



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Fire and Rescue Service

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service

Monitoring Report: April 2024 – December 2024



Our five principles for keeping communities safe

PEOPLE

PREVENTION

PROTECTION

RESPONSE

ENVIRONMENT

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Our People Principle



1 Sickness Absence

The Service aims to encourage all its employees to maximise their attendance at work while recognising that employees will, from time to time, be unable to come to work because of ill health.

Total time lost, for NWFRS, due to sickness absence has increased to 5.67% during quarter three, which is an increase compared with the same quarter during the previous year of 5.21%, but is a decrease from 6.15% in quarter two for 2024/25.

940 individuals were employed by NWFRS during quarter three, which is an increase of 30 people from the same period in 2023/24.

Please note that throughout the report, the number of cases in the year to date (YTD) will not be a sum of the quarters as some individuals' absences will span across quarters. There may also be fluctuations in the numbers reported from quarter to quarter as a result of changes to employee data.

1.1 All Sickness Absence

	Year 2023/2024			Year 2024/2025			Absence Rate Variance
	Q3 Cases	Q3 Days Lost	Q3 Lost time %	Q3 Cases	Q3 Days Lost	Q3 Lost time %	
Long Term Sickness	143	792	0.95%	152	857	1.00%	↑ 0.05%
Short Term Sickness	63	3572	4.27%	78	3991	4.67%	↑ 0.40%
Total	206	4364	5.21%	230	4848	5.67%	↑ 0.46%

During quarter three, the number of short-term absence days and cases have increased compared with the same period in the previous year, although overall there has been a decrease from quarter two absence. Short term absence accounted for 1.00% of time lost across all duty types, an increase of 0.05% from the same period in the previous year.

The number of long-term sickness cases has increased in comparison with the same period in the previous year, with long term absence now accounting for 4.67% of time lost from 4.27%.

Short term means individual periods of sickness of 27 calendar days or less.
Long term means individual periods of 28 calendar days or more.

Some duty systems may see a higher percentage of lost time despite fewer cases of absence being recorded. This is caused by there being fewer staff within that duty system. The sickness absence percentage calculation is proportionate to the number of staff within that duty system.

1.2 Short Term Sickness

Short Term Sickness equates to 1.00% of lost time during quarter three.

	2023/24 – Q3 Cases	2023/24 – Q3 Days lost	2023/24 – Q3 Lost time %	2024/25 – Q3 Cases	2024/25 – Q3 Days lost	2024/25 – Q3 Lost time %
Wholetime*	55	299	1.17%	45	282	1.13%
RDS /On-Call	62	344	0.80%	69	393	0.88%
Control	9	45	1.49%	10	28	1.06%
Corporate Departments	17	104	0.83%	28	154	1.16%
Total	143	792	0.95%	152	857	1.00%

(*Wholetime - includes all operational staff, such as station based, rural and flexi duty officers)

(SLT have been split so operational members of SLT are included within wholetime figures, and Heads of Departments are included within Corporate Departments).

Top 3 Short Term Sickness Absence Reasons (Cases)

	Absence Reason	Cases	Lost time %
1	Cold, Flu	40	23.4%
2	Musculoskeletal – Lower Limb	10	7.7%
3	Musculoskeletal – Upper Limb	7	5.4%

Lost time % is based upon the days lost rather than the case numbers

The reasons for absence above are across all duty types.

The highest number of short-term absence cases were due to cold/flu reasons, with musculoskeletal related absences being the second and third highest.

1.3 Long Term Sickness

Long Term sickness equates to an average of 4.67% of lost time during quarter three.

Long Term Sickness	2023/24 – Q3 Cases	2023/24 – Q3 Days lost	2023/24 – Q3 Lost time %	2024/25 – Q3 Cases	2024/25 – Q3 Days lost	2024/25 – Q3 Lost time %
WDS Stations	14	742	2.93%	24	1273	5.11%
RDS /On-Call	38	2229	5.20%	46	2332	5.22%
Control	3	163	6.56%	1	57	2.16%
Corporate Departments	8	438	3.50%	7	329	2.48%
Total	63	3572	4.27%	78	3991	4.67%

Top 3 Long Term Sickness Absence Reasons (Cases)

	Absence Reason	Cases	Lost Time %
1	Musculoskeletal – Lower Limb	23	24.7%
2	Mental Health – Stress	14	17.4%
3	Failed Medical / Fitness Test	6	8.2%

Lost time % is based upon the days lost rather than the case numbers

Long term sickness absence reasons during quarter three have remained the same as quarter two.

Musculoskeletal – Lower limb absence continues to account for the highest number of cases and lost time. Absences due to this reason include employees who are awaiting surgical intervention or are recovering from surgery but due to the physical nature of operational roles, employees must have fully recovered before returning to work to avoid further exacerbation or injury.

