

For Publication

**Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Human Resources Policy and Challenge
Group
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Item No. 7**

REPORT AUTHOR: HEAD OF SAFETY AND STRATEGIC PROJECTS

SUBJECT: HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

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Background Papers: None

Implications (tick✓):

LEGAL		✓	FINANCIAL	
HUMAN RESOURCES			EQUALITY IMPACT	
ENVIRONMENTAL			POLICY	
CORPORATE RISK	Known	✓	OTHER (please specify)	
	New		HEALTH AND SAFETY	✓
			CORE BRIEF	

Any implications affecting this report are noted at the end of the report.

PURPOSE:

For Members to consider the Service's Health and Safety Annual report for the year 2015/16.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Members acknowledge the Health and Safety Annual Report for information and comment.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Health and Safety Annual Report (covering the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016) provides an overview of the work undertaken by the Health and Safety Support Team (HSST) and the Management of Health and Safety within Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS). The publication of the Service's Health and Safety Annual Report is a requirement as laid down in the Service's Health and Safety at Work policy.
- 1.2 The role of the HSST is to provide competent assistance to the Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) in meeting its statutory health and safety obligations and provide professional and independent advice and support to management at all levels and to employees in meeting their health and safety obligations.
- 1.3 As detailed in the body of the report, considerable work has been undertaken in the management of health and safety throughout the Service and particularly in the following areas:
- Health and Safety policies;
 - Adoption of National Operational Guidance and Tactical Operational Guidance and the alignment of risk assessments and training materials;
 - Generic and specific activity, manual handling and fire risk assessments;
 - Provision of safety critical information;
 - Provision of health and safety related training;
 - Active monitoring and audit;
 - Safety event reporting and investigation;
 - Reactive monitoring of accidents, near misses and vehicle collisions;
 - Vehicle mounted CCTV Systems; and,
 - Occupational health and wellbeing.
- 1.4 During the reporting period there have been 84 workplace accidents. This compares well when benchmarked over the previous five year average of 86. In addition following the RoSPA audit and receipt of the Platinum Level 4 Award, a considerable amount of work has been completed by the Team to put in place and embed the recommendations detailed within the audit report. The action plan produced detailing the recommendations are scheduled to be completed by the end of this financial year.
- 1.5 There are always improvements to be made and the emphasis is and will continue to remain a sensible, risk-based balanced approach. It is important that the safety culture within the Service remains a positive one, ensuring that health and safety is built into normal ways of working, and recognising that people are a key resource and that good health and safety management is vital to prevent injuries, ill health and unnecessary losses.

1.6 The Annual Health and Safety Report 2015/16 is attached for Members information and comment.

**SERVICE OPERATIONAL COMMANDER TONY ROGERS
HEAD OF SAFETY AND STRATEGIC PROJECTS**



Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service



HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2015 - 2016

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This Health and Safety Annual Report, incorporating information the Service's Occupational Health Unit (OHU) provides a summary of the work undertaken by the Health and Safety Support Team (HSST) and OHU during the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 inclusive. The HSST provide competent assistance to the Fire and Rescue Authority in meeting its statutory health and safety obligations as well as professional independent advice and support to management and employees assisting them in meeting their specified responsibilities and obligations. The aim of this report is to provide an overview of the work undertaken in the management of health and safety within Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS).

The body of this report details the work carried out in the management of health and safety throughout the Service. As in the previous reporting period, the involvement of various key individuals has helped the Service to continually move forward. The Health and Safety Steering Committee (HSSC) acting as the senior management group to oversee and co-ordinate the key health and safety management processes has ensured the maintenance of health and safety direction and focus. The HSSC members and the HSST would like to thank all Service employees for their co-operation in helping to maintain a safe workplace and prevent injury during the wide range of activities undertaken.

During the reporting period the Service has seen an increase in the number of workplace accidents from 73 in the previous year rising to 84 in 2015/16 and has continued a minor upward trend since 2013/14. The amount of days lost as a result of accidents has unfortunately increased compared to the previous four reporting periods. It should be noted however that 63% of those days lost were as a result of one workplace injury.

Work carried out by the HSST has continued to be proactive with a risk-based balanced approach designed to provide safe solutions. It is as important as ever to ensure that the safety culture within the Service remains a positive one. Health and safety must continue to play a significant part of all our workplace activities whether operational, routine or during training. The Service was successful in the completion of a number of key health and safety objectives during 2015 – 2016; this included:

- Further development of health and safety refresher training modules for managers;
- The implementation of a programme of medical health surveillance for operational personnel;
- The alignment of BFRS risk assessments and safe systems of work with new National Tactical Operational Guidance;
- A review and update of BFRS Breathing Apparatus training in line with National Operational Guidance for Breathing Apparatus (OGBA)
- Delivering a programme for the audit of health and safety management systems and the publication of reports on the findings; and,
- Delivering a programme for active monitoring and the publication of reports on the findings.

2. HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

2.1 Commitment to Health and Safety

The Chief Fire Officer and Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority's aim is to continually improve the management of health and safety at work and health and safety performance which is fundamental to the success of the organisations overall service delivery. People are recognised as a key resource within the organisation and good health and safety management is vital to prevent injuries, ill health and unnecessary losses.

The Chief Fire Officer has appointed the Assistant Chief Officer to be the Principal Officer who has the primary corporate responsibility for Health and Safety, supported by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) who effectively plan, control and direct resources to secure health and safety, including the prioritisation and setting of objectives and programmes and provision of finance and resources. This demonstrates high level commitment to integrate health and safety into business activities and to monitor and measure health and safety management performance against health and safety objectives, plans, performance indicators and targets.

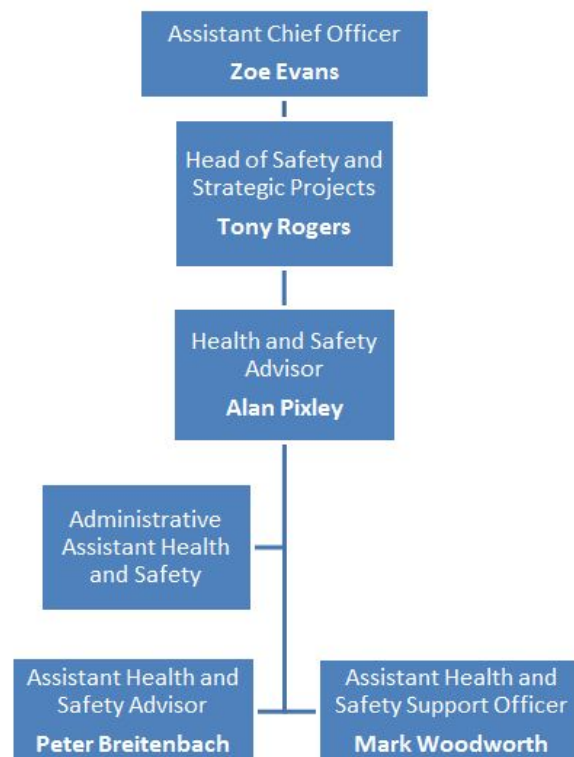
2.2 Health and Safety Support Team

The HSST sits within the Service's *Safety and Strategic Projects* function, with Service Operational Commander Tony Rogers as the Functional Head. The HSST role fulfils the legal requirement for the Service to obtain competent health and safety assistance and advice. The HSST is led by the Health and Safety Advisor (HSA), Alan Pixley, who holds a NEBOSH Diploma and is a Graduate Member of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH).

The Assistant Health and Safety Advisor post is currently held by Mr Peter Breitenbach who holds a NEBOSH General Certificate qualification.

The Assistant Health and Safety Support Officer (AHSSO) post is currently held by Watch Commander Mark Woodworth. Mark holds the IOSH Managing Safely qualification. The Administrative Assistant Health and Safety post is currently vacant.

HEALTH AND SAFETY SUPPORT TEAM¹



With regards to procurement, the HSST manages a small revenue budget which is used for the purchase of health and safety equipment, calibration of existing equipment and for the provision of driving licence checks via an external provider.

2.3 Health and Safety Policy

The Service's *Health and Safety Policy V13 01/01* was issued in May 2013, and is currently under review. The policy includes a statement of intent and clearly defined responsibilities and arrangements for the management of health, safety and welfare. It is supported by a number of referenced existing subordinate policies providing more specific and detailed information and guidance regarding the topic to which it applies.

During the reporting period several health and safety policies were reviewed and re-issued including:

- *Display Screen Equipment* May 2015
- *Reporting and Investigation of Vehicle Collisions* July 2015
- *Provision of Safety Critical Information* November 2015
- *Managing Health and Safety in Practical Operational Training* February 2016
- *Managing Fire Safety in Service Premises* March 2016

3. RISK CONTROL SYSTEMS

3.1 Risk Assessment

National Operational Guidance / Tactical Operational Guidance

The National Operational Guidance Implementation Group has met on a two monthly basis throughout 2015/16. The group oversees the adoption of Tactical Operational Guidance and the alignment of associated risk assessments and training materials. By adopting this documentation the Service can achieve the maximum inter-operability benefits using agreed common generic terminology as well as following agreed national Fire and Rescue Service guidance and best practice.

