


# Annual Health & Safety Report 2021/22

## Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service

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Health & Safety Manager

MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Annual Health & Safety (H&S) report for the period of April to April 2021/22. This report provides detailed data of the Health, Safety & Welfare (HS&W) performance of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MFRS) against the 2021/22 pre-determined Local Performance Indicators (LPI's).

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

It has been prepared using data from the Authority's HS&W Management System, OSHENS, and from the Business Intelligence Department. The data is presented using 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.

***"The 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 HS&W 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 etc. 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 H&S 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 H&S Management on behalf of the CFO. The H&S Manager along with the Occupational Health (OH) Manager are responsible for the day to day management of HS&W on behalf of the MFRA 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 led 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. LPI's are broken down into:

### 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)**



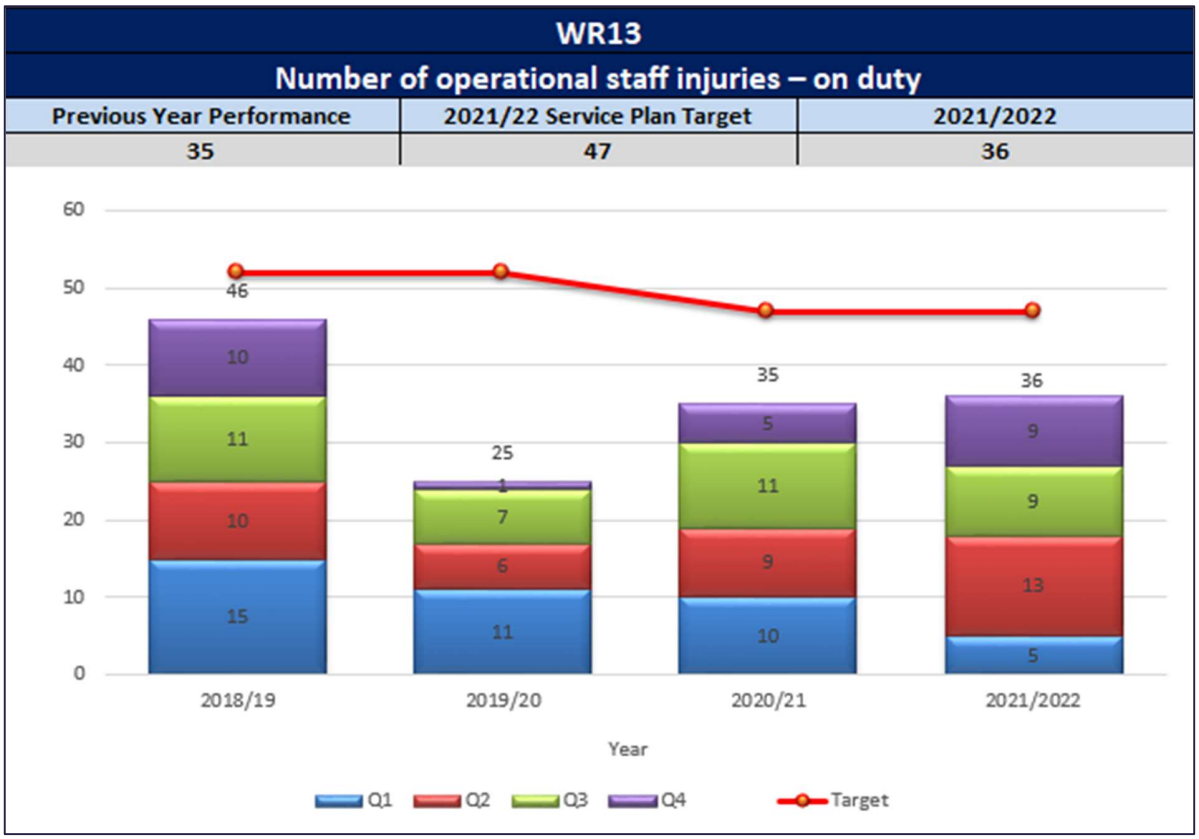

### LPI Monitoring

- 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 H&S 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 2021/22 there were a total of 36 injuries to operational staff, an increase of 1 from the previous year. 27 of the 36 members of staff remained on duty and of the 9 who went off duty, 4 returned to work within 7 days.

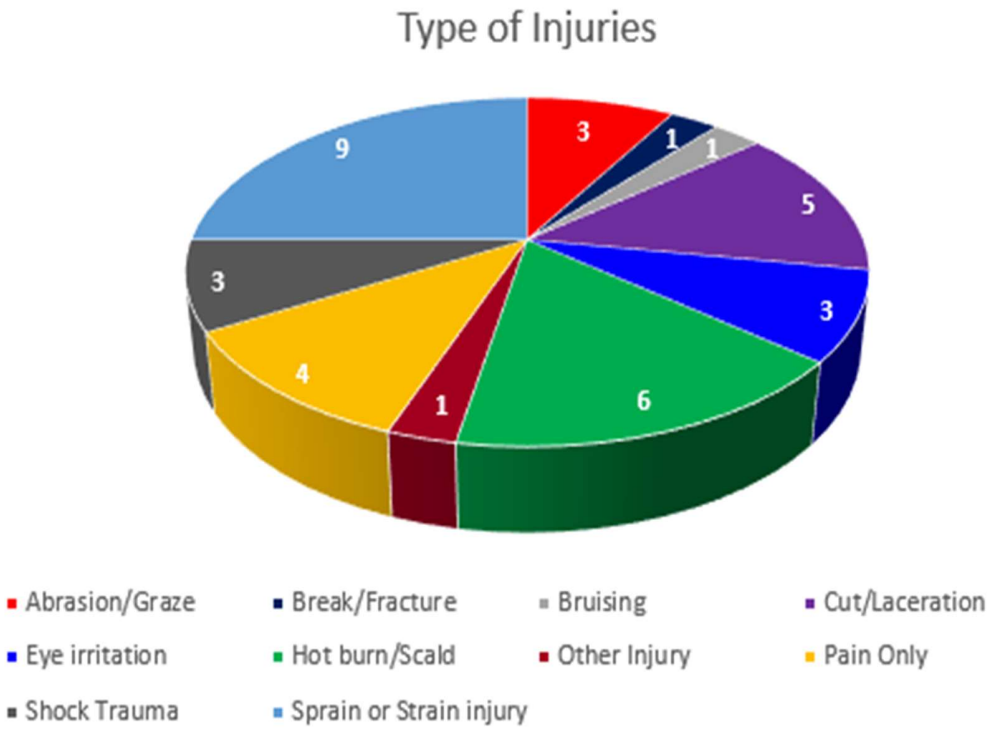



There were a total of 95 duty days lost through staff injuries which is a decrease of 4 on the previous year. 38 of the days lost were due to one individual on long term sickness and the remaining 57 days were spread across the other 8 members of staff.

Trend analysis shows, that where duty days were lost, 7 of the 9 staff members were found to be above the age of 30. Also, sprain and strain injuries were most common, with 9 of the 36 injuries (25%) falling into this category.

The full break down of injury type amongst operational staff for 2021/22 is detailed on the following page:

# Injuries

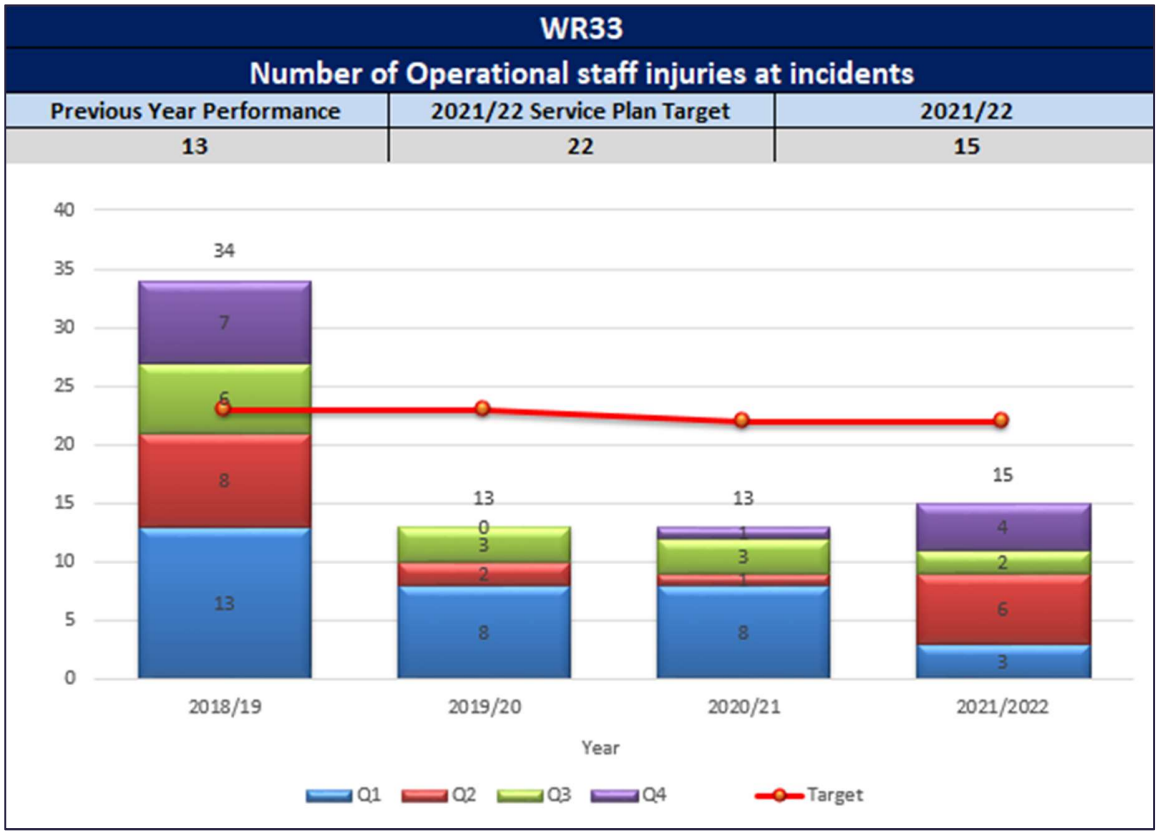



MFRS has an established positive reporting culture, with staff comfortable and confident in reporting injuries without reprisal, even when minor in nature. For example; 4 members of staff reported 'Pain only' injuries which primarily related to a muscular discomfort during the course of their duties. All remained on duty and did not suffer any long lasting effects and 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 in the following pages.