Long term absence due to mental health - stress continues to be within the top three absence reasons for long term sick during quarter three, with there being a slight increase in the number of cases and time lost compared to quarter two of the current year. Whilst the service has seen an increase in mental health cases, this is also reflective across the country, as reported by NHS monthly statistics bulletin. Adults accessing mental health support has increased from 1.1 million in July 2023 to 1.4 million in July 2024.

Support is provided to employees who are absent due to mental health and musculoskeletal reasons, including access to occupational health, employee assistance programme and physiotherapy treatment. Signposting to external agencies, such as the Firefighters Charity, Parabl and other specific services is also provided to employees.

All Wales Comparison

The average shift days lost per person for all absence (short and long term) on an all Wales basis was 11.62 shift days per person for wholetime uniformed staff, 17.72 shift days per person for Control staff, and 14.76 shift days per person for Corporate staff.

In comparison with the other Welsh Fire and Rescue Services, North Wales had the lowest shift days lost per person due to both long- and short-term absences across the three duty types reported out of all three services.

For total absence:

- 9.02 shift days per person was lost by Wholetime uniformed staff in North Wales, compared with 13.54 days per person lost by South Wales wholetime uniformed staff and 9.54 shift days per person in Mid and West Wales;
- 12.19 shift days per person was lost by Control based staff in North Wales, compared with 23.7 shift days per person in South Wales and 16.66 shift days per person in Mid and West Wales;
- 10.09 shift days per person was lost by Corporate staff in North Wales, compared to 21.24 shift days per person in South Wales and 10.4 shift days per person in Mid and West Wales.

Note, the all Wales data is for the period April 2023 to March 2024, with the most recent update published in October 2024, and only reports on absence data for wholetime, control, and corporate staff and doesn't include on-call or retained data.

Our Prevention Principle



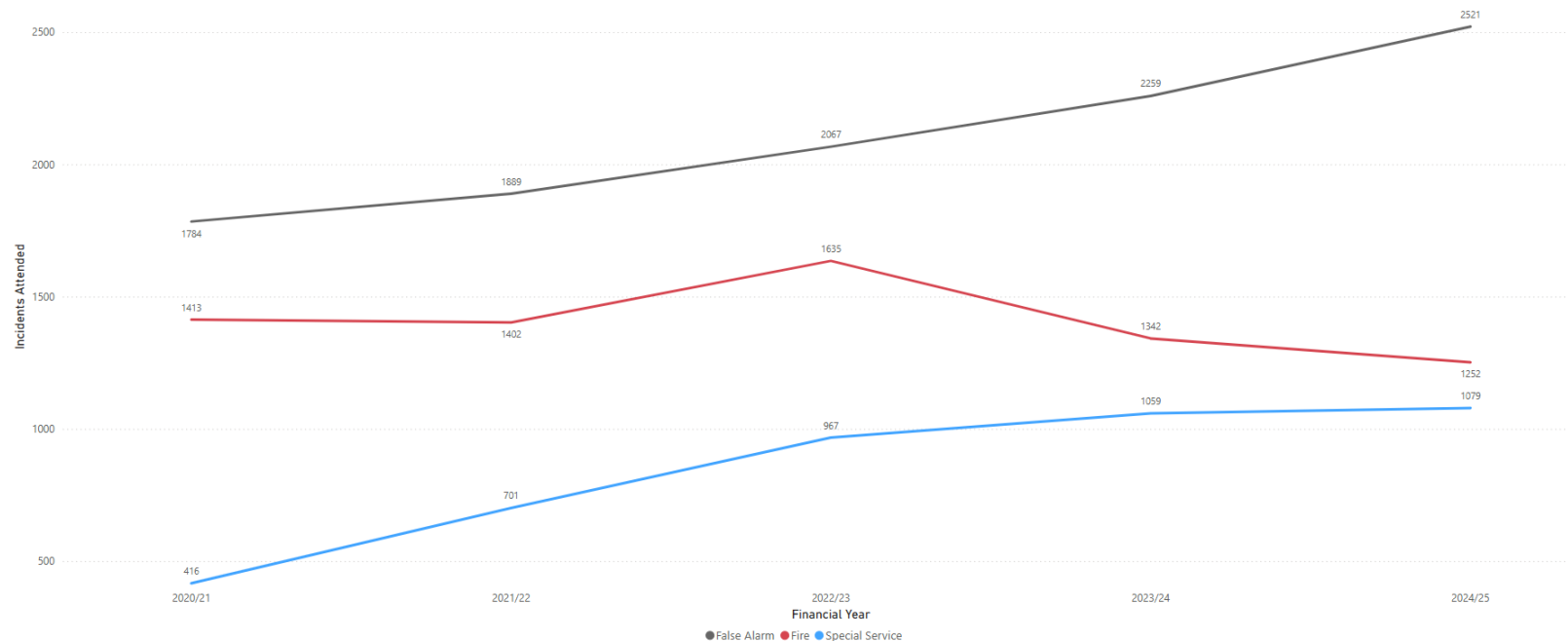
2 All Incidents

All Incidents – **4,852** incidents were attended during the first three quarters of the financial year, which is an increase of 4.1% from 4,660. This is also significantly above the 3-year average of 4,440.

