

Performance Report Quarter 1

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service

Finance & Audit Committee

1 April – 30 June 2020



DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE

Priority: Making every penny count

KLOE 6: How well do we use resources to manage risk?

KLOE 6 Action

To what extent are business continuity arrangements in place and how often are they tested?

The Service has robust and assured business continuity and significant event arrangements in place. These have ensured the resilience and continuation of the Service during the coronavirus pandemic and subsequent major incidents and events over quarter 1. In line with the Government's guidance, Service personnel, except for station personnel and fleet and equipment technicians, have successfully worked from home using smarter working arrangements.

The Service's business continuity arrangements are aligned to industry best practice and these arrangements were audited by internal auditors with substantial assurance provided.

Each year the Service undertakes a horizon scan to review the emerging threats and risks posed to the Service, along with the community and national risk registers to ensure that arrangements remain current and robust. This was undertaken in April 2020 with learning programmed for delivery during 2020-21.

KLOE 6 Action

To what extent do we show sound financial management of non-pay costs, including estates, fleet and equipment through benchmarking, contract renegotiation and procurement?

The Service makes extensive use of national procurement contracts and actively promotes and partakes in regional procurement opportunities, particularly within the Networked Fire Services Partnership. Current work includes participation in new National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Frameworks for ladders, smoke alarms and Safe and Well equipment.

Our NFCC National Savings Register return shows a significant level of savings generated in previous financial years: £0.5m in 2016-17, £1m in 2017-18 and £0.8m in 2018-19. Figures for 2019-20 will be confirmed in due course.

Due to many suppliers and contractors being furloughed during the pandemic, some procurements have been delayed. A plan is in place to address this in quarter 2. Procurement for equipment for the new fire appliances remains on track.

One area of focus over the year will be on improving contract management and renegotiation for critical suppliers to achieve improved value for money and business continuity. Training for all relevant managers is in place via the e-learning platform. Good progress is being made in this area.

Moving forward, the organisational supplier base will be reviewed to further improve the efficiency of procurement. We will use spend analysis opportunities to reduce the number of suppliers and identify cost savings.

KLOE 6 Action

To what extent do we understand what assets we are responsible for across the Service and how do we demonstrate effective management of these assets?

Both Fleet & Equipment and Estates have five-year Integrated Asset Management Plans that are linked to the Medium Term Finance Plan, the Strategic Assessment of Risk and the Community Safety Plan to ensure future asset provision matches longer-term strategic goals.

A longer-term premises analysis has been completed to deliver better planning of the estate and identify opportunities for improving efficiency and effectiveness. An opportunity to extend from a five to a seven-year plan, which will enable more effective use of resources, whilst maintaining regulatory compliance is being explored. This work will also mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the planned maintenance programme.

During the coronavirus pandemic, the Equipment and Supplies teams have ensured that, in line with Public Health England advice and guidance, all staff have received the necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to carry out their roles effectively. Robust mechanisms are in place to ensure that staff and contractors alike follow mandatory hygiene guidance across Service premises to minimise risks of cross infection.

The Fleet & Equipment maintenance plans to ensure all vehicle and equipment servicing meets legal and statutory requirements remain on track. Plans are in place for the arrival of the next batch of new fire appliances from the manufacturer in October 2020. The introduction of a new Asset Management System database that will encompass the whole Service remains on track for delivery in 2021.

Following management training, an ISO 55001 Asset Management gap analysis was undertaken to identify opportunities for further improvement across the Assets department. An action plan to address identified areas is in production with an intent to achieve completion by March 2021.

KLOE 6 Action

To what extent do we understand and manage our impact upon the environment?

An Environmental Sustainability Plan was published in January 2020, encompassing waste, transport, utilities, carbon emissions, purchasing, improvement projects and Service wide communication of environmental issues.

Green Champions have been appointed across the Service and given day-to-day responsibility to promote sustainability in the areas in which they work. Commitments include sharing best practices and importantly, implementing practical initiatives such as encouraging people to switch off lights and ensuring recycling takes place.

The Service has committed to reducing our utility and fuel consumption through investment, monitoring and introduction of new practices. Initial plans are to invest in environmentally sustainable LED lighting and reduce travel by utilising and embedding smarter working wherever possible. Consumption is monitored monthly and has already shown a reduction in fuel use and emissions over quarter 1. Full analysis will be undertaken in quarter 4.

KLOE 6 Action

To what extent do we demonstrate effective management of Information and Communication technology?

The ICT department has a five-year strategy in place to meet overall organisational intent and ensure the effective delivery of information and communication technology. Overall, this plan remains on track.

Quarter 1 was focused on meeting the challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic and providing assurance that where possible, service delivery could be maintained through remote working.