# Number of Operational Staff Injuries at Incidents

Of the total 36 operational staff injuries whilst on-duty, 15 occurred at incidents. This is a slight increase of 2 from the previous year however, remains significantly below the predicted target of 22.




MFRS attended 18,287 operational incidents in 2021/22 which was supported by 31,734 appliance movements. Of the total 15 operational injuries, 11 remained in work which indicates the injury was minor in nature and further highlights the positive reporting culture amongst staff. Of the 4 who went off duty, 3 returned to work within 12 days and the remaining individual was on long term sickness due to sprain/strain injuries, caused through manual handling activities.

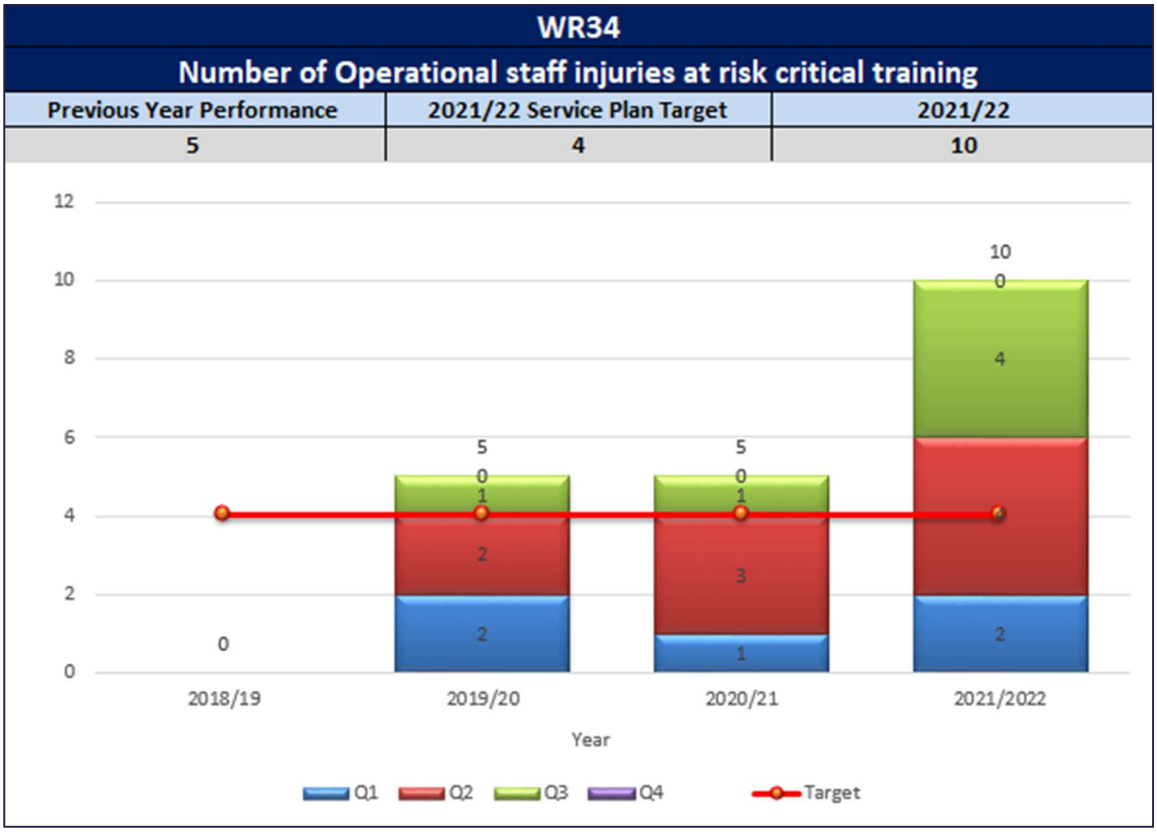
The total duty days lost for operational staff whilst at incidents was 22 days, a reduction of 7 on the previous year. The reduction is a significant and positive result.

# Number of Operational Staff Injuries at Risk Critical Training

The H&S 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.

10 individuals were injured during risk critical training, 3 of which went off duty. 3 of the 10 injuries occurred during the same event. The 3 members of staff reported some reddening of the skin and small blistering to their hands following realistic fire behaviour training however, all remained on duty.

The figures indicate that the injuries were generally minor in nature and that the training environment is being managed well through risk assessment and 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 are the best they can be. In 2021/22, the following training took place:

281 core training courses were completed consisting of:

- 65 Breathing Apparatus (BA) courses with approx. 6 attendees per course;
- 13 Realistic Fire Behaviour Training (RFBT) courses with approx. 8-10 attendees per course;
- 45 Road Traffic Collision (RTC) courses with approx. 8 attendees per course;
- 40 Safe Working At Height (SWAH) courses with approx. 4 attendees per course
- 118 Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) courses with approx. 4 attendees per course.

A range of additional realistic training was undertaken which included but was not restricted to:

- 80 Off-site station exercises
- 24 Tactical exercises organised by stations
- 3 Tactical exercises organised by the Training & Development Academy (TDA)
- 3 'Control Of Major Accident Hazards' (COMAH) live exercises
- 41 High Rise exercises using the Gaywood Green high rise block in Kirkby
- 6 Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA) exercises
- 3 Exercises at Liverpool John Lennon Airport (JLA) in Speke.

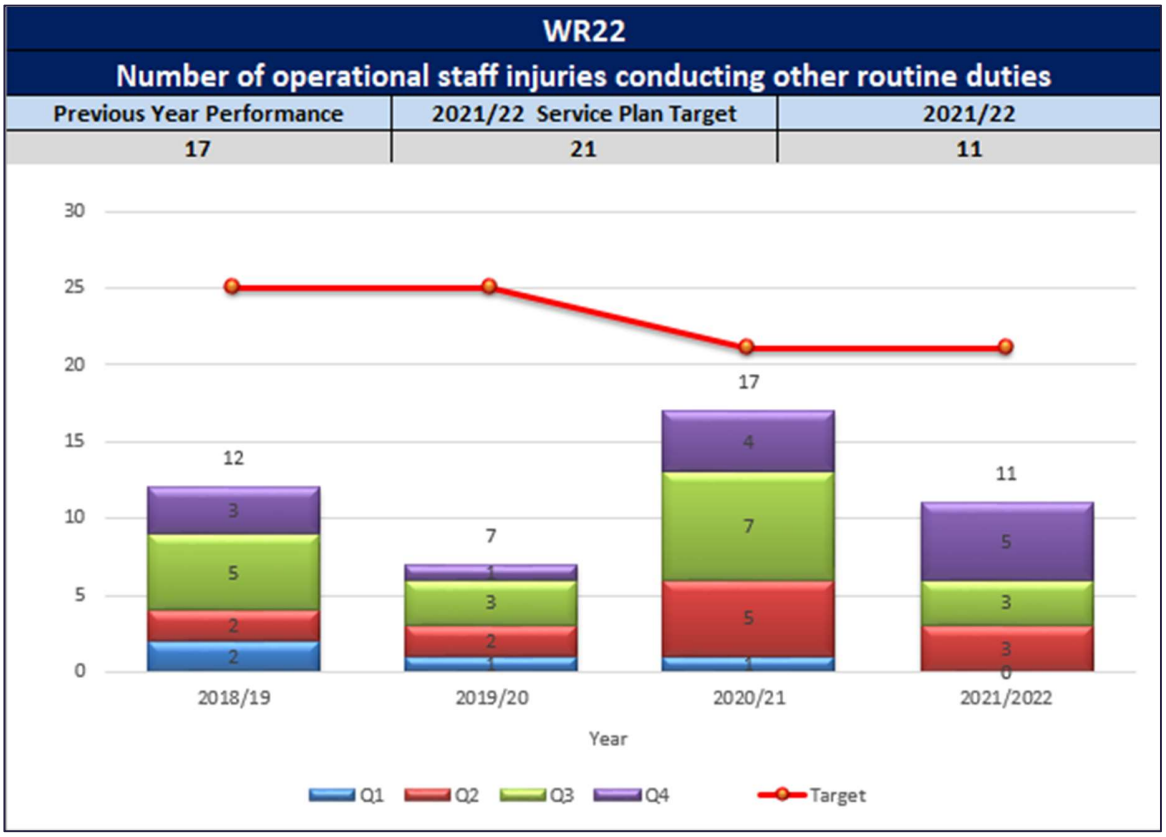


Core training was up 68% from the 2020/21 period, whilst off-station exercises and other training, detailed above, increased by nearly 75%, highlighting the increased exposure that operational staff had to risk critical training events as Covid restrictions eased.