Fires – **1,252**, a decrease of 6.7%. This is also below the three-year average of 1,460.

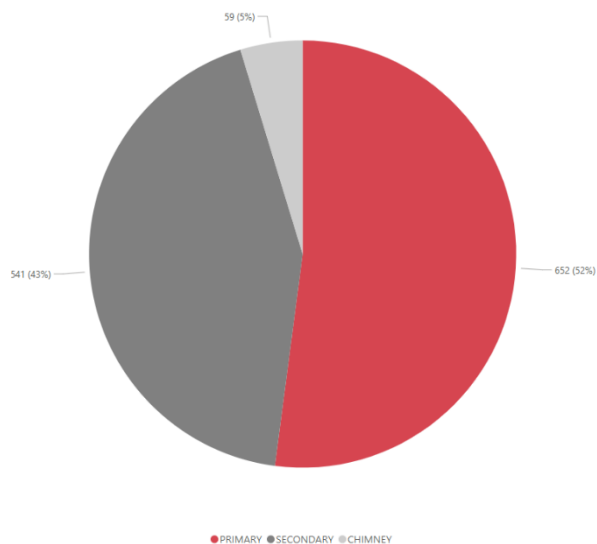
False Alarms – **2,521**, an increase of 11.6%. This is also above the three-year average of 2,072.

SSCs – **1,079**, an increase of 1.9%. This is also above the three-year average of 909.



3 Fires, by Category and Motive

1,252 fires were attended; a 6.7% decrease from 1,342.



Primary Fires - 652

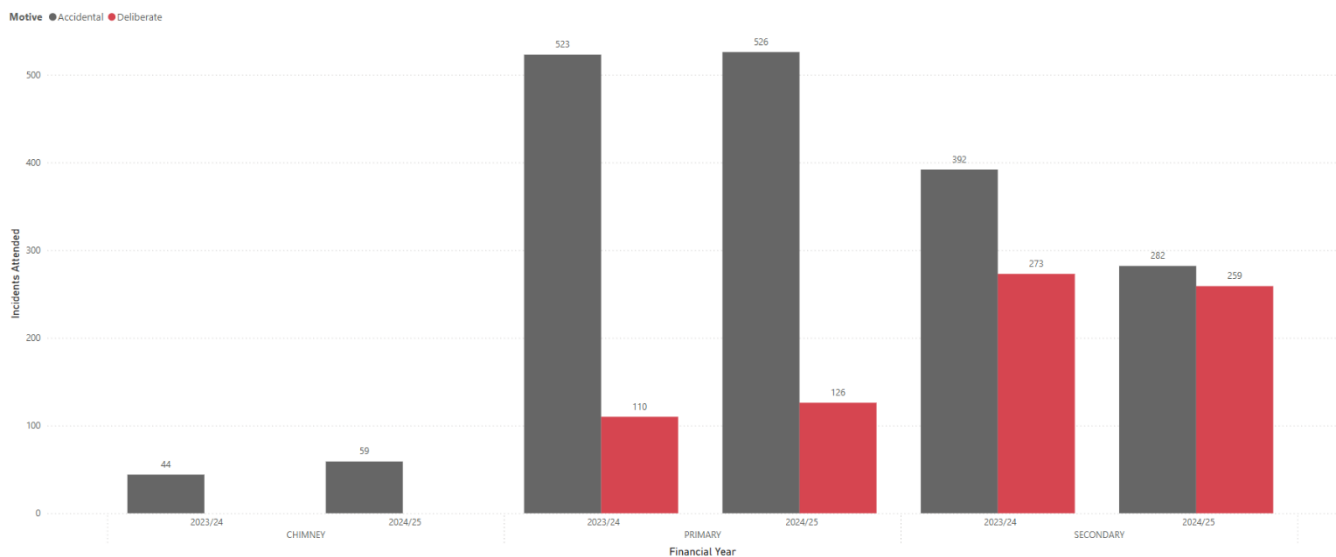
- **Accidental: 526**, 80.7%.
- **Deliberate: 126**, 19.3%.

Secondary Fires - 541

- **Accidental: 282**, 52.1%.
- **Deliberate: 259**, 47.9%.

Chimney Fires

- **59**, 4.7% of all fires attended – this is an increase of 34.1% from 44.
-



Actions taken to date:

The number of completed Safe and Well Checks (SAWCs) at the end of quarter three was **15,055**. We are ahead of target for the year; however, we will be continuing to work with our referring agencies to ensure the highest quality of referrals are received.

During quarter three, a new process was developed enabling operational crews to identify buildings that have fallen into disrepair and have attracted ASB. The crews forward the information to the prevention team who inform the appropriate authorities.

Seasonal and targeted social media campaigns via our Corporate Communications Team included: bonfire and firework safety, electrical safety, chimney safety, and Christmas safety.