The ability for the Service to operate business as usual across most of its functions since the implementation of home working in March 2020 has been testament to the cloud technology already in place. Notwithstanding operational firefighters and Fleet & Equipment technicians, the majority of staff have been able to work remotely with very little disruption, taking full advantage of online meetings, secure remote storage and improved electronic processes.

An opportunity was identified to bring forward plans from October 2020 to improve remote access provision. 'Checkpoint' is now in place with upgraded firewalls and increased virtual private network access for all hardware. Moving from an individual licence basis has realised some savings.

Work has also been completed in the use of 'InTune' to increase the organisational ability to remotely patch and update devices and infrastructure in support of network and data security.

KLOE 6 Action

To what extent do our plans address the risks identified in the integrated risk management plan?

The Service undertakes a Strategic Assessment of Risk to ensure that decision-making and planning remains current and reflective of the landscape within which we operate. The document is developed through a PESTELO analysis that draws on a broad range of information, data and intelligence, looking both externally (locally and nationally) and internally and against risk and demand. It is used to ensure that the priorities within the Service's Community Safety Plan (CSP), and the subsequent

delivery plans remain focused on maximising the impact the organisation has on improving public safety and health and wellbeing. The most recent Strategic Assessment of Risk 2020-2022 was published on the Service's website in April 2020. The document was developed taking account of the local Health & Wellbeing strategy, Community Safety Plan, Police and Crime Plan and Community Risk Register. As part of its development, the Service consulted with members of the Local Resilience Forum, Community Safety Partnership and Health & Wellbeing Board.

The Service actively contributes to multi-agency working and engagement with the community through various partnerships and the Local Resilience Forums. At present the focus is on the ongoing situation and management of the coronavirus pandemic and the development of the local outbreak management plans.

KPI		
Number of cyber-attacks prevented.		
	2020-21	Number of cyber-attacks prevented
	Q1	241
	Q2	
	Q3	
	Q4	

KLOE 7: How well are we securing an affordable way of managing the risk of fire and other risks now and in the future?

KLOE 7 Action

To what extent do we understand and take action to mitigate our main or significant financial risks?

The revenue budget for 2020-21 and current Medium Term Finance Plan (MTFP) were approved by Members in February 2020. The MTFP showed a forecast deficit of £1.5m for 2020-21, rising to £3m for 2023-24. Since February, like all organisations, we have been significantly impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. In the short-term, we have received additional funding of £1.3m to help us respond to this impact. The longer-term financial impact cannot yet be determined but does represent a significant financial risk to us. Our future funding position was already uncertain, and the potential impact of the coronavirus pandemic now adds an additional layer of complexity. We will be much clearer about what this looks like as we progress through the 2020-21 financial year, and when more information becomes available. The economic shock of the pandemic will undoubtedly impact on the amount of funding that we receive, particularly through council tax receipts and business rates. We can also expect to see costs increasing in certain areas, such as property repairs and maintenance contracts.

There had been some uncertainty over the timing of the next Spending Review, but that is now confirmed as taking place this year. We have been engaging with local MPs, the Home Office and NFCC to influence the debate on financial sustainability for fire and rescue services. We expect the Spending Review to provide a 3-year funding settlement, although the details will not be known until December 2020 at the earliest.

We are already reviewing the MTFP and financial plans for 2021-22 onwards, including the options to address the forecast budget deficits, and how these could be impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. We will be sharing this information with Members in the coming months.

During this busy time, we have also been working with our external auditors, Deloitte LLP to complete the 2019-20 Financial Statements and audit process. We are on track to present the Statements for approval at the Finance & Audit Committee meeting on 17 September.

KLOE 7 Action

To what extent do we have a track record for achieving savings and avoiding any residual future budget gaps?

The current MTFP identifies that budget savings are required in future years: £1.5m in 2021-22, £2.5m in 2022-23 and £3m in 2023-24. Officers are continuing to work on the options for savings to help address this so that we have a clear financial picture once we know the outcome of the Spending Review 2020 process. Members will be updated later in 2020.

Work on our Value for Money Framework has continued, and we recently demonstrated this tool to the Home Office. We are now working on ensuring that the tool is used in performance reporting, so that there is a clear link between our performance and how this can drive financial savings and efficiencies for the Service, partners and wider society.

KLOE 7 Action

To what extent is our use of reserves sustainable and promoting new ways of working?

The current Reserves Strategy was approved by Members in February 2020 as part of the MTFP. The level of funding in each reserve has been reviewed and updated as part of our work to close the 2019-20 financial year and complete the statutory Statements of Accounts. Some additional funding has been added to the Ill-Health Retirement Reserve and Capital Replacement Reserve to help mitigate financial risk in those areas.