3 recruit courses were delivered during 2021/22, each of which lasts 16 weeks in duration and has approximately 20 Recruit Firefighters (RFF) on.

Individual training blocks are aligned daily to the training planner across all stations and amount to approximately 8000 x 2hour 45minute training periods per year. However, in actual terms and for the earlier part 2021/22, this figure continued to be adversely, but not significantly affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

# Number of Operational Staff Injuries Conducting Other Routine Activities



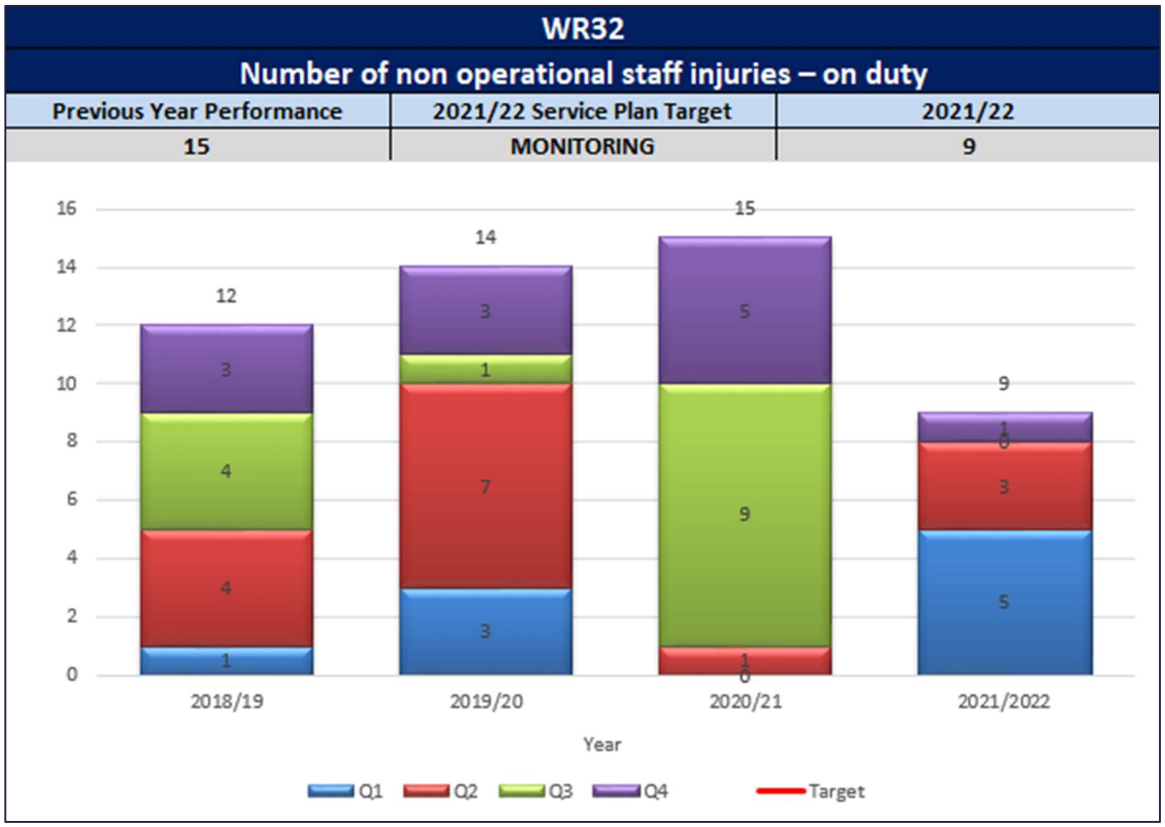

During routine activity in 2021/22, 11 injuries occurred which seen a decrease of 6 on the previous year.

Of the 11 individuals who were injured, 9 remained on duty highlighting their injuries were minor in nature. Only 2 individuals went off duty, which is a 50% decrease on the previous year.

The 2 injuries were individuals went off-duty resulted in 20 duty days being lost which is a decrease of 50 duty days on the previous year.

3 injuries occurred to staff in the age range of 30-34 whilst the remaining 8 were evenly spread across the broad age ranges of 25-29, 35-39, 45-49 and 50-54. No significant age trend was identified.

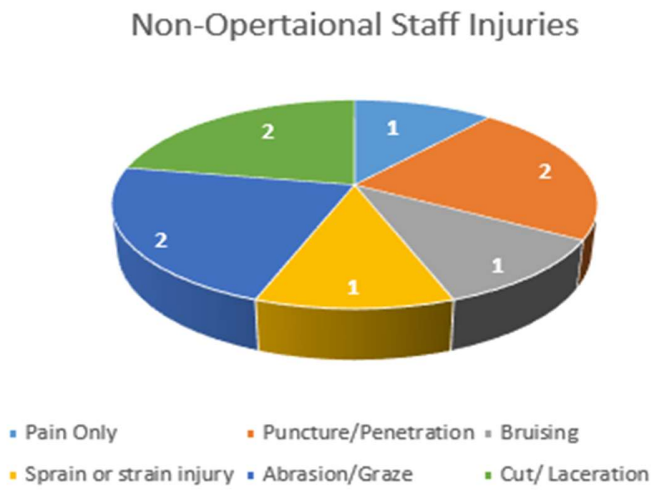
# Number of Non-operational Staff Injuries On-duty




There were a total of 9 non-operational staff injuries in 2021/22, a decrease of 6 from the previous year. All 9 individuals remained on duty.

Specific age ranges for this category were varied with no particular trend identified:

- 20-24 = 3 members of staff
- 30-34 = 2 member of staff
- 40-44 = 1 member of staff
- 50-54 = 2 members of staff
- 60-64 = 1 members of staff




Injuries were also varied, minor in nature and had no particular trend identified.

# 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).


HSE

Health and Safety Executive

Reporting accidents and incidents at work

A brief guide to the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)

What is RIDDOR?

RIDDOR is the law that requires employers, and other people in control of work premises, to report and keep records of:

- work related accidents which cause death;
- work related accidents which cause certain serious injuries (reportable injuries);
- diagnosed cases of certain industrial diseases; and
- certain 'dangerous occurrences' (incidents with the potential to cause harm).

There are also special requirements for gas incidents (see 'Reportable gas incidents').

This leaflet aims to help employers and others with reporting duties under RIDDOR, to comply with RIDDOR and to understand reporting requirements.

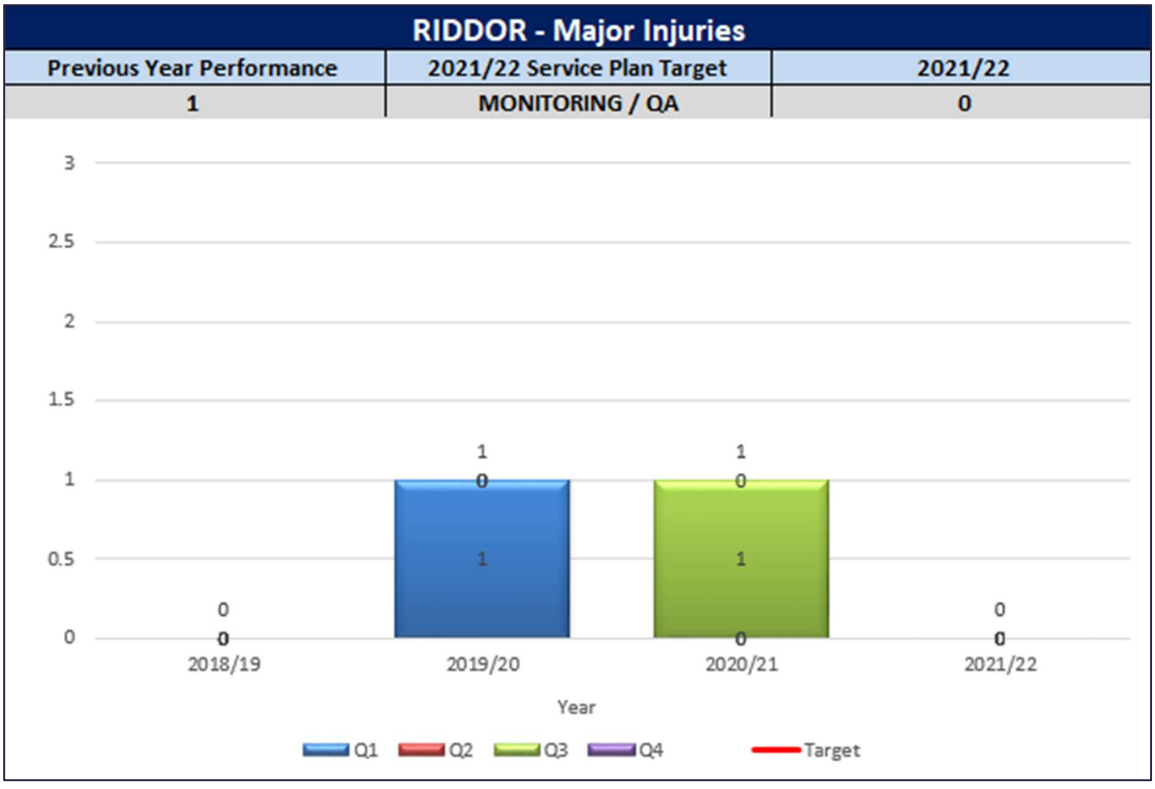
RIDDOR 2013 Changes

From 1 October 2013, RIDDOR 2013 comes into force, which introduces significant changes to the existing reporting requirements. The main changes