In 2015/16 the following risk assessments were reviewed and aligned with National Guidance:

- **OH 002** Acetylene
- **OH 003** Chemical & Hazardous Materials
- **OH 005** Asbestos
- **OH 012** LPG Cylinders
- **OH 017** High Pressure Pipe Lines
- **OH 018** Dealing with Incidents involving Chemical Fatalities
- **OH 012** Highways
- **OF 001** Firefighting - Buildings

- **OF 001A** Firefighting - High Rise
- **OF 001C** Firefighting - Public Entertainment Venues
- **OF 001D** Firefighting - Commercial & Industrial Buildings
- **OF 001F** Firefighting - Shopping Centres
- **OF 001G** Firefighting - Secure Accommodation
- **OF 006** Positive Ventilation or Attack
- **OR 010** Rescue from Vehicles
- **OR 015** Rescue from and Working in Confined Spaces
- **OR 015B** Rescue from Silos
- **OR 015D** Rescue from Collapsed Structures

Specific Activity (General) Risk Assessments

The Service holds and maintains a library of general risk assessments. These cover a broad range of local and Service-wide work activities that present significant risk to the Service. During the reporting period the Service published **10** new general risk assessments and reviewed **90** existing risk assessments. As part of the risk assessment process, recommendations identified for the implementation of further workplace precautions were completed. These follow up actions were allocated to the relevant responsible person via the RIVO Safeguard system where the task is tracked to completion by the HSSC (for Service wide recommendations) or the HSST (for local recommendations).

Specialist Risk Assessments

Manual Handling Assessments

The Service holds and maintains a library of Manual Handling assessments. These cover all identified manual handling operations carried out across the Service. Progress towards the completion and review of manual handling assessments is monitored by the HSSC who assigns the assessment completion or review to the relevant competent assessor with an appropriate deadline. During the reporting period the Service completed **2** new manual handling assessments and **70** existing assessments were reviewed.

Fire Risk Assessments

To comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, all Service premises are required to be the subject of fire safety risk assessments. This ensures the implementation of appropriate fire precaution and protection measures and as a result the maintenance a fire emergency plan. Fire risk assessments were reviewed for Ampthill, Bedford, Dunstable, Kempston, Luton, Shefford, Stopsley, and Woburn fire stations, Workshops and Southern Area Office during the reporting period.

Provision and use of Work Equipment (PUWER) Assessments



Before any item of work equipment is requisitioned, a PUWER assessment is completed to ensure that equipment is suitable, safe for use and in conformance with all appropriate design and construction requirements. The PUWER assessment will also consider the arrangements required to ensure that the equipment is maintained and inspected throughout its working life and identify any training needs to ensure it is used by personnel who have received adequate information, instruction and training. During the reporting period the Service completed **12** new PUWER assessments and reviewed **71** existing assessments.

3.2 Information and Training

Safety Critical Information

Information is considered safety critical if it is deemed that serious harm to employees or others could reasonably be foreseen as a result of one or more employees being unaware of the information. Service Policy dictates that this will result in the publication and distribution of a Safety Bulletin. In the reporting period there were 2 Safety critical bulletins published for the following topics:

- *Drager Breathing Apparatus Secondary Air Supply Hose Stowage:* During an annual service on a Drager Breathing Apparatus set the Secondary Air Supply Hose was found to be excessively damaged and worn. Further inspection found that the plastic retaining clip was incorrectly positioned with too much distance between the retaining clip and the metal crimp on the male connector at the end of the hose. This had allowed the hose - which was inadequately secured - to flex and move resulting in excessive wear and damage. BA users were instructed to visually check the Secondary Air Supply Hose and Retaining Clip during every general check to ensure correct stowage. BA active monitoring by Watch Managers was also implemented following the publication of this Safety Bulletin.



- *Electricity Substations:* Crews from BFRS attended an external fire involving an electrical substation and a *defensive mode* was adopted awaiting the arrival of a UK Power Networks representative. Once in attendance the UK Power Networks representative was asked to confirm that the power to the substation was isolated before crews were committed to carry out firefighting operations. The UK Power Networks representative confirmed that the information available to him indicated that the power was isolated. However this could not be totally confirmed until a physical check of the substation was carried out. The fire was extinguished in surrounding bushes ensuring that water was not directed at the substation. On inspection it was confirmed that the substation was still 'live', contrary to the information provided by the UK Power Networks control centre. This event was reported as a 'Near Miss' and work carried out by both BFRS and UK Power Networks to review and update the Electricity Tactical Operational Guidance.