During quarter 2, South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) will conduct a financial resilience audit which is focused primarily on our Reserves Strategy.

Priority: Supporting and developing our people

KLOE 8: How well do we understand the wellbeing needs of our workforce and act to improve workforce wellbeing?

KLOE 8 Action

How well do we understand the wellbeing needs of our workforce and act to improve workforce wellbeing?

The Service has a robust and audited Health and Wellbeing programme to support staff which is overseen by senior Officers. Health and Wellbeing procedures are available to all staff which outlines all the support mechanisms available to staff, including mental health support, chaplain, peer support and other external self-service provisions.

We have 33 staff providing peer support, who promote national campaigns such as World Mental Health Day, International Stress Week, and Time to Talk. Mental Wellbeing sessions are integrated into the Supervisory Managing Performance and Wellbeing training.

The Health and Wellbeing team is part of a South West Emergency Services Collaboration Group, set up by Devon and Cornwall Police, which the Service has chaired since December 2019. This partnership working provides an insight into what initiatives other services are involved in, and what we could learn from them, as well as identifying areas for future collaboration.

Absence management continues to be a key focus for the Service and improvements identified by our internal auditors are being actioned and overseen by Officers. It is recognised that long-term sickness is the largest contributing factor to the absence figures in quarter 1 across all staff groups except Corporate. This trend is reflected nationally in fire and rescue services. Management of long-term absence is more complex than short-term absence, as the illness/conditions may be serious and involve surgery and recovery time. With any long-term absence, staff are referred to Occupational Health from 28 days absence for advice and recommendations. Musculoskeletal remains the highest causation of absence and support mechanisms remain with weekly physiotherapy clinics. Through a cost benefit analysis, funding for private investigations is considered if NHS waiting times are delaying treatment and/or recovery.

In quarter 1, due to Government guidance and the closure of gyms, no fitness testing took place. Fitness videos were uploaded via the staff intranet CONNECT and promoted through Wellbeing Wednesdays to support staff in maintaining and improving fitness during lockdown. The average fitness levels for the Service before the pandemic was 91.8% pass for on-call staff and

97.9% pass for wholetime. 18 members of staff on a fitness improvement programme during the coronavirus pandemic were provided with revised plans which were adapted to incorporate items that could be used for fitness exercising and were easily accessible in the home.

An Occupational Health provision was maintained during the coronavirus pandemic via remote clinics. A return to work process (involving occupational health intervention) was developed for those returning to work after being symptomatic and/or testing positive. The physiotherapist provision also remained, remotely. No routine medicals were held during quarter 1.

The Service has a corporate target to reduce the number of working days lost to non-physical ill health by 5% each year. In quarter 1 there was a reduction of 201 working days compared to the same quarter in the previous year, demonstrating we have exceeded this target.

The Service has a corporate target to achieve average sickness levels lower than the previous three-year average. Sickness data for quarter 1 is set out in table 1 (overleaf) and absence levels are lower than the previous quarter (quarter 4 2019-20).

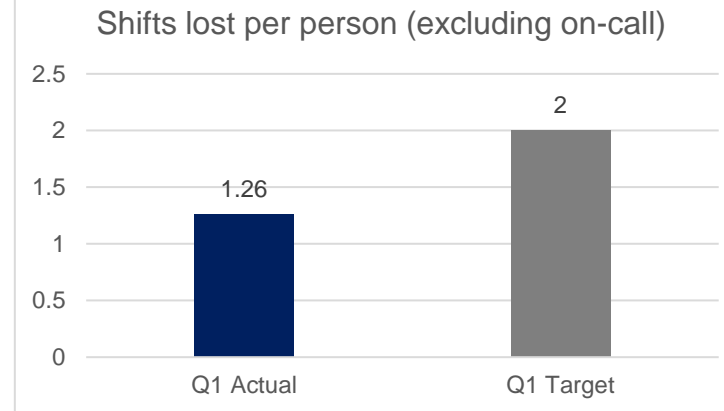
KPI				
Number of shifts/days lost per person to sickness – all staff groups				
Quarter 1 2020-21	Fire Control	Corporate	Wholetime	On-call*
Total No. in Staff Group	33.22	281.73	405	605.32
No of individuals that had a short-term absence in Q1	6	20	44	66
No of individuals that had a long-term absence in Q1	2	5	17	17
% of total sickness absence in Q1 due to short term sickness	19%	57%	28%	31%
% of total sickness absence in Q1 due to long-term sickness absence	81%	43%	72%	69%
No. of shifts lost per person in Q1 due to sickness absence	2.42	0.46	1.61	2.42
No. of shifts lost per person in the same quarter last year	3.76	1.53	1.77	4.30
Category for highest reason for absence (i.e. musculoskeletal)	Respiratory	Respiratory	Musculoskeletal	Musculoskeletal
Shifts/Days* lost per person 2020-21 cumulative	2.42	0.46	1.61	2.42