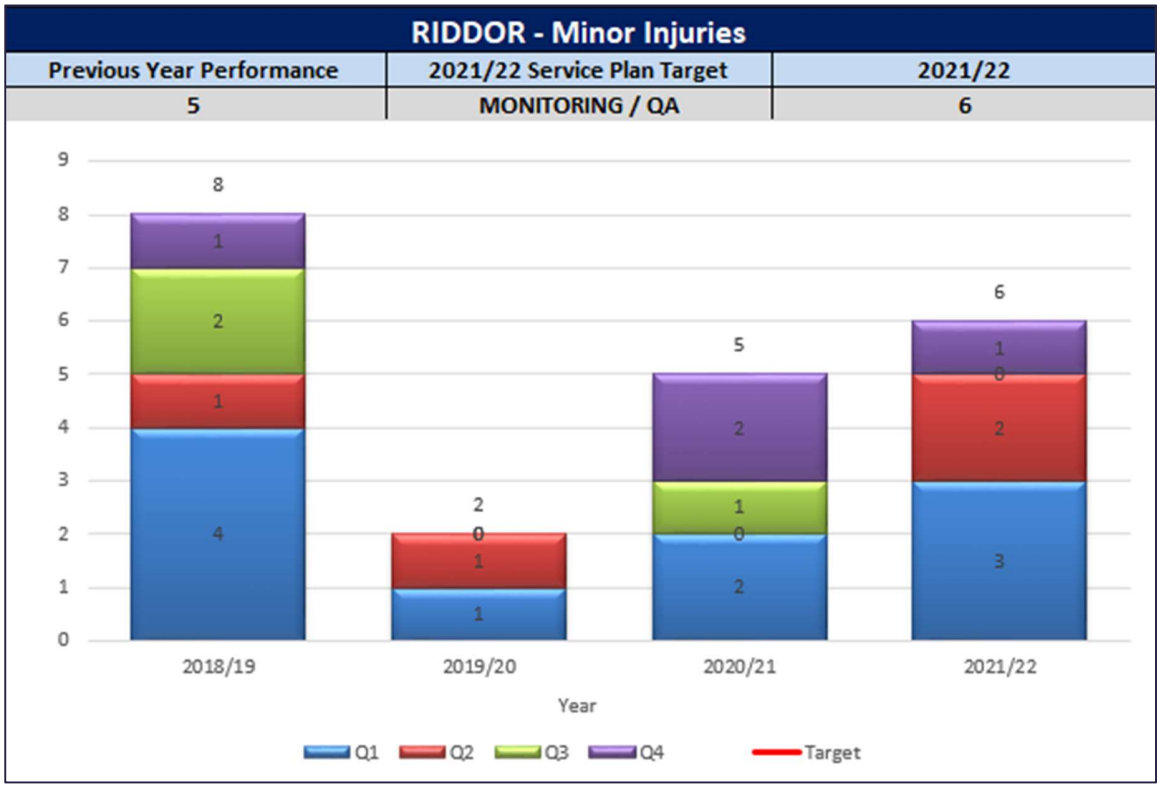
This is a web-friendly version of leaflet INDG453(rev1), published 10/13

Under the Reporting of RIDDOR 2013, 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 the occurrences to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) on behalf of MFRA.

There were no reportable **Major** injuries during 2021/22, a reduction of 1 on the previous year.



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



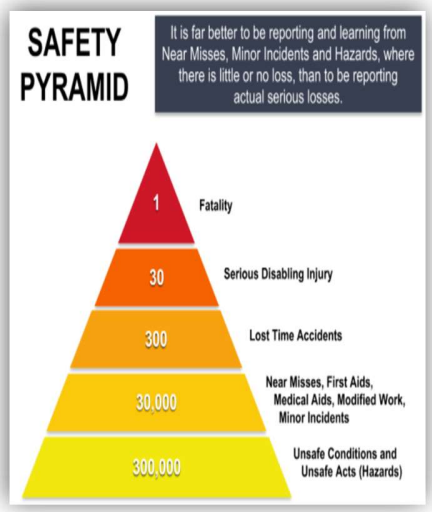

There were 6 **Minor** injuries reported to the HSE during 2021/22, an increase of 1 on the previous year. Two were sprain or strain injuries; one was pain injury; one a hot burn/scald; one cut/laceration and one break/fracture. 3 of the 6 individuals injured were in the age bracket 30-34 and all of individuals were male. No other trends were identified.

# Accident & Injury benchmarking

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. Benchmarked accident & injury performance will be presented in a supplementary report later in the year.

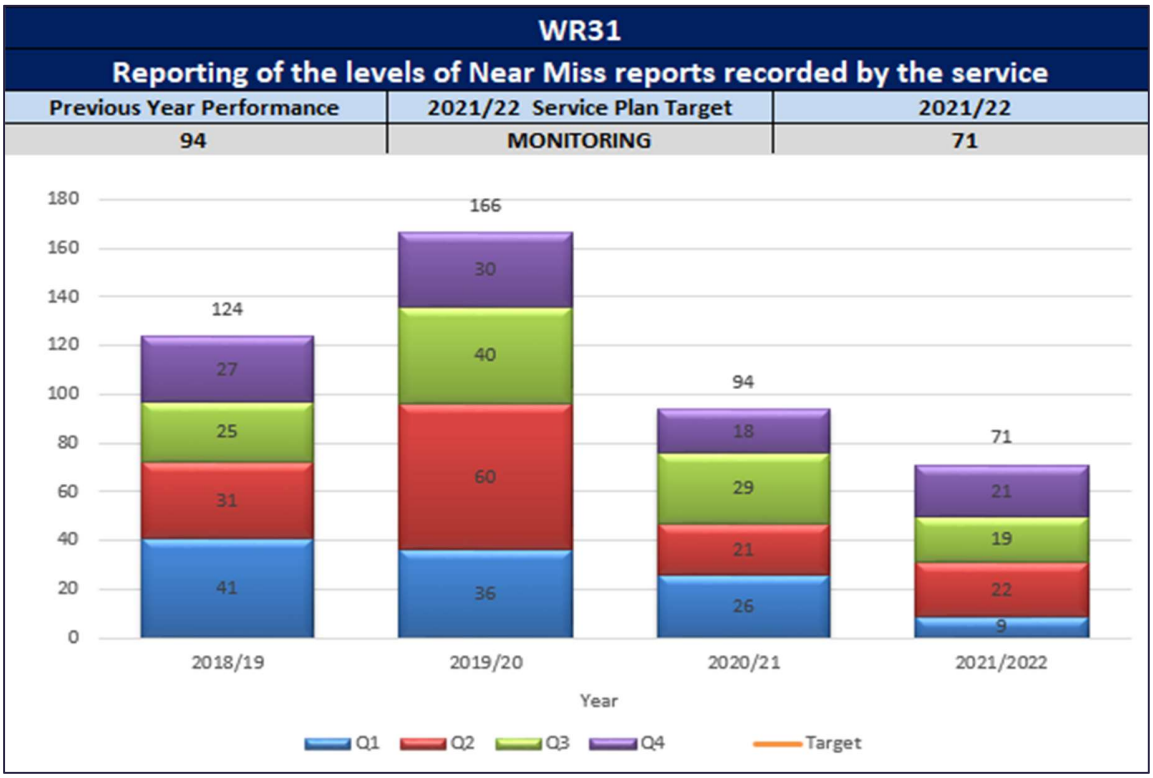
# Reporting of the levels of Near Miss reports recorded by the Service

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 continuously promoted by the H&S Department as it contributes to a positive H&S culture within the Service.

A total of 71 Near Misses were recorded during 2021/22. This is 23 less than the previous year and remains the second consecutive year it has been lower than the 2019/20 period. The reduction is likely attributable to the impact of COVID-19 on the Service, with lack of movement, reduced training and less occupation of premises. Continuing to promote Near Miss reporting which, may see an increase in figures, will remain a focus for the 2022/23 period.