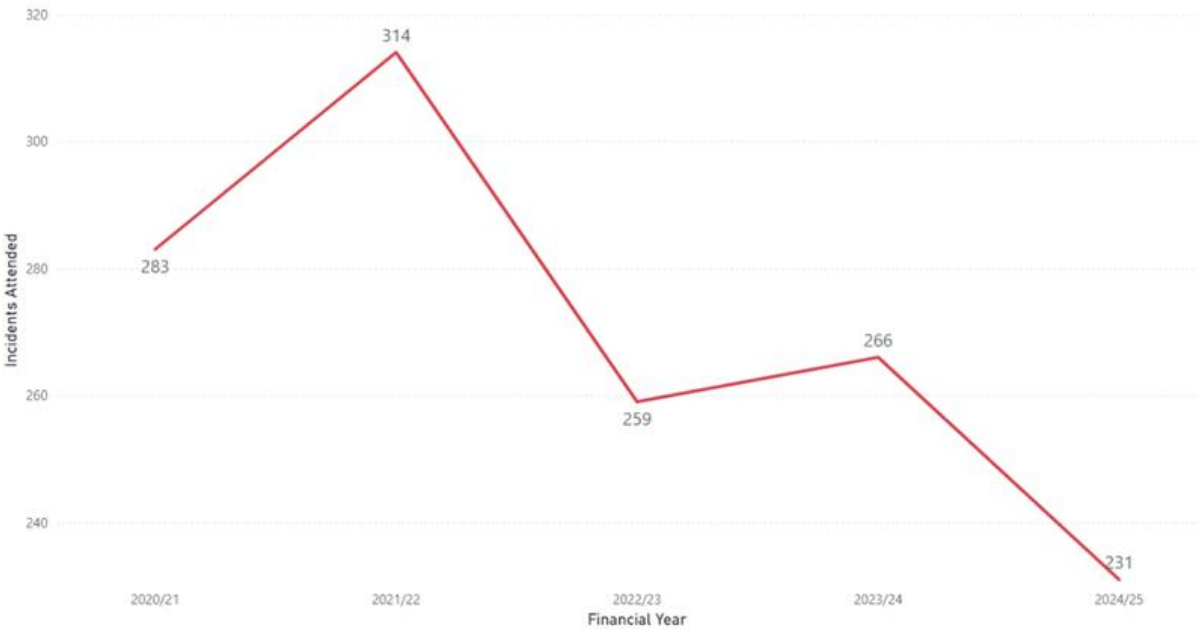
Bespoke educational sessions delivered in conjunction with local authority groups and charities to asylum seekers took place. These sessions utilised translators in four different languages. Ongoing activity in this area is being developed.

During quarter three, a new initiative with NatWest Bank commenced. These sessions are aimed at the elderly and are proving very productive, allowing us to offer SAWCs to our main target audience.

An extensive amount of targeted multi agency engagement and activity took place over the Christmas period.

4 Accidental Fires in Dwellings (ADFs)

231 accidental dwelling fires were attended, a reduction of 13.2% from 266. This is also less than the three-year average of 280.



5 Main cause of accidental dwelling fires

There were numerous main causes of ADFs during the three quarters of the financial year. Those which have shown a rise this quarter could be associated with the cost of living crisis, and the costs now involved with heating homes.

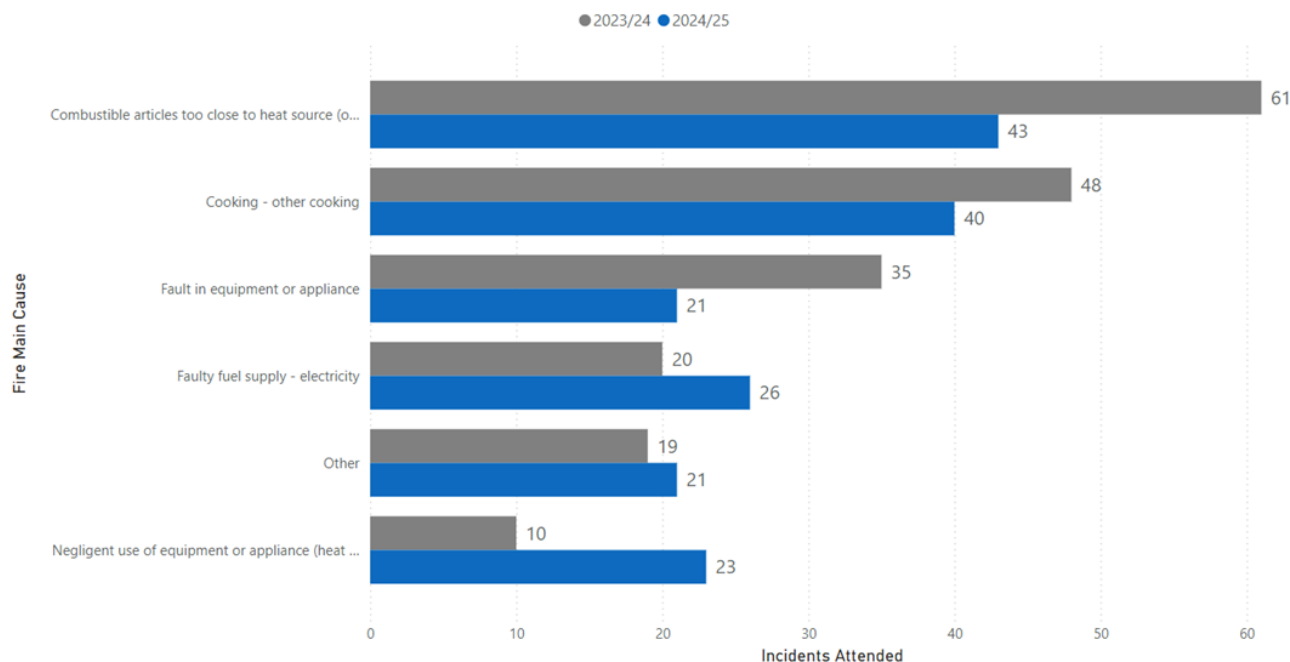
Although the most common was 'Combustible articles too close to heat source (or fire)', this still showed a 29.5% decrease from 61 to **43**.