Table 1

***on-call sickness is counted in days**

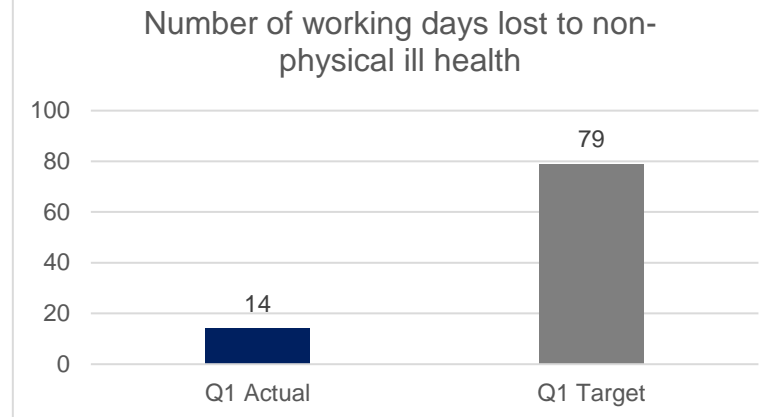
Corporate Target

We will aim to achieve average sickness levels lower than the previous three-year average.



Corporate Target

To reduce the number of working days lost to non-physical ill health by 5% each year.



KLOE 9: How well trained and skilled are staff?

KLOE 9 Action

How well do we understand the skills and capabilities of our workforce?

The current Annual Training Action Plan has had to be reviewed due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Risk critical training such as Breathing Apparatus (BA) and Fire Behaviour Training has continued throughout quarter 1. Following Government advice, we have reduced the numbers of personnel attending each course to enable social distancing. Risk assessments and additional PPE measures have been put in place. Recruit courses scheduled for March/April have been facilitated in June/July and a phased recovery plan for training has been developed and is being implemented.

Embedding of our competence recording system, Gartan Expert, continues to improve this quarter with all operational staff achieving the targets set for maintenance of skills competencies. Fire Control competence is now programmed for completion in quarter 3 with identification of Network Fire Service Partnership Control Licence, Operational Licence and Maintenance of Skills for Control being updated in Gartan Expert during quarter 2.

KLOE 10: How well do we ensure fairness and diversity?

KLOE 10 Action

How well do leaders seek feedback and challenge from all parts of the workforce?

The Service has an internal communications engagement plan to ensure there is opportunity for all parts of the workforce to provide feedback and challenge to leaders.

In quarter 1 our communications and engagement with staff has been focussed on our response to the coronavirus pandemic which necessitated changes in working arrangements for many of our staff. This has involved:

- twice weekly Question Time dial in sessions, which reduced to two sessions a fortnight in May
- weekly Major Incident Command Brief for managers
- staff survey to understand any workload or welfare issues, with pulse surveys to measure current feelings – this will continue as we maintain current working arrangements, and
- weekly one to ones and team meetings over the phone and using video calls.

The programme of Chief Fire Officer workplace visits was put on hold in March due to lockdown restrictions, but a decision was made to reinstate these in quarter 2.

We continue to engage with unions on a regular basis attended by the Director of People and Director of Community Safety to enable effective two-way dialogue between the Service and representative bodies. In addition to this during quarter 1, informal daily contact was made with the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and weekly contact was made with UNISON, the Fire and Rescue Service Association (FRSA) and the Fire Officers' Association (FOA).

We are preparing our Communications and Engagement Plan for the development of the Community Safety Plan and this will include opportunities for staff briefings and consultation.

KLOE 10 Action

How well do we identify and address potential disproportionality in recruitment, retention, and progression?

The Service has a quarterly workforce profile report with supporting Key Performance Indicators that allows us to monitor any trends in new starters by staff group to identify any disproportionality with age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin and religion or belief.

In order to address any disproportionality in recruitment, we have various positive attraction activities such as:

- localised and longer-term recruitment campaigns (particularly for on-call stations)
- Officers visiting other fire and rescue services to see what initiatives they have set in place to increase the diversity of their workforce, and
- on-call 'Have a Go Days' which aim to attract and support a more diverse applicant base. However, we were unable to run these events during quarter one due to the coronavirus pandemic restrictions.

On-call applications remained open and candidates were placed on hold while a recruitment process to accommodate social distancing restrictions was developed. Corporate roles were not advertised during this period.

Promotions processes have been designed to promote fair promotion opportunities for all. The new promotion process at crew manager and watch manager level was due to be launched on 1 April 2020, but this was delayed to 3 August 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. Five members of wholetime staff were promoted from the existing crew manager promotion pool. All were male and four of these individuals were white British and one preferred not to say.