Information not deemed to be safety critical is provided to relevant personnel by the most effective means. An example of this is the issue of Critical Update Messages using the LearnPro system. In the reporting period there were 15 Critical Update messages issued covering the following topics:

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| • <i>Response Support PowerPoint Presentations</i> | May 2015 |
| • <i>Safety Critical Bulletin - Secondary Air Supply Hose Stowage</i> | May 2015 |
| • <i>Working on Carriageways</i> | June 2015 |
| • <i>Welfare of Breathing Apparatus (BA) Wearers</i> | July 2015 |
| • <i>Lorry Drop; Illegal Immigration Event</i> | August 2015 |
| • <i>LearnPro Changes</i> | August 2015 |
| • <i>Rescue from Silos</i> | October 2015 |
| • <i>Breathing Apparatus Competencies</i> | October 2015 |
| • <i>Site Specific Risk Information</i> | November 2015 |
| • <i>Class 700 Trains</i> | December 2015 |
| • <i>JESIP Modules</i> | December 2015 |
| • <i>Safety Critical Bulletin - Electricity Substations</i> | December 2015 |
| • <i>BA Operational Guidance</i> | February 2016 |
| • <i>Tactical Ventilation Phase 2&3 RDS Personnel Only</i> | February 2016 |
| • <i>Identification of Police Commanders PDF</i> | February 2016 |

Accident Investigation Training



The Service maintains an Accident Investigation Team (AIT) comprising of nominated operational managers at the role of Station and Group Commander. Training provides investigators with an understanding of the Service reporting and investigation process and the knowledge and confidence to carry out event investigations and identify immediate and underlying causes of the event. In February 2016 the HSA and AHSA attended a four day accident investigation and evidence gathering course for Regional H&S practitioners. Additionally, 2 new members of the AIT attended the RoSPA accident investigation course at their training facility in Birmingham. To further assist all Line

Managers in the safety event investigation process, a PowerPoint refresher training module for accident investigation is available on the Service Intranet and also as a LearnPro refresher training module.

RIVO Safeguard Training

The RIVO Safeguard system is a web-based health and safety management tool which assists the Service in its effective management and control of specific key health and safety related issues including accident / near miss / vehicle collision reporting and investigation. Access rights to the RIVO Safeguard system is given to Line Managers and is an essential



tool to assist the health and safety management process. Training in the use of the RIVO Safeguard system has been reviewed and updated. During the reporting period the training was provided by the AHSSO and the AHSA to 12 Service control staff, 19 Operational and 5 non-operational Line Managers in the reporting period. In the same period refresher training was provided to 7 Operational Line Managers.

Manual Handling Training



The Service provides all staff with information and training for manual handling to ensure, where possible, that injuries are avoided. It is the responsibility of the Occupational Health Unit (OHU) to deliver initial and refresher manual handling training across the Service. The Service Fitness Advisor delivered 11 manual handling refresher courses in 2015/16 that were attended by 84 BFRS employees.

Stress Awareness Training for Line Managers

In February 2016 the Service Training Centre hosted a number of Managing Mental Health at Work courses organised by the OHU. The courses were delivered by *Mind* as part of the Blue Light Programme and covered:

- Introduction to Mind's Blue Light programme and research;
- Mental health – What affects staff and volunteers at work;
- How to support personnel living with mental health problems;
- How to have conversations about mental health;
- Mind's approach to creating mentally healthy workplaces;
- Managing your own mental wellbeing; and,
- Signposting – Blue Light and Mind resources.



To compliment this training the HSST produced a PowerPoint Manager's Refresher Training module for managing stress in the workplace which is available in the Health and Safety area on the Service Intranet and will be available as a LearnPro module.

3.3 Operational Policies and Procedures

The AHSSO worked in collaboration with Operational Support to review and update the Operational Post Incident Debrief form on RIVO Safeguard. This involved a review of the Question Bank and the addition of a 'not applicable' option to simplify the process. Following feedback the revised form is more user friendly with work on-going in the production of a specific Service Control Post Incident Debrief form on the RIVO Safeguard system.

3.4 Equipment

The procurement of new appliances, support vehicles and other similar safety critical equipment usually involves the formation of an Equipment Working Group. During 2015/16 Health and Safety support and input was provided to the Specialist Rescue Unit Working Group predominantly involving the assessment of stowage of equipment and safe manual handling operations.

Health and Safety support and input was also provided to the Work at Height (WAH) Working Group throughout the year and included assistance in the completion of WAH risk assessment reviews and the procurement of a suitable WAH and rope rescue training mannequin.

4. COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

4.1 Health and Safety Consultation Group

The Health and Safety Consultation Group meet every two months and is chaired by the Head of Safety and Strategic projects. This forum achieves two-way communication and co-operation on initiatives aimed at improving health and safety, agreeing common interests, objectives and approaches. Consultation takes place through health and safety representatives appointed by the representative bodies, and elected health and safety representatives who are not members of a trade union.