Other main causes which saw a reduction included:

- 'Cooking – other cooking' which showed a reduction of 16.7% from 48 to **40**.
- 'Fault in equipment or appliance' which showed a significant reduction of 40.0% from 35 to **21**.

Despite this, a few main causes saw a rise during this quarter. These included:

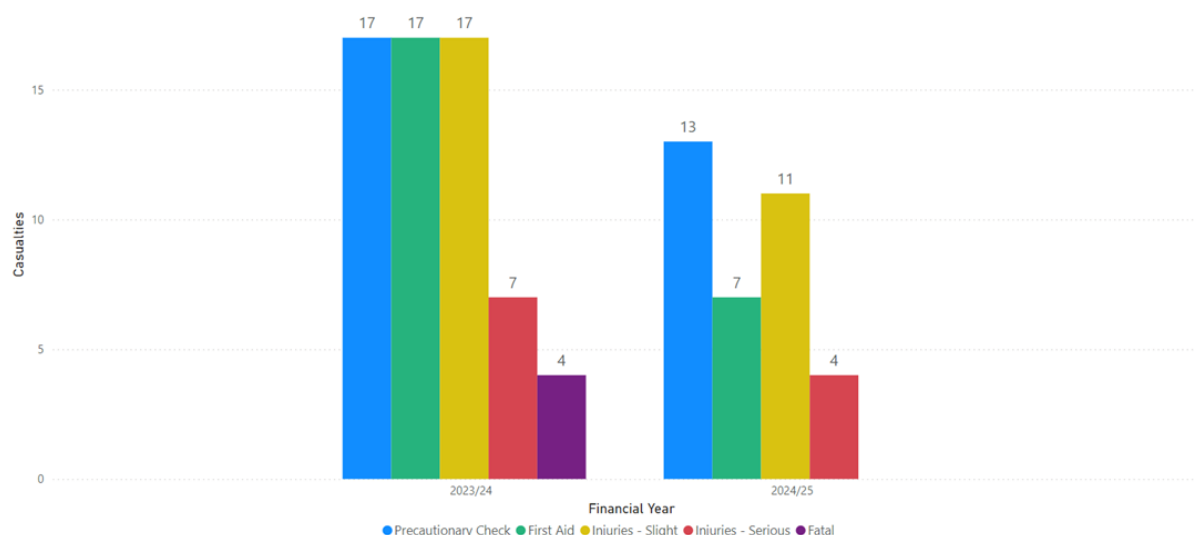
- 'Faulty fuel supply – electricity', which increased by 30.0% from 20 to **26**.
- 'Other', which increase by 10.5% from 19 to **21**.
- 'Negligent use of equipment or appliance (heat source)', which increased by 130.0% from 10 to **23**.



6 Fatalities and Casualties from Accidental Fires in Dwellings

A total of **35** people sustained injuries at the **29** ADFs where an injury of any form was recorded. No fatalities were recorded during the period.

The number of people injured (including fatalities) as a consequence of an ADF has decreased 43.5% compared with the same period last year. The number of ADFs where an injury was recorded has also decreased by 40.8%.



Of the **35** casualties, **23** (65.7%) were 'Overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes; asphyxiation', **four** sustained slight burn injuries, **three** sustained severe burn injuries, **two** had 'Breathing difficulties (other than 'overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes; asphyxiation)', **another** had a 'Combination of burns and overcome by gas/smoke', and **another** suffered from 'Shock/Anaphylactic shock'. The **one** other casualty's injury type was recorded as 'Other'.