The quarterly workforce profile report allows us to monitor any trends in new starters by staff group in terms of disproportionality with age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin and religion or belief.

Wholetime

Of the nine new starters in quarter 1, three were staff who returned on abatement to support with the coronavirus pandemic staffing. Six members of staff were recruited via the transferee process. All were white British males and the highest proportion of 33% were in the 25-35 age band.

On-call

Due to the lockdown in quarter 1, all on-call recruitment ceased. There was one new starter who was at the end of the recruitment process when lockdown came into force.

Fire Control

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, it was not possible to progress the four successful applicants at the same time therefore only two staff started in this period. Of the two new starters in this quarter, they are both white British males.

Corporate

Of the six new starters in this quarter, they were predominantly in the 25 to 35 age band. Five were female and one was male. Five were white British and one declined to say.

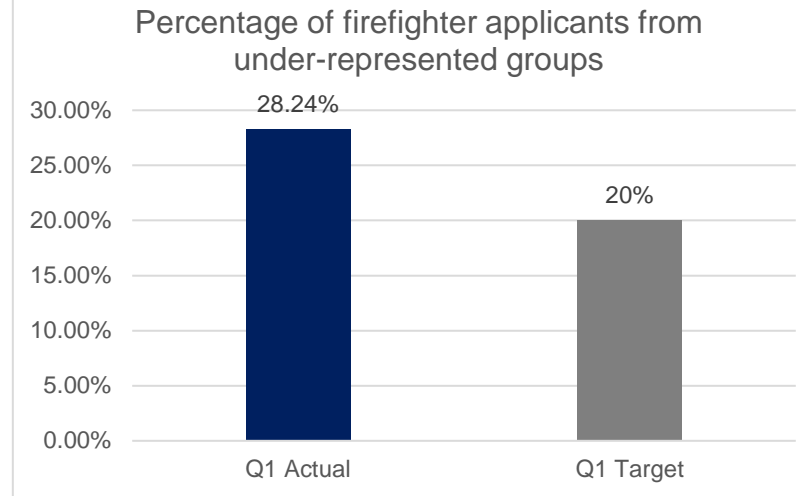
Local and national workforce data is used as a comparator. When comparing DWFRS staff ethnicity to the local population in quarter 4 (latest available), there is a 3.43% variation below the local ethnicity levels. When reviewing data from quarter 4 (latest available) against census information, the numbers of DWFRS staff who have advised they are LGBT is 2.24% fewer than the national LGBT population.

Developments to the leavers process are ongoing in liaison with the Knowledge Management team and ICT who have advised that this process will be ready to go live at the end of quarter 3. The new process will be online, and will be mandatory, allowing for monitoring of reasons for leaving and any associated trends. Currently, the process is not mandatory, and it is not uncommon for leavers discussions not to take place, making any reporting inconsistent.

In quarter 1, there were 24 leavers. Five leaver discussions were completed, twelve staff declined, seven were not offered a discussion. We analyse discussion and data trends from leavers discussions to inform organisational understanding and improve retention of staff. Of 24 leavers in quarter 1, the age group with the highest proportion of leavers was 46-55 with 10 leavers. Two leavers were female, and 22 leavers were male. There were no significant leaver trends in terms of sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin or religion and belief. Primary reasons for leaving were age (retirement and full service), ill health, transferred to wholetime service, personal/work commitments, moved away and obtained employment elsewhere.

Corporate Target

We will aim to improve the diversity of our workforce as a whole (currently standing at 21.47%) with a focus on increasing the diversity of firefighters by attracting 20% of applicants from under-represented groups as part of our positive action programmes.



KLOE 11: How well do we develop leadership and capability?

KLOE 11 Action

How well do we manage and develop the individual performance of our staff?

All joiners are invited to a corporate induction programme and guidance is provided to line managers on inducting their new starters. Due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, the face to face corporate induction, which is usually held at Headquarters, was cancelled. A new online format for corporate induction was developed and has been delivered over two half-day sessions on 3 and 5 June with 25 attendees. Following the corporate induction, a survey regarding the effectiveness of the process was sent out. Fifteen individuals completed the feedback questionnaire, with 10 rating it as exceeding expectations and five as meeting expectations.

Evaluation of the induction period is also assessed from data from probation reviews. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, probation periods have been extended to support staff and managers to accommodate new ways of remote working for corporate staff and fortnightly drill nights for on-call staff.

The new promotion process will be in place from 3 August 2020 and the intention is to rotate temporary promotions that have exceeded a six-month timeframe (within members of the pool) to increase opportunities for development.

