiny of the Authority's prosecution and enforcement powers and how they are used	Protection	October 2025
Update on Pathway to Net Zero	Update on Pathway to Net Zero including Fleet Management	Preparedness	July 2025
KPI's Response Times	Scrutiny of attendance times in accordance with the KPI target(s).	Response	April 2026
Culture Review update	Scrutiny of how the Authority has progressed in development of culture and inclusivity, and how it plans to progress it in the future.	POD	October 2025

*Standing Items:*  
 Health and Safety  
 Scrutiny Forward Work Plan

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