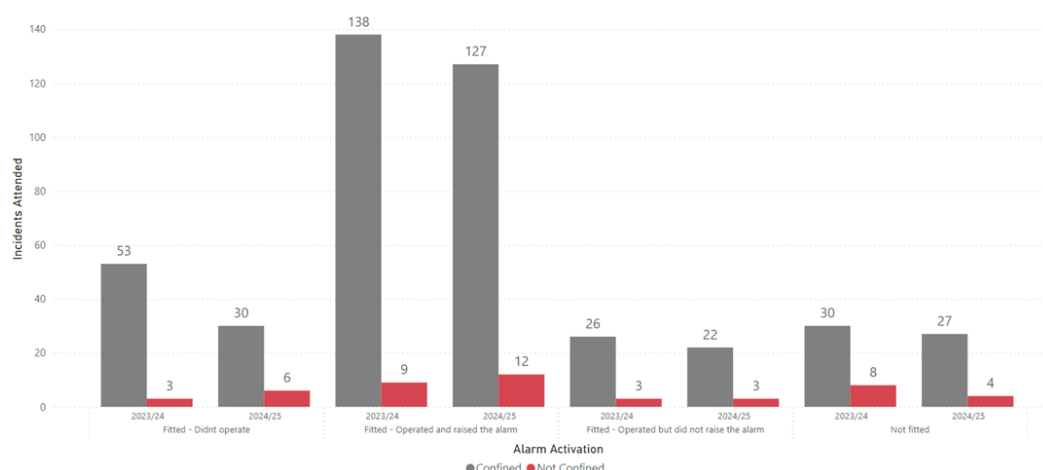
7 Smoke Detectors – Accidental Dwelling Fires

Detectors: smoke/heat detectors were present at **200** (86.6%) accidental dwelling fires attended.

Alarms operated and raised the alarm at **139** (60.2%) ADFs.

Alarms were not fitted at **31** of the ADFs attended.

Of the **231** ADFs attended, **206** were confined to the room of origin, and **25** were not confined.



Actions taken to support the most vulnerable to fires in their homes:

Extensive engagement with targeted groups over the Christmas period: for example, collaborating with charities to deliver gifts to elderly people living alone, arranging numerous coffee mornings across the area, attendance at food banks, charity events and engagement at targeted shopping outlets.

A Christmas fire safety message was delivered through a highly successful poster competition aimed at engaging our younger members of society, with over 900 entries received from across the Service area.

Ongoing re-engagement with referring agencies continues to take place to help ensure we receive referrals aimed at those people most vulnerable to fire.

Extensive activity and engagement with university students across the service area - this includes mandatory "Kitchen Talks" delivered by operational crews from Bangor Fire Station. Work is ongoing to replicate this in Wrexham.

Campaign Steering Group (CSG) continues to work with the Corporate Communications team to proactively promote fire, road, and water safety across all media platforms.

Educational Visits to Schools in Q3

- Primary Schools visited = 17 → 1,240 pupils
- Secondary Schools visited (Crucial Crew) = three → 450 pupils
- Special Needs Unit visited = one → six pupils

Phoenix

- Six courses with 46 attendees.

Fire Setter Interventions

- Six Firesafe sessions delivered by DangerPoint
- One Fire Awareness Child Education (FACE) session delivered internally

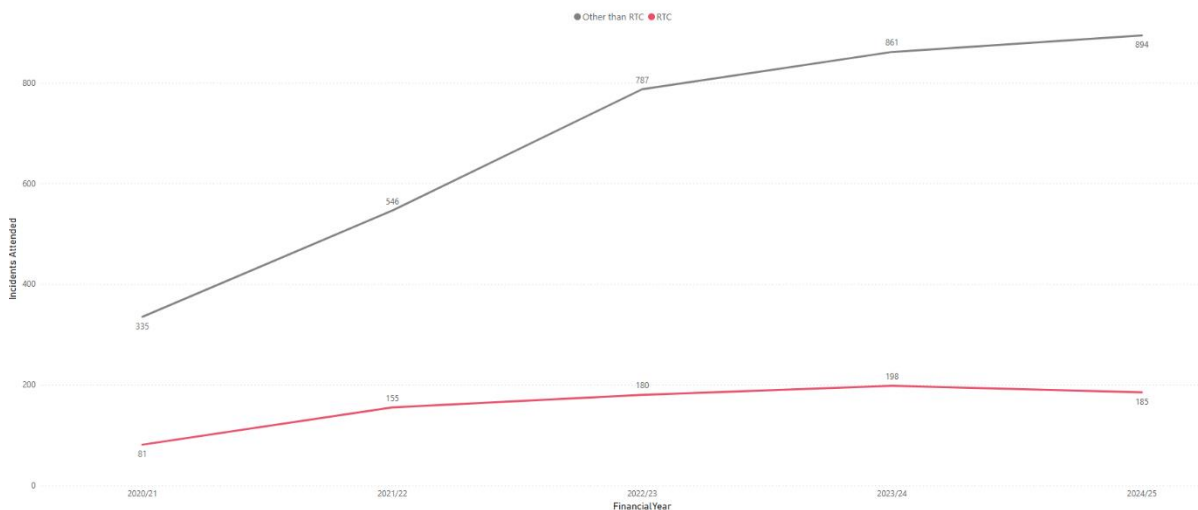
DangerPoint

- 5,669 young people attended through the Home Safety scenario up to the end of quarter three.