The launch of the new Personal Review process was delayed from 1 April 2020 to 1 July 2020. A full evaluation will be completed in April 2021 regarding the effectiveness of this new process in managing and developing the individual performance of our staff.

KLOE 11 Action

To what extent are the career pathways of all staff effectively managed?

The refreshed development pathways are a blended learning approach which includes e-learning and is supported by Development Programme workbooks. E-learning in quarter 1 has significantly increased in both production and take up due to social distancing restrictions and home working. Newly promoted staff are issued with the development workbooks and progression is monitored. This will also be applied to those successful in the new promotion process which is being rolled out in quarter 2. Feedback on the workbooks is encouraged so that they remain relevant and are continuously improved.

The Leadership Programme and Trainer/Assessor courses postponed from quarter 1 will recommence from October with additional safety measures in place.

Apprenticeships in all departments and at all management levels have continued during the coronavirus pandemic with online learning and meetings applied where achievable. Additional support from the department has been provided when required. In quarter 1 there were 24 people on apprenticeships. Our apprenticeship levy spend in quarter 1 was £22,928 which is an increase of £6,021.90 from quarter 4 in 2019-20. Our expired levy in quarter 1 was £16,879 which is a decrease of £5,057 from quarter 4 in 2019-20.

Coaching courses have successfully continued virtually through quarter 1 and a number of new coaches will join the cohort throughout the year.

The Incident Command team have adapted their delivery to virtual assessment and training where possible without any significant impact on qualifications and re-accreditations. The two virtual reality scenario vans will be completed in quarter 2 and commence on-station delivery.

KLOE 12: How effective is the Occupational Health and Safety management system in the Service?

KLOE 12 Action

How well structured and embedded is the Health & Safety policy, practices, and culture to ensure a safe and legally compliant Service?

The Health and Safety Committee and the associated department continue to monitor the arrangements in place to keep our staff and the public we serve safe. There are no causes for concern to raise with Members.

As Members are aware, there is a corporate target to migrate to the international standard of ISO 45001 as the current Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series (OHSAS) BS 18001 will be withdrawn on 12 March 2021. Following a weeklong continual assessment visit and a second ISO 45001 migration audit in May, it was assessed that the Service had 95% migration to the standard and as of 3 July 2020 we will have certification to ISO 45001 - Occupational Health and Safety Management Standard. Moving forward, the Service will now revert to ISO 45001 surveillance visits assessment across all parts of the Service. This will give the Service a six-monthly independent audit of our health and safety practices and culture. The first surveillance visit is due to take place in December 2020.

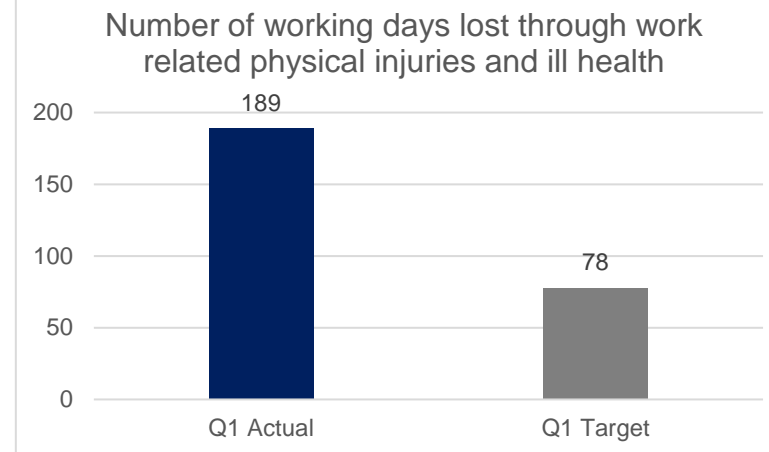
The number of days lost to physical work-related injuries and ill health absence quarterly trend is up from 83 to 189 days, which is not showing improvement over the same quarter last year. In this quarter, fifteen people (incidents) are contributing to the total. Slips, trips, or falls is the highest injury category within the report, just over a half (59%) of the days lost are due to this category. After investigation, there is no identifiable pattern to indicate where control measures have been less effective.