# 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

- The total number of RTC's involving fire service vehicles (LPI RR23)
- The number of Road Traffic Collisions (RTC's) where a Fire Appliance hit other vehicle or object whilst responding to an operational incident (LPI RR31)
- The number of RTC's where a Fire Appliance hit other vehicle or object whilst engaged in routine activity **(LPI RR32)**
- The number of RTC's where a light vehicle hit another vehicle or object whilst responding to an operational incident **(LPI RR33)**
- The number of RTC's where a light vehicle hit other vehicle or object whilst engaged in routine activity **(LPI RR34)**

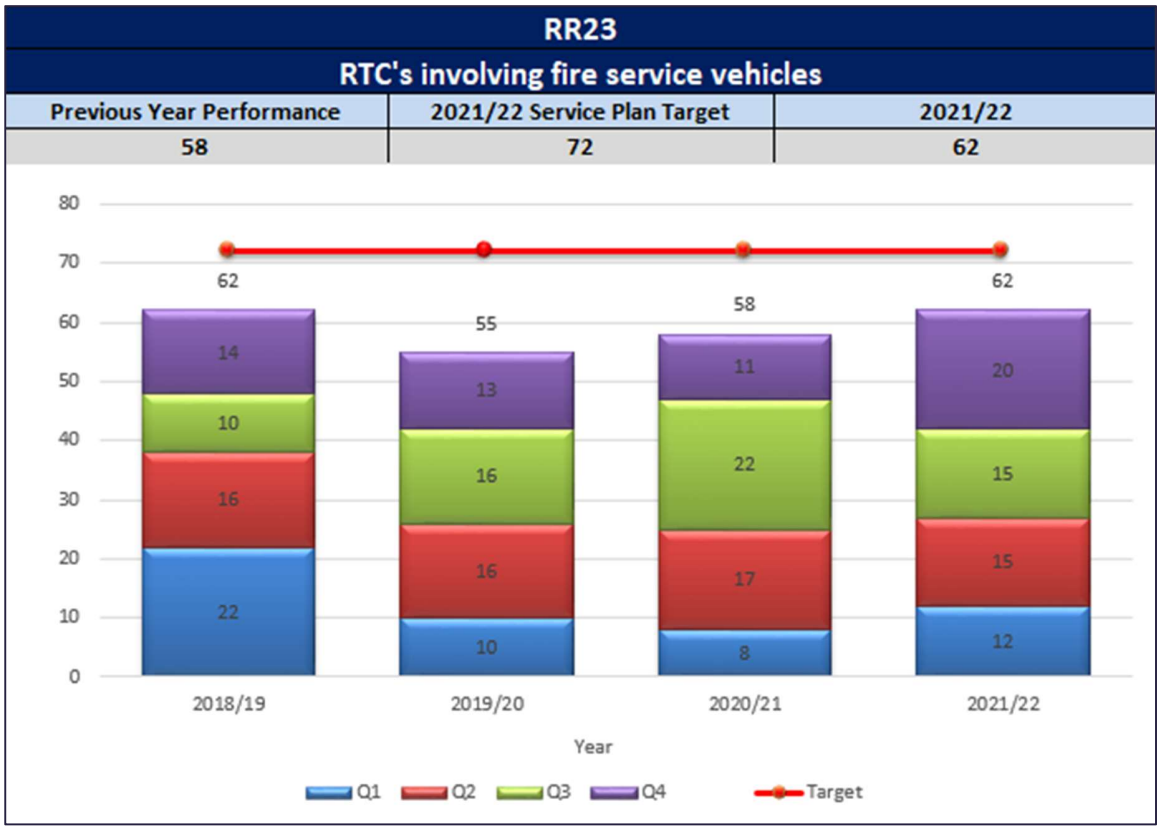
## LPI Monitoring

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

# Total Number of RTC's Involving Service Vehicles

MFRA operate 228 vehicles across its fleet and have covered well in excess of 1 million miles in 2021/22, for both blue light response and routine activity.

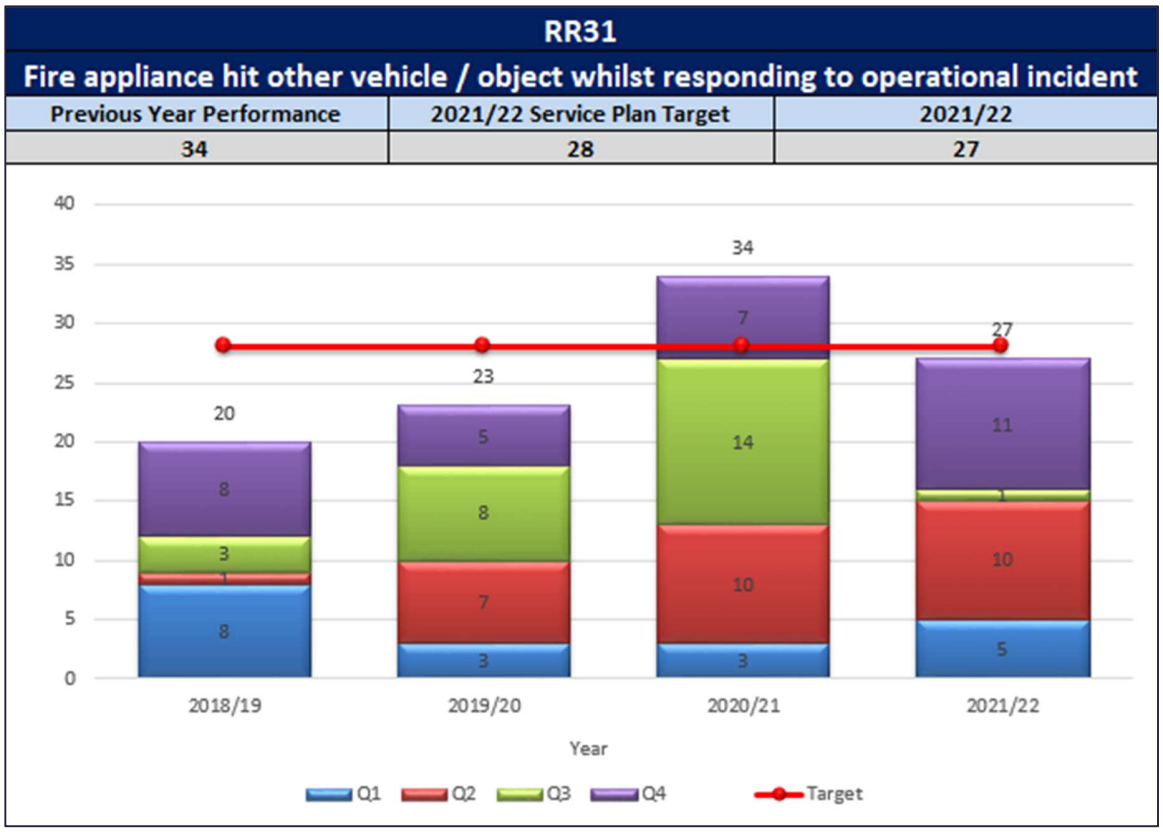
The total number of RTC's involving all types of Service vehicles was 62 in 2021/22, and although an increase of 6 on the previous year, it is still under target by 10.




All road traffic collisions are reviewed at the RRRG which is chaired by the H&S Manager. The group decide what the appropriate course of action for each incident is, with support/development put in place for the individuals involved in the collisions, with the aim of preventing further occurrence.

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

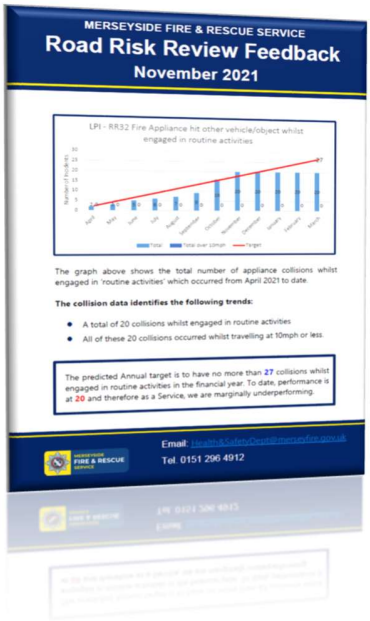
MFRA fire appliances responded on 31,734 occasions to 18,287 incidents in 2021/22, with this activity deemed as the Services most risk critical driving category.




There were 27 collisions involving appliances responding under blue lights, a decrease of 7 on the previous year and 1 below target.

When reviewing the 27 blue light collisions it was identified that the overwhelming trend for this LPI is moving forward under 10 mph, as 23 of the collisions (85%) were in this category. 2 collisions were whilst reversing under 10 mph, 1 was travelling forward over 10 mph and 1 collision occurred whilst moving forward with the speed unknown.

The Service introduced 24 new Emergency Fire Appliance Drivers (EFAD) qualified drivers in 2021/2022.


MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
Road Risk Review Feedback
November 2021

LPI - RR32 Fire Appliance hit other vehicle/object whilst engaged in routine activities

The graph above shows the total number of appliance collisions whilst engaged in 'routine activities' which occurred from April 2021 to date.

The collision data identifies the following trends:

- A total of 20 collisions whilst engaged in routine activities
- All of these 20 collisions occurred whilst travelling at 10mph or less

The predicted Annual target is to have no more than 27 collisions whilst engaged in routine activities in the financial year. To date, performance is at 20 and therefore as a Service, we are marginally underperforming.