8 Special Service Calls (SSCs)

A total of **1,079** special service calls (including Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)) were attended. This is an increase of 1.9%.

The number of RTCs attended decreased 6.6% to **185**.



Other than RTC categories which saw the largest **increase** in attendances included:

- **394** 'Assist other agencies' incidents – an increase of 14.9% from 343.
- **77** 'Other rescue/release of persons' incidents – an increase of 54.0% from 50.
- **58** 'Lift Release' incidents – an increase of 61.1% from 36.

Despite this, other categories saw a **decrease** in the number of incidents attended. These included:

- **65** 'Flooding' incidents – a decrease of 37.5% from 104.
- **56** 'Effecting entry/exit' incidents – a decrease of 35.6% from 87.

Actions taken to date:**Operation Ugain**

During quarter three, the roadside safety presentation was delivered to 622 people who were caught driving over the 20mph speed limit. The year to date figure is now 2,240.

Olivia's Story

Olivia's Story was delivered throughout quarter three to apprentices at Airbus, and to students at Coleg Cambria, Llandrillo, Glyn Llifon, and Dolgellau.

Olivia's Story continues to be delivered by the Fire Safety WMs and remains current and extremely impactful. Sessions are often supported by North Wales Police.

9 Safe and Well Checks

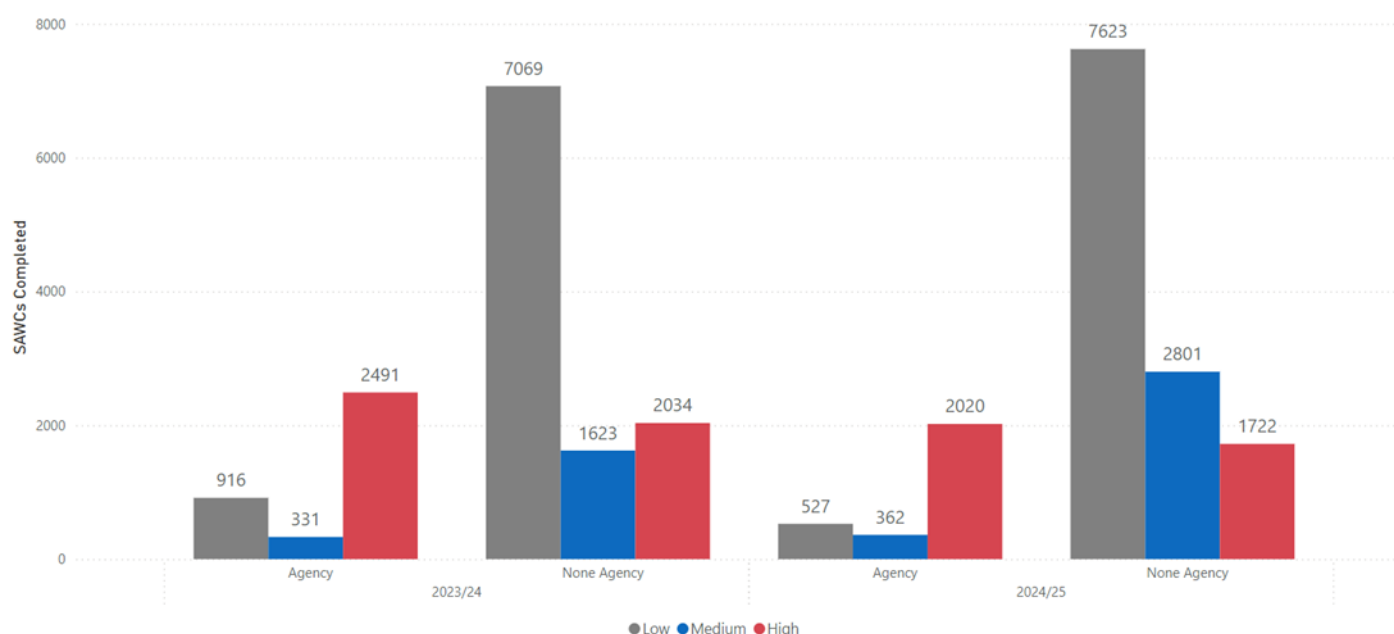
A total of **15,055** SAWCs were completed, of which:

- **3,742** (24.9%) were High priority, with **2,020** (54.0% of high priority checks completed) coming from a partner agency.
- **3,163** (21.0%) were Medium priority, with **362** (11.4% of medium priority checks completed) coming from a partner agency.
- **8,150** (54.1%) were Low priority, with **527** (6.5% of low priority checks completed) coming from a partner agency.