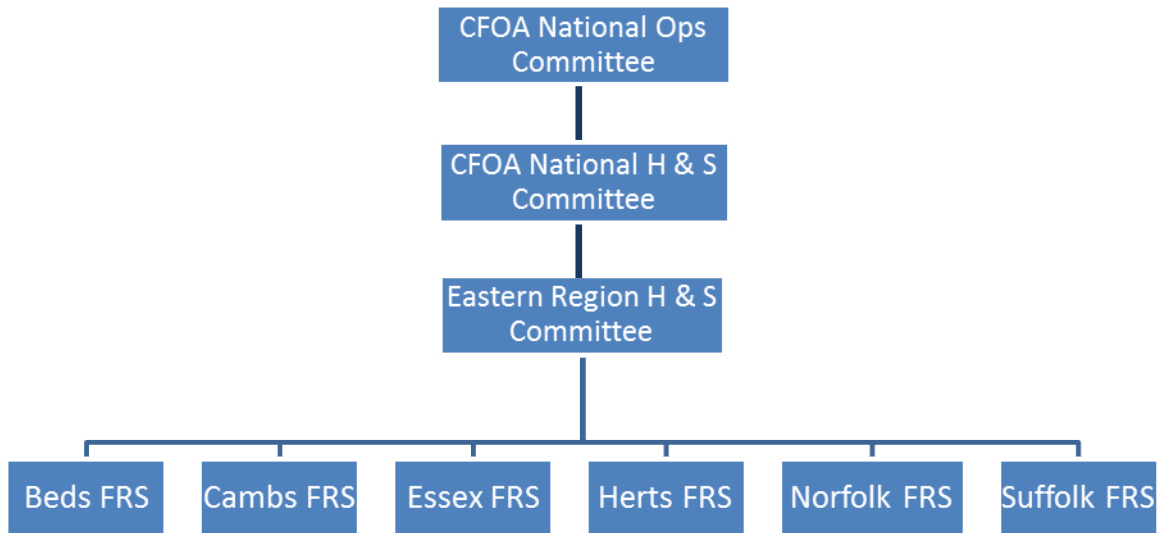
During the meetings a number of standing items are discussed/addressed that include:

- A review of the completion of action points;
- Scrutiny of local and regional safety event statistics;
- Significant safety events;
- Health and safety performance indicators;
- Service policy updates;
- Feedback from the Health and Safety Steering Committee meetings;
- Health and safety corporate objectives update; and,
- Report updates for active monitoring and health and safety management system audits.

During the reporting period representatives also contributed during consultation following the review of Service Orders and systems of work and at various meetings and working groups. This included the Working at Height working groups and the Service Workwear and Clothing Committee meeting.

4.2 Regional Health and Safety Practitioners Group

Members of the HSST represent the Service at the Eastern Region Health and Safety Practitioners Group meetings which are held every quarterly. The Group works within the structure detailed below and also seeks to identify beneficial links and contacts with other relevant groups as appropriate. An example of this is the link established with the Regional Occupational Health Practitioners Group. Administration for the regional group is undertaken by Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.



The main objectives of the Group during 2015/16 were to:

- Carry out meaningful comparison of H&S performance across the region to support identification of areas of good or poor performance with a view to seeking improvement;
- Carry out peer review, where Services require, to support identification of gaps and sharing of good practice;
- Maintain links to other relevant groups, not necessarily limited to CFOA groups where mutually beneficial support may be sought;
- Support consistent regional training and identify potential for rationalisation and standardisation where appropriate; and,
- Support H&S improvements in all services by the sharing of good practice, developments and reports.

5. MONITORING

5.1 Performance Indicators

In line with its Terms of Reference, the Human Resources Policy and Challenge Group monitors health and safety performance against three key performance indicators. Health and safety performance in these three areas are measured against set targets and for the year 2015/16 were as follows:

Description	Target	Actual	Performance	Comments
H1- Number of serious accidents (over 28 days) per 1000 employees	5.84	1.94	Green	67% better than target
H2 - Number of working days/shifts lost to accidents per 1000 employees (excluding Retained Duty System employees)	438.66	436.01	Green	1% better than target
H3 - Number of 24 hour cover periods lost to accidents per 1000 Retained Duty System Full Time Equivalent employees	760.59	2703.69	Red	Missed target by 255%

For 2014/15 all health and safety performance indicators were significantly inside the year-end target. Unfortunately, in 2015/16 the target for H3 was missed by a considerable margin and was mainly due to one injury event that resulted in a total of 313 days lost to the end of the reporting period.