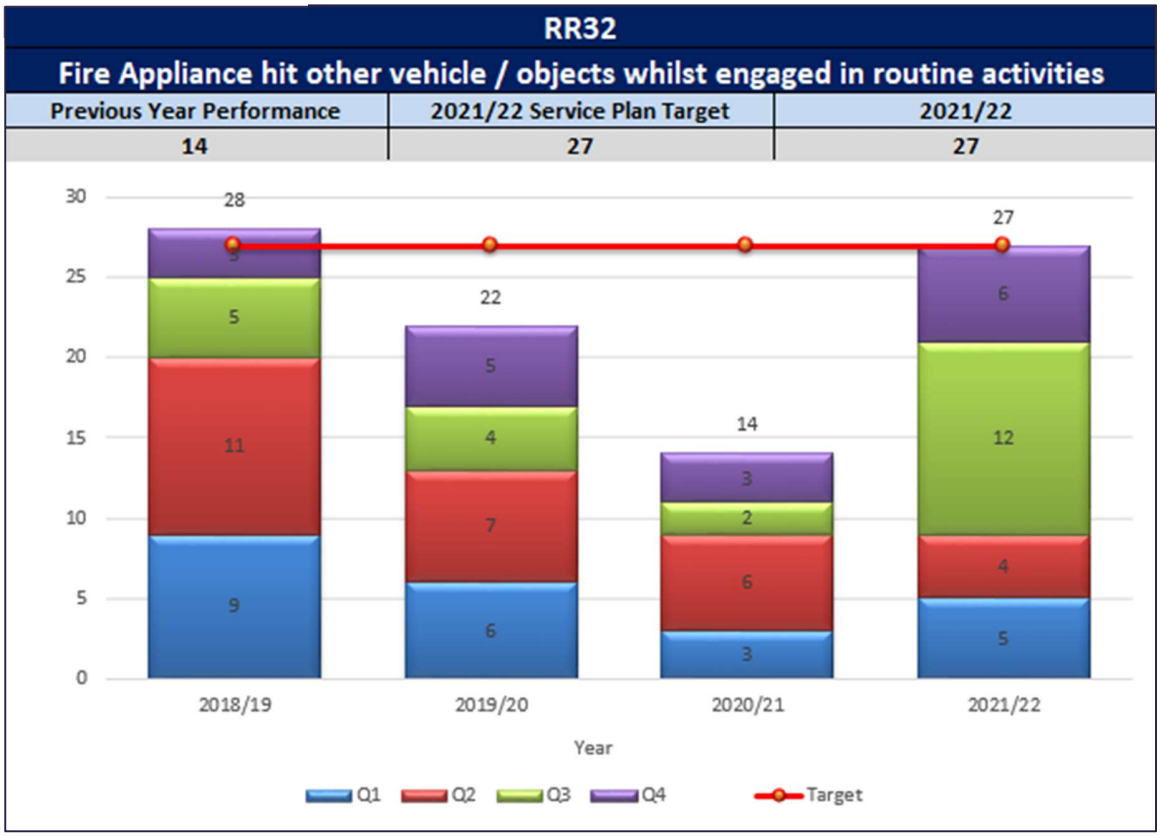
Email:
Tel. 0151 296 4912

Frequent communications from the H&S 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 the situation. Findings are discussed via monthly standardisation meetings and actioned through the RRRG.

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

MFRA fire appliances were involved in 59,077 routine movements in 2021/22.

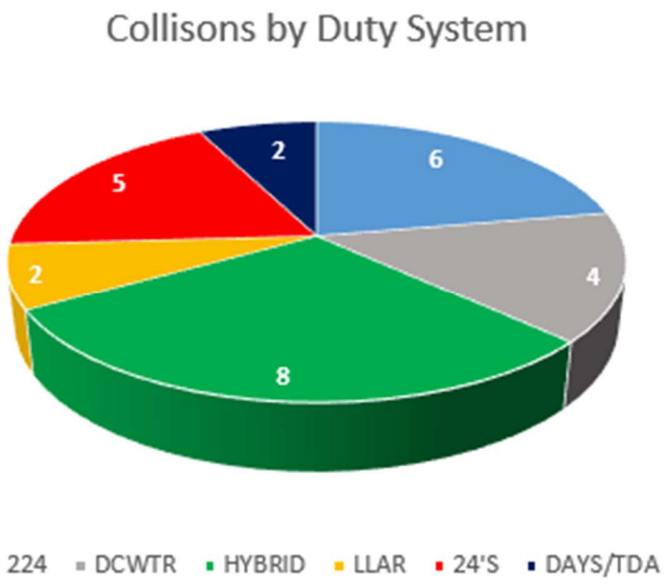


The total number of appliance collisions whilst engaged in routine activities increased by 13 to 27 for the year. This is equal to the predicted target.

Similar to blue light collisions, the trend for this LPI is moving forward at a low speed with 20 (74%) of the collisions occurring under 10 mph whilst moving forward. 1 collision occurred whilst travelling forward at an unknown speed. The other 6 collisions all occurred whilst reversing under 10 mph.

Additional trend analysis of collisions by duty system showed the following:

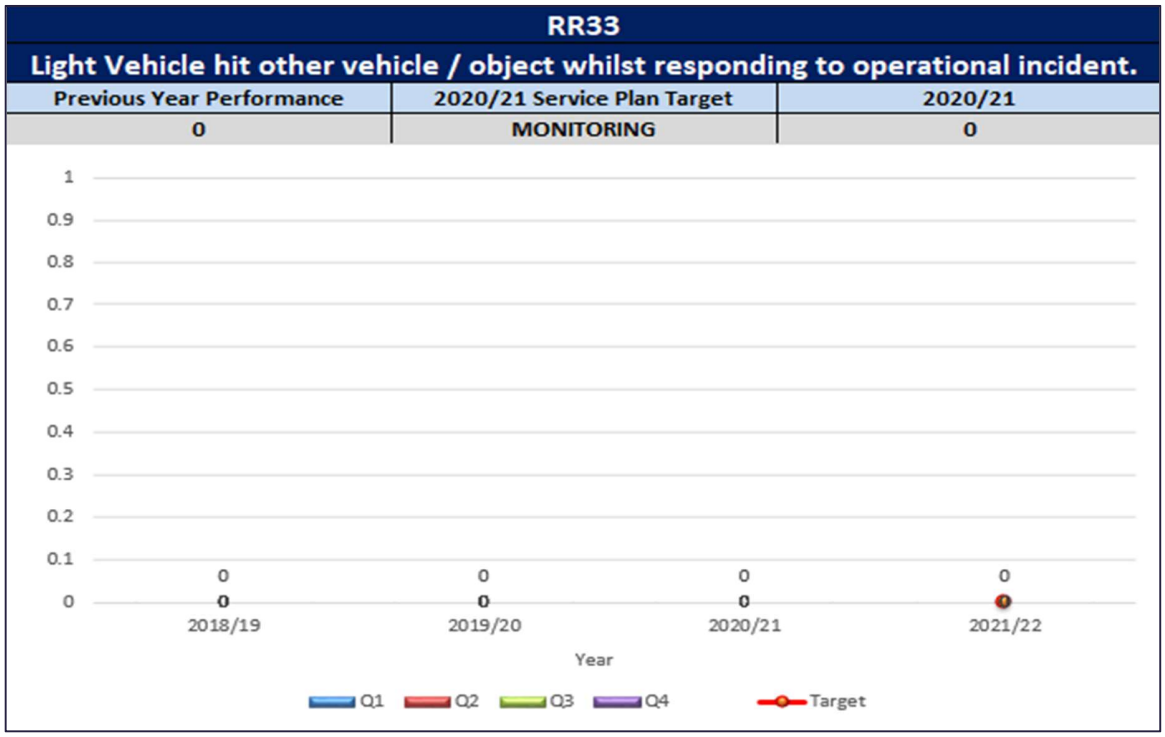
- 2-2-4 Duty System (224)
- Day Crew Wholetime Retained (DCWTR)
- Hybrid (HDCWTR)
- Low Level Activity & Risk (LLAR)
- Days / TDA




Collison's whilst engaged during routine activities were marginally higher amongst the Hybrid stations, with no significant trend identified across the remaining duty systems/stations. Hybrid stations generally have two appliances and are often the busier stations within their districts.

The Service has progressed 16 new LGV drivers into the operational environment during the 2021/22 period.