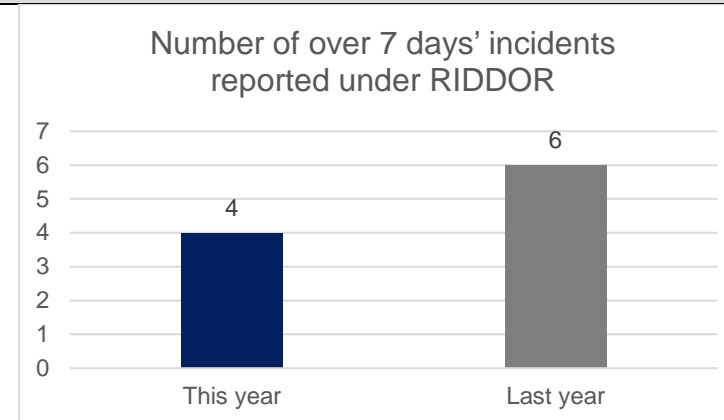
The total number of events reported has seen a slight fall of 7% in actual numbers is 109 compared to 118 in the same quarter last year. The number of physical injury or ill health reports has seen a decline, reducing by 10% (30 to 27). This quarter has also seen that the total number of Adverse Occurrence Reports (AORs) reported has dropped slightly (99 down to 93). This is averaging one a day over the quarter. Over 42% (46) of the reported AORs are vehicle related reports, 25% (27) are physical injury or ill health reports and around 17% (18) are near miss events which is pleasing to report as these provide an excellent learning opportunity. It should be noted that the number of reported 'events' will be larger than the total number of reports (AOR's) as one AOR can be used to report a combination of events e.g. injury or harm and vehicle damage or failure. As in the case of this quarter, there were 109 events but only 93 AOR's.

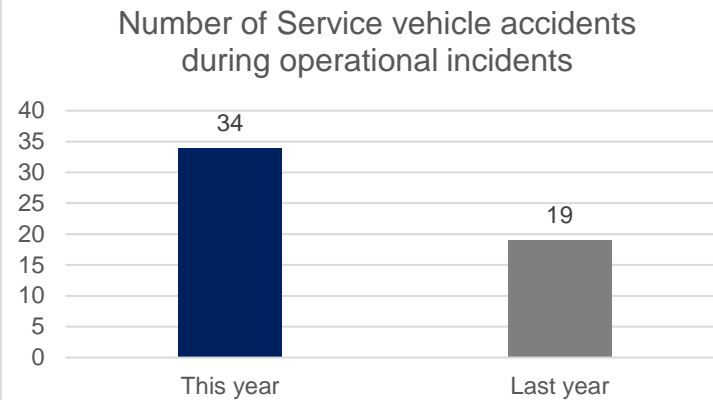
Training in the enhanced reporting system has given staff a good understanding of the requirement to complete reports as required by procedures. This has reduced under reporting and supports the AOR submission process. There appears to be no real pattern emerging from these events and control measures have been implemented where possible to reduce the likelihood of reoccurrence. In quarter 1, there has been a 33% reduction (6 to 4) of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). These regulations require employers, the self-employed and those in control of premises to report specified workplace incidents. The four reports made were within the 'over 7 day' category in RIDDOR.

Corporate Target

To reduce the number of working days lost through work related physical injuries and ill health by 5% year on year.



KPI**Number of dangerous occurrences incidents reported under RIDDOR.****KPI****Number of over 7 days' incidents reported under RIDDOR.**

KPI**Number of Service vehicle accidents during operational incidents.****KLOE 13: Are effective governance and decision-making arrangements in place?****KLOE 13 Action**

How well does the fire and rescue authority have oversight and scrutiny to ensure that the Service is appropriately effective and efficiency in ensuring the safety of communities from fire and other risks?

As Members are aware, the Service has five key priorities. The development and performance against these are overseen and scrutinised by Members on a quarterly basis. Priorities one, two and three, are reviewed at the four Local Performance & Scrutiny Committee meetings and Priorities four and five are reviewed at the Finance & Audit Committee.

The performance reports at these meetings provide details on the effectiveness and efficiency of the Service as well as looking at how the Service is supporting, developing and ensuring the health and wellbeing arrangements. At six monthly intervals the Authority receives a progress report against all five priorities supported by a full presentation.

The Authority publishes an Annual Report and the Statement of Assurance for public review, this is scrutinised and approved during their September Authority meetings each year. Members are also able to scrutinise the performance of the Service through regular seminars, workshops and working groups.

The Authority has adopted a set of financial planning principles and assumptions on which to base its revenue budget and MTFP. This supports the budget planning process, with the principles kept under review and updated when there is reasonable evidence to suggest that a change is required. The MTFP is developed and aligned to the learning and outcomes within the Strategic Assessment of Risk.

The Authority oversees and scrutinises the development and delivery of the Community Safety Plan (CSP). As part of its strategic planning arrangements, the Service consults with key partners through community partnerships and the Local Resilience Forums to inform the Strategic Assessment of Risk.

As part of the development of the forthcoming CSP Members' seminars are programmed for December and January. This will ensure the delivery of the draft CSP at the February 2021 Authority meeting to allow for public consultation and engagement during March - May 2021 and the delivery of a final draft for Member approval in June 2021.