A total of **2,909** SAWCs completed were referred to the Service from an Agency – this equates to 19.3% of SAWCs completed.

Whilst there has been a **4.1%** increase in the number of SAWCs completed compared with the same period last year, there has been a **17.3%** decrease in the number of high priority SAWCs completed. This is the lowest number of high priority checks conducted during the last five financial years.

Despite this however, it goes without saying that low and medium priority SAWCs completed are still valuable, and the total of both low and medium priority checks has grown compared with the same period last year (an increase of 2.1% and 61.9% respectively). This is the highest number of low and medium checks recorded in the last five years.



Actions taken to date:

To support and further develop the delivery of SAWCs by our operational crews, a new process commenced during quarter three. Members of the prevention team will now attend at least one session each year during the Watches' daily prevention allocated activity. This will assist in the sharing of information and help promote best practice.

Prevention staff continued with their re-engagement sessions with external partners - this is to help ensure we receive only the most targeted referrals for SAWCs. Examples of those engaged with during quarter three include, Baywater, Occupational Therapists, housing associations, Wrexham County Borough Council, Age Connect, and Care & Repair.

A comprehensive and extensive amount of prevention activity took place over the Christmas period engaging with target groups, including at coffee mornings and shopping outlets. Food banks were also supported, as well as joint activity with charities helping deliver gifts to vulnerable people.

Development of our prevention staff continues in line with the Department Objectives with at least 2 x 30 mins sessions each month using both external and internal providers.

Further Actions:

All Partnership Managers will continue to engage with operational watches.

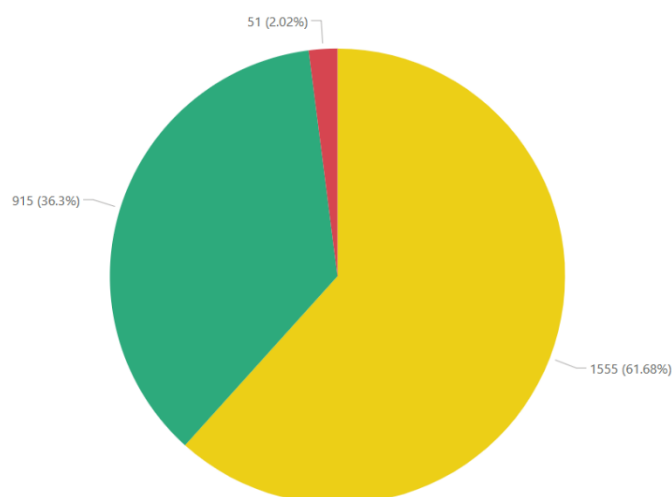
Our Protection Principle



10 False Alarms

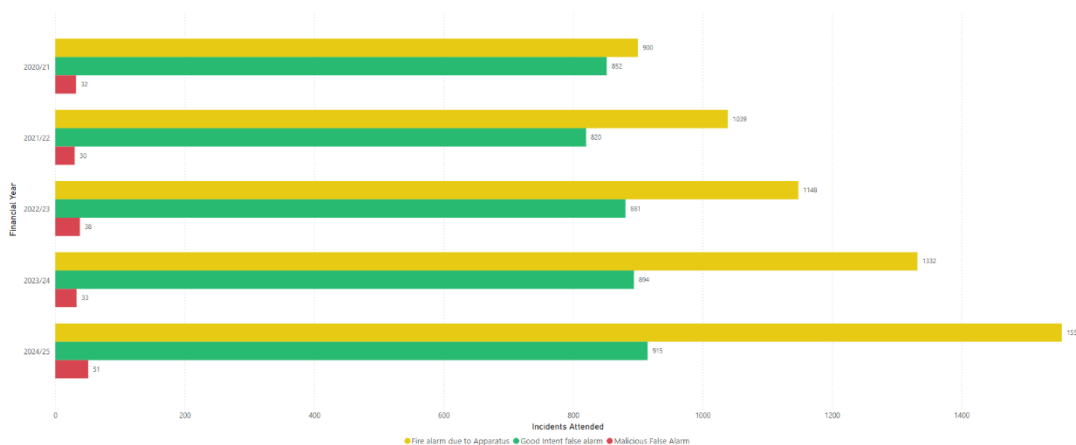
A total of **2,521** false alarms have been attended, which is an increase of 11.6%.

A rise has been recorded across all false alarm categories, with a 16.7% increase in Fire alarm due to apparatus (1,332 to **1,555**), a 54.5% rise in Malicious False Alarms (33 to **51**), and a 2.3% increase in Good Intent False Alarms (894 to **915**). All false alarm categories are now at their highest levels compared with the last five years.



● Fire alarm due to Apparatus ● Good Intent false alarm ● Malicious False Alarm

Guidance continues to be provided Control's Watches by the Control Management Team on the practices that need to be adhered to when recording the category of false alarm.