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



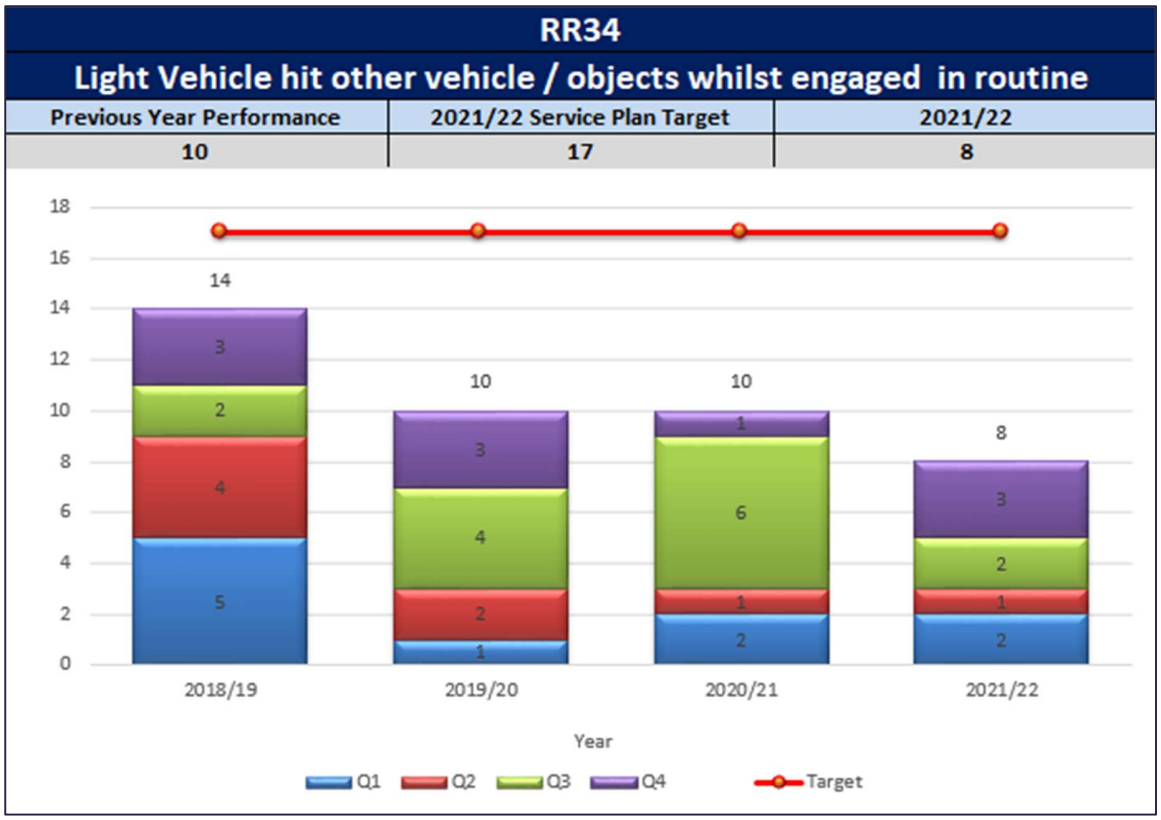

This category covers the blue light response by the Service in light vehicles which is generally the Senior Officer group during emergency response activity. This category is not given a target but is monitored for trends.

Senior Officers mobilised to operational incidents on 3361 occasions in 2021/22 and for the seventh year in succession there have been no collisions in this category.



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

Vehicle collisions involving light fleet vehicles was 8, a reduction of 2 on the previous year.

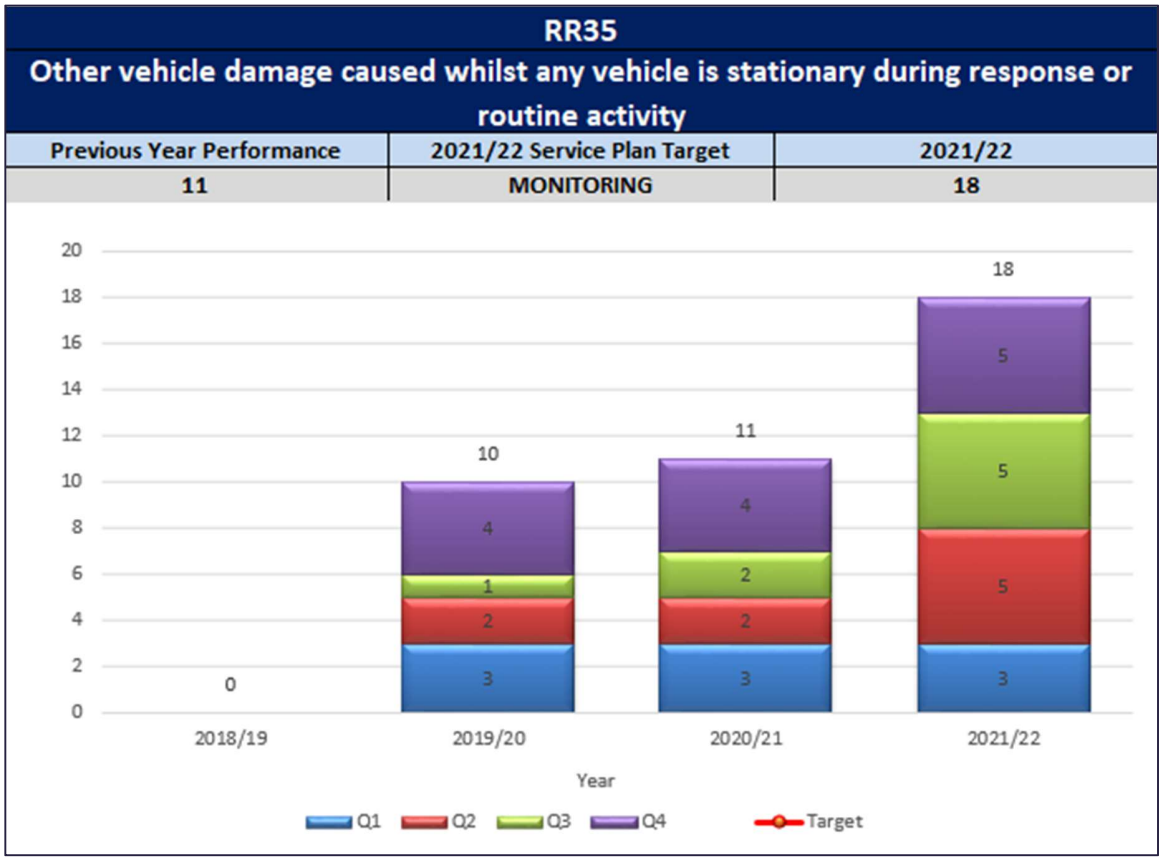



The LPI remained the same even though there was a marked increase in the use of light vehicles in order to assist with the response to the Covid-19 Pandemic i.e., parcel/prescription deliveries, supporting vaccinations, high risk home safety visits etc.

In analysing the data for trends, 5 of the 8 collisions (63%) occurred whilst moving forward under 10 mph; 2 occurred whilst reversing at under 10 mph and 1 collision occurred whilst moving forward over 10 mph.

This category has seen a cumulative 43% decrease in incidents over the past 4 years.

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

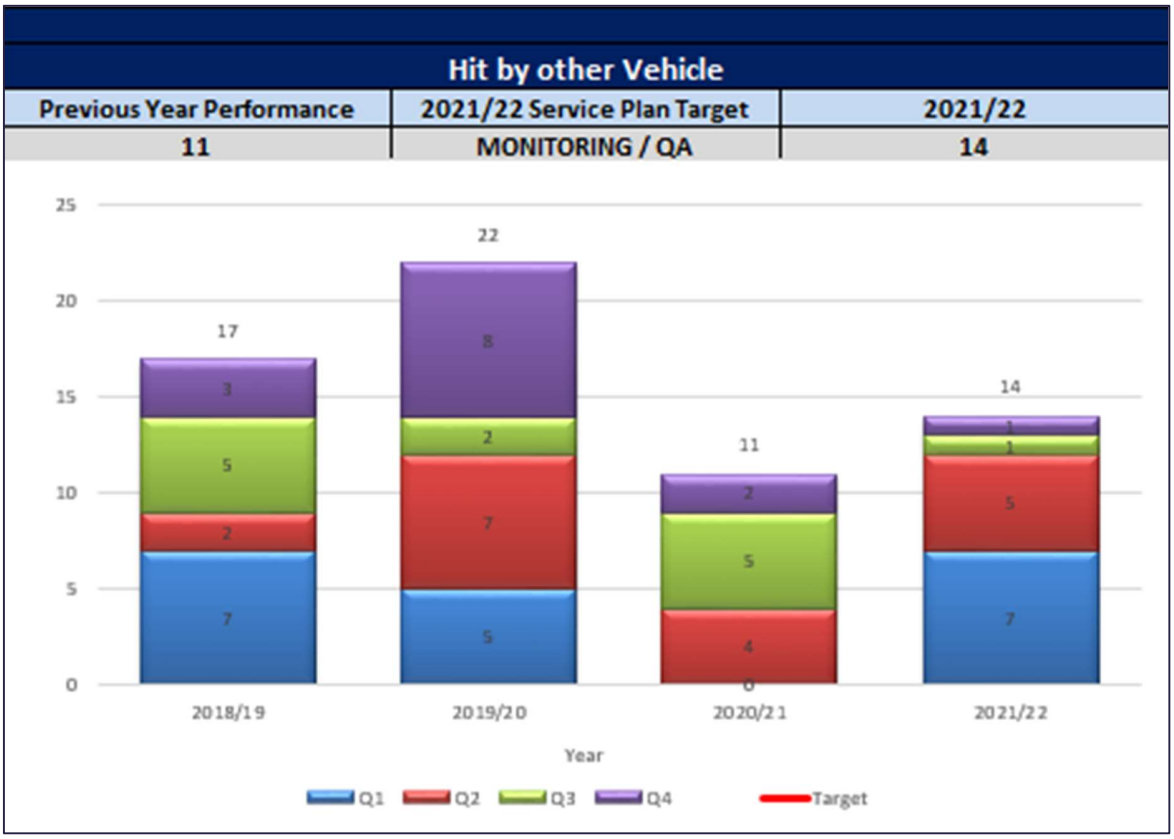



This category was introduced in April 2019 to capture vehicle damage which was not caused by a collision, for both fire appliances and light vehicles. This category is not given a target but is monitored for trends.