5.2 Active Monitoring

Active monitoring is a proactive method of measuring safety performance against set standards. Activities of significant risk are subject to one or more active monitoring systems that include audits, inspections (premises and plant/equipment), health surveillance and the monitoring of Firefighter competence through station based and central training and operational training exercises.

The HSST have been responsible for the administration of the formal active monitoring programme carried out by Monitoring Officers at operational incidents and by Watch Managers during routine and training activities. The programme topics are flexible and can be changed / introduced following changes in procedures, safety events etc.

The findings of operational active monitoring during the reporting period were presented to the Operational Debrief Working Group (ODWG) with non-operational active monitoring being presented to the HSSC. The ODWG and HSSC are responsible for reviewing the findings of the active monitoring and determining the need for and form of corrective action, including where necessary immediate corrective actions. The topics scheduled and where formal active monitoring took place during the reporting period were as follows:

Monitoring Officers (Operational)	Watch Commanders (Routine and training)
Command and Control	Pump and ladder training
Operational use of Aerial Platform	Manual Handling
Breathing Apparatus	Breathing Apparatus

As detailed in the health and safety active monitoring programme, some operational activities/incidents occur infrequently but have the potential to cause significant risk. For this reason Service Control will mobilise a Monitoring Officer to every incident type that meets this criteria. During 2015/16, as well as the scheduled topics detailed above, active monitoring was carried out a number of times for the following topics:

- Acetylene cylinders;
- Hazardous materials;
- Flammable liquids;
- Working on or near water; and,
- Working at height.

5.3 Internal Audit

The HSST are custodians of the Service’s Health and Safety Management Audit process. The audit is used as a positive process and recognises good and poor health and safety management performance against set standards. This enables the organisation to learn from experience and make continual improvements. The audits have consistently recognised positive achievements as well as identifying areas for improvement. The Audit of Health and Safety Management programme sets out a range of audit topics, agreed by the Head of Safety and Strategic Projects that span a three year rolling period with HSST having responsibility for managing the audit process. The topics scheduled and formally audited during the reporting period are detailed below:

Audit Topic	Premises/Station/Section Audited
Provision of Safety Critical Information	Not location specific, the audit included the identification and communication of safety critical information and the recording and maintenance of records
Provision and use of Work Equipment	Not location specific, the audit included selected equipment in use on all rescue pumps, Dunstable, Stopsley, Kempston and Workshop

In all cases the HSSC were presented with the audit findings and recommendations with the responsibility to consider what actions, if any, needed to be taken (including by whom and within what timescales) and assign them to the responsible individual/s.

6. ACCIDENTS AND VEHICLE COLLISIONS

As detailed in Chart 1 below, in 2015/16 the number of recorded accidents had slightly increased with the amount of days lost as a result significantly increasing when compared to the previous four reporting periods. Data shows that a significant proportion of the days lost to Service accidents were attributable to only two events in the categories of:

- Musculoskeletal, Operational, 313 days lost; and,
- Slip and fall on Station Premises, Routine, 46 days lost.

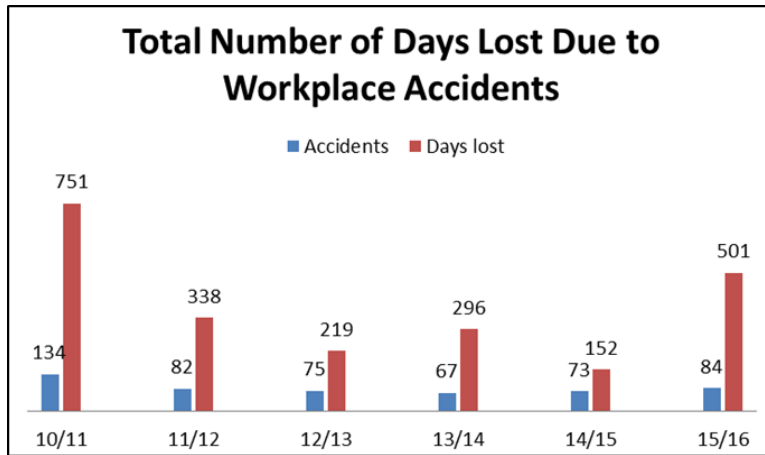


Chart 1.

Musculoskeletal, Manual Handling and Slips/Trips/Falls accounted for 50% of all accidents and 92% of all days lost in 2015/16. In comparison to 2014/15 the number of musculoskeletal injuries reduced by one, manual Handling Injuries increased from 8 to 10 in 2015/16 and Slips, Trips, and Falls increased in the same period from 12 to 15.