KLOE 13 Action

How effective and efficient are our governance arrangements?

The Authority's governance arrangements have been assured through an independent peer review by the Local Government Association (LGA). The 2019-20 Statement of Assurance, required under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, is to be presented to the Authority for approval in September 2020, after which it will be published on the Service's website. The process for its delivery has been assured by internal audit and through the LGA peer review.

The Statement of Assurance is comprehensively supported by a range of assurance processes which includes a full review of the Service's governance arrangements which are aligned to CIPFA/SOLACE best practice.

The Service's internal governance arrangements have recently been adapted due to the coronavirus pandemic, to ensure the continuation of the delivery and improvement of the Service as detailed within the Service Delivery Plan. The adaptations made includes the revision of the Service's meeting structure, the appropriate attendance and engagement of relevant Officers and each meeting's terms of reference and programme of work.

KLOE 13 Action

How effective and efficient are we at managing data?

Members can be assured that the Service is robustly managing its information compliance requirements. Our responses to data protection legal responsibilities requests are within agreed timelines this quarter; 88% of Freedom of Information requests were dealt with within 20 working days and 100% of complaints were responded to within 14 working days.

Work is continuing on track to ensure our information security arrangements align to the requirements of the national Cyber Essentials and the national Cyber Security Standard. Delivery of the action plan, which is being monitored at the Information and ICT Steering Board, is reducing the cyber resilience risk.

Seven security incidents have been reported this quarter and all were low risk with no loss of data. These were predominantly phishing emails, prompting further staff awareness on recognising and dealing with a suspicious email.

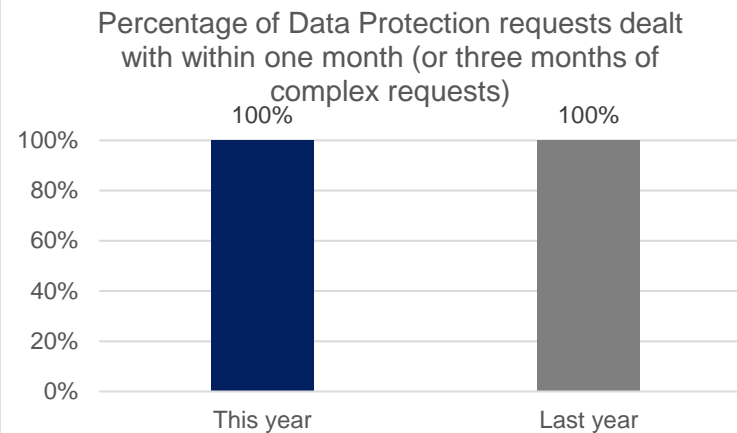
Progress against the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) action plan is progressing well and the concept of privacy by design is being embedded into Service processes through Data Protection and Information Risk impact assessments. Work is continuing to manage retention periods for information held in archive and legacy systems and ensure these are applied to new systems and processes going forwards.

A project has been initiated to scope the use of Office365 for automating process improvements, allowing us to maximise technology and make further efficiencies whilst effectively managing our data. Project plans are underway to start moving existing systems to Office365, migrate department-based documents to SharePoint and introduce automatic processes to replace those that are paper based to support the requirements for remote working using Microsoft forms.

All staff are expected to complete Information Security/Data Protection e-learning to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities regarding data. We monitor the completion rate of this e-learning and escalate to Officers if required. Compliance is currently good at 86%.

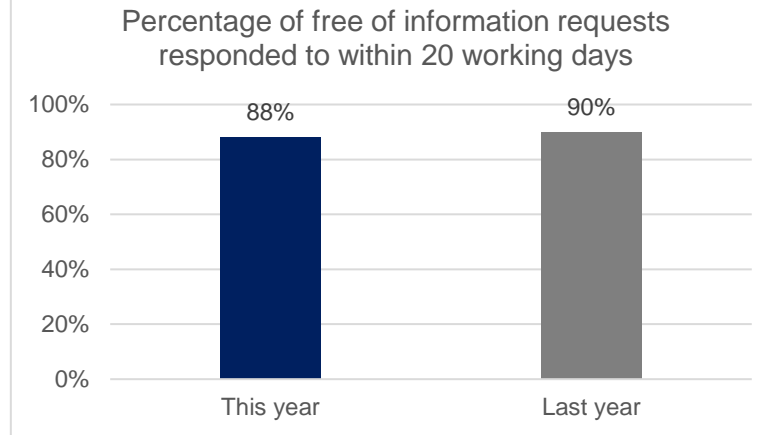
KPI

Percentage of Data Protection requests dealt with within one month (or three months for complex requests).



KPI

Percentage of freedom of information requests responded to within 20 days.



KPI

Percentage of complaints resolved within 14 days.