There have been 18 reports of vehicle damage whilst the vehicle is stationary during 2021/22. Whilst often difficult to establish 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 3rd Party Vehicle




The RRRG monitors all collisions involving Service vehicles where a 3rd party has been at fault.

There were 14 collisions during 2021/22 which is 3 more than the previous year and 8 less than 2019/20.

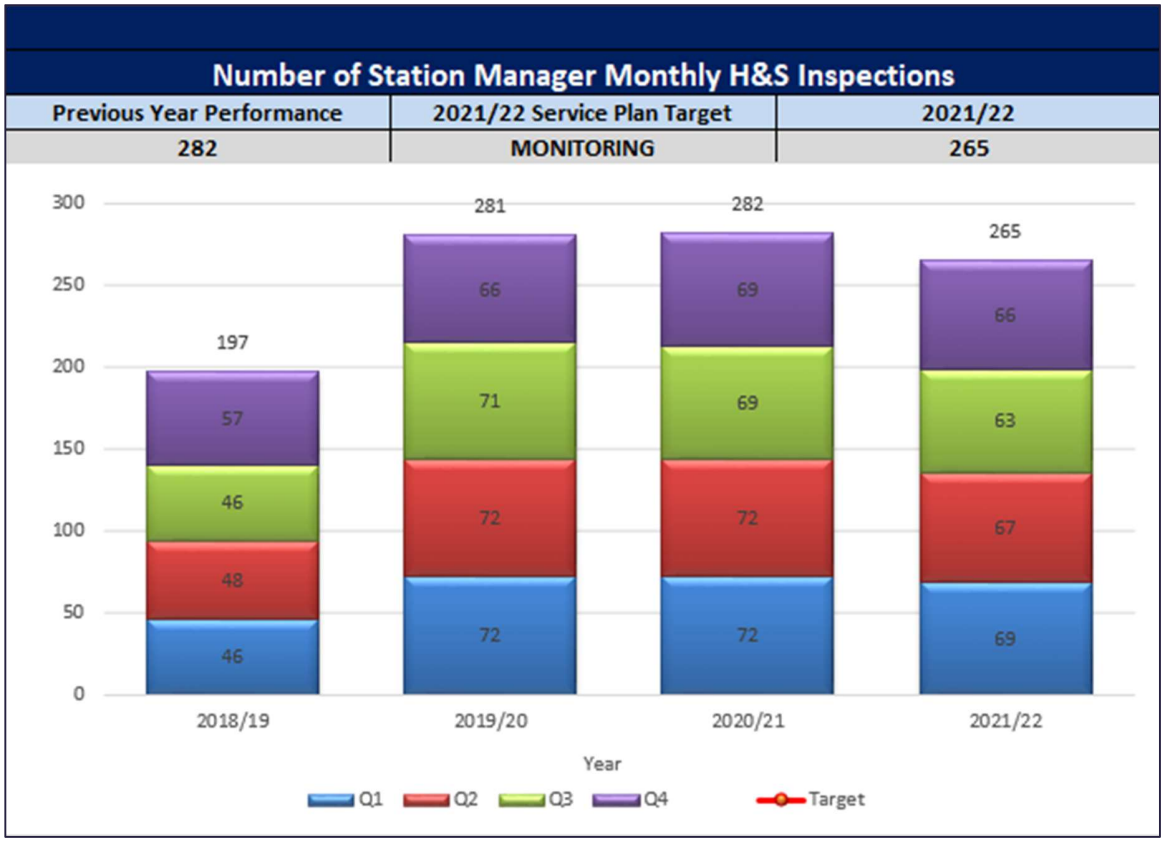


3rd party collisions are closely monitored by the H&S Department to ensure the welfare of staff members involved is looked after.

Collisions were a Service vehicle is hit by a 3rd party are discussed during each RRRG meeting.

# Number of Station Manager Monthly H&S Inspections

The SM 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 H&S Department



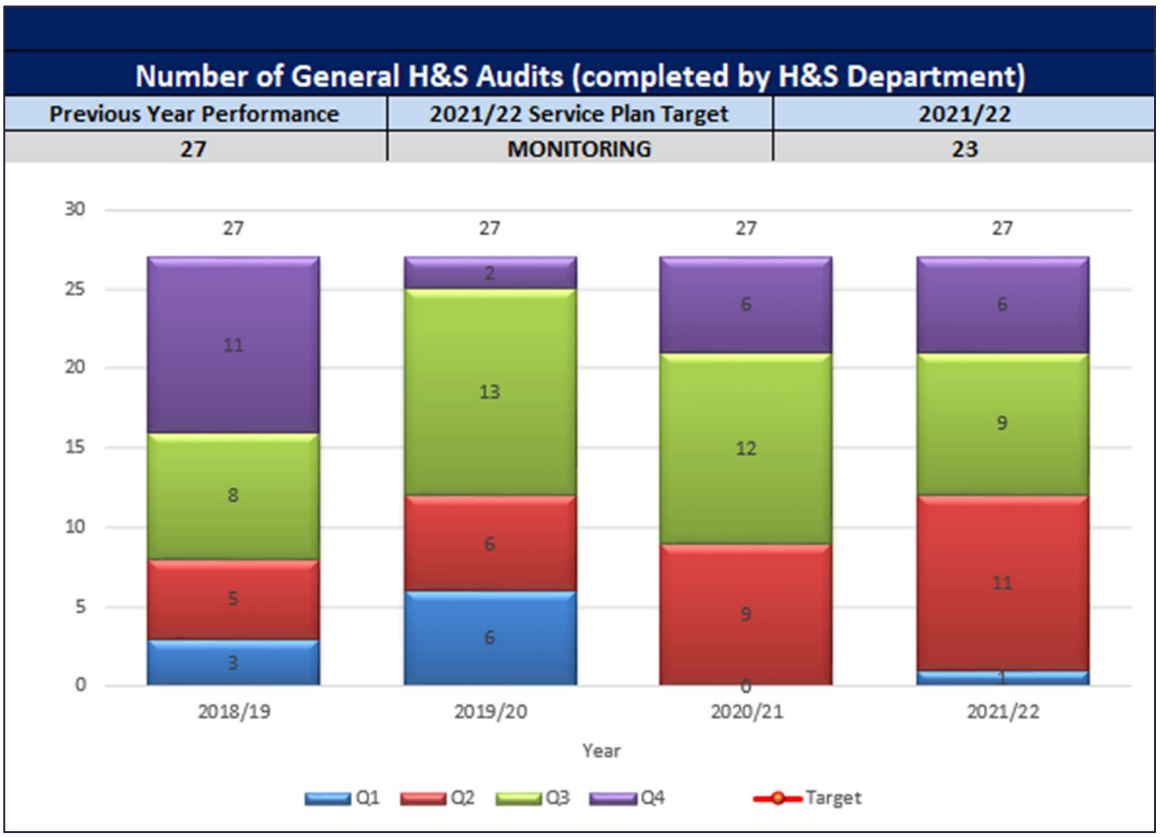

For the period of 2021/22, completion of the monthly H&S inspections was 96% (265). This is another high percentage completion rate for the year. The minimal shortfall was as a result of high Covid/absence rates amongst the SM cohort at periods during the year. No significant trends were identified from the inspections.

As Covid restrictions eased during 2021/22, SM's returned to completing the monthly H&S inspection of their stations and the devolved responsibility to WM's was removed.

The weekly Covid workplace inspection, as carried out through 2020/21, continued early into 2022.

# Number of Annual General H&S Audits

The H&S Department have the responsibility of carrying out General H&S Audits annually across the 27 MFRS sites. Despite the continued Covid-19 Pandemic, all locations were audited in 2021/22.




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.

# A look forward to 2022/23…

The H&S team 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. Priority areas will be:

- Look to further reduce the number of work related accident & injuries, and any associated absence, whilst increasing the number of Near Miss reports.
- Adopt an intelligence led approach using data analysis to help minimise appliance collisions, specifically during blue light response and routine activity.
- Following an Organisational restructure, we will support the SM cohort in achieving a 100% completion of station based monthly H&S inspections.
- Continue to engage and support H&S representatives at Service locations, and those of Trade Unions, to assist in achieving Organisational and Departmental objectives and common H&S goals.
- Ensure learning identified through H&S related incidents is used to improve the safety of personnel.
- Review the functionality of the MFRS H&S management software system, OSHENS to inform on long term suitability.
- Work closely with H&S practioners through established NFCC Regional and National structures, ensuring shared learning and understanding of H&S matters.

Finally, the team will continue to deliver against the H&S commitments made within the Operational Response Functional Plan for 2022/23. H&S objectives heavily focus on the progression of FF contamination work-streams and, using best practice guidance, will build upon the vast amount of work already undertaken in this area by MFRS.

*"Safety doesn't happen by accident"*

MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

GM Craig Whitfield

Health & Safety Manager