As detailed in Chart 2 below, the numbers of accidents in training increased from the previous year and for the third year running the number of accidents in the routine working environment exceeded the number of accidents at operational incidents and in training.

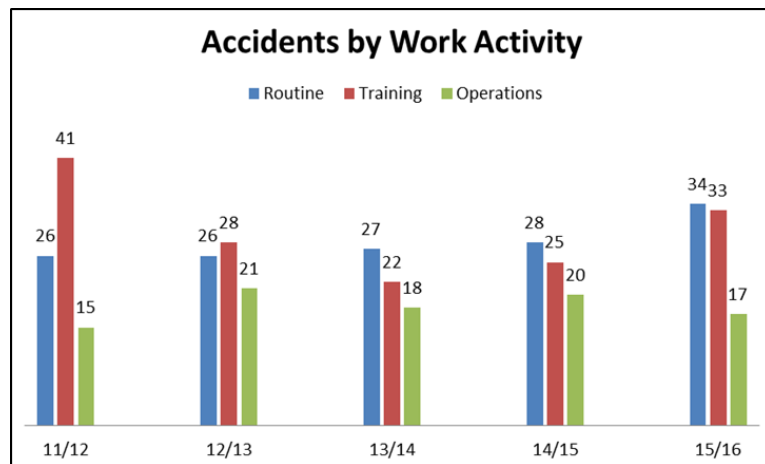


Chart 2.

As detailed in Chart 3, there were a total of 28 vehicle collisions reported in 2015/16 compared to 27 in 2014/15 and 40 in 2013/14. On 21 occasions the vehicle involved in the collision was fitted with CCTV and was viewed to assist the vehicle collision investigator. For vehicle collisions where the Service vehicle had struck a stationary object or other vehicle the speed of the Service vehicle was:

- 1–10mph on 20 occasions;
- 11 - 30 mph on 4 occasions;
- 31 – 50 mph on 1 occasion; and,

- On 3 occasions the Service vehicle was stationary and was struck by another moving vehicle.

For 22 of the vehicle collisions the Service vehicle was travelling forward and for 3 was reversing.

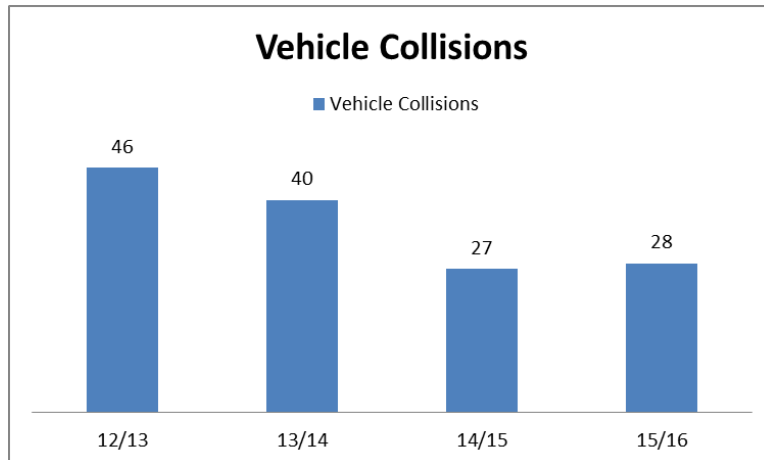


Chart 3.

Chart 4 below lists the Service vehicles involved in collisions base location.

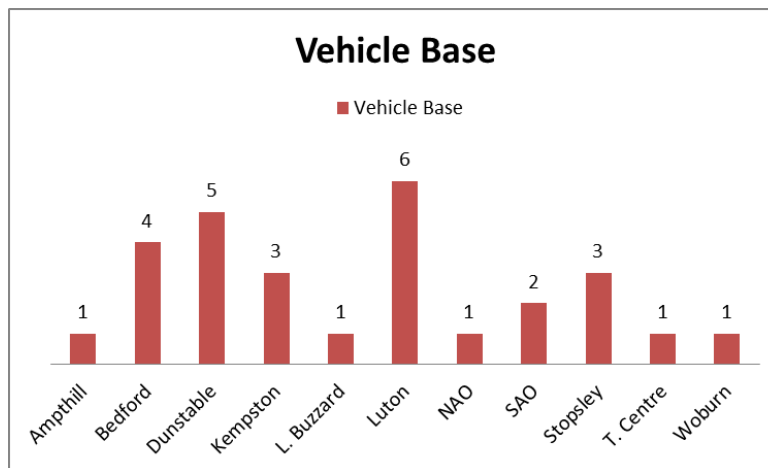


Chart 4.

All vehicle collisions continue to be investigated by a member of the Accident Investigation Team which provides a more informed and consistent approach to vehicle collision investigations and their outcomes.

7. VEHICLE MOUNTED CCTV SYSTEMS

The footage obtained from the appliances fitted with 5 permanently fixed cameras has continued to be invaluable in the support of event investigations, active monitoring and operational debriefs. In the reporting period CCTV hard drives have been impounded and footage viewed on 50 occasions to support the following work.

- 23 vehicle collision investigations;
- 7 complaints by members of the public;
- 6 police investigations;
- 3 near miss investigations;
- 6 reactive monitoring;
- 2 fire fighter injury investigations; and,
- 3 internal complaint investigations.



8. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

8.1 Occupational Health Unit

The Occupational Health Unit (OHU) based at Service Headquarters is part of the Service's Human Resources function and works closely with the Health and Safety Support Team providing impartial specialist medical advice to both the Service and employees of Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service. The OHU is responsible for undertaking statutory health assessments such as for new entrants to the Service and new Recruit Firefighters, medicals in compliance with DVLA requirements and 3 yearly health assessments.

Provision of referral to external agencies such as to the Firefighters Charity, physiotherapy or counselling helps to facilitate a return to fitness. The planning and implementation of formal programmes of rehabilitation or modification of duties, with Occupational Health supervision throughout, helps expedite return to role following sickness absence. The main priority of the OHU is to protect employees by ensuring that the workplace activities undertaken does not, in any way, damage or compromise their health. Occupational health is a specialty role, the purpose of which is to assist the organisation by:

- Supporting BFRS employees;
- Working with BFRS employees on long-term health issues;
- Monitoring the effects of work on health and wellbeing overall; and,
- Ensuring staff are fit and able to carry out the role that they are employed for.

The OHU is headed by a full time qualified Occupational Health Practitioner (OHP) – Deb Fensome, supported by a full time Service Fitness Adviser (SFA) – Ian Hammett, and Occupational Health Support Technician (OHST) Bev Copperwheat. The Service Medical Adviser (SMA) currently attends for 2 clinic sessions per month.

The Service's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) Workplace Wellness is facilitated by the Occupational Health Unit and continues to offer counselling; emotional support for both domestic and work related issues; Citizens Advice; legal and financial advice the contact details for which can be found on the Intranet or from the OHU.

8.2 Performance Indicators

In line with its terms of reference, the Human Resources Policy and Challenge Group monitor occupational health performance against two key performance indicators. Occupational Health performance in these two areas is measured against the set targets and for the year 2015/16 was as follows:

Description	Target	Actual	Performance	Comments
OH1 - % of personnel in operational roles who have completed an annual fitness test assessment in the last 12 months (excluding career breaks, those on modified duty and long-term sick	97%	98%	Green	1% better than target
OH2 - % of operational personnel achieving a pass category on their annual fitness test	95%	95%	Green	Met target

Every operational employee is required to successfully complete an annual fitness test with the SFA Ian Hammett and these are reflected in the KPIs. In year 2015/16 as previously, both the KPIs were met with the best results to date since the introduction of the annual testing programme.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY OBJECTIVES

In line with best practice and guidance, the Health and Safety at Work Policy includes a commitment to the setting of annual corporate health and safety objectives. Following analysis in line with policy requirements by the Health and Safety Support Team and Health and Safety Steering Committee the corporate health and safety objectives for 2016/17 have been approved by the Corporate Management Team and the Fire and Rescue Authority Human Resources Policy and Challenge Group. These now reflect the principle work streams for 2016/17 and a live action plan tracking completion of the objectives is available in the Health and Safety Section area on the Service intranet.

The Corporate Health and Safety objectives for 2016/17 are:

1. To develop an in-house Service wide Accident Investigation course for nominated managers and members of the Accident Investigation Team.
2. To continue to review the Service's operational policies and procedures in line with the National Operational Guidance to provide standardisation of emergency response procedures.
3. To further develop the programme of health and safety refresher training for Managers and the publication of additional LearnPro training modules.
4. To complete all actions arising from the RoSPA external audit following an assessment of the Service's health and safety management systems.
5. To carry out a Service wide Health and Safety climate survey, using the Health and Safety Laboratory safety climate tool and act on evidence-based proposals for improving organisational safety culture as a result.
6. To enhance firefighter safety during operational incidents and training by the replacement of the Service's Thermal Imaging Cameras' to include video capture capability.
7. To conduct a review of the safety critical learning materials supported by LearnPro to ensure these align to the requirements of individual operational roles, and are capable of being suitably evidenced within the established PDR Pro recording system.
8. To provide assurance to current internal quality management systems by the auditing of all driver training to ensure they meet or exceed local and national expectations and effectively support the individual and organisational requirements.