

<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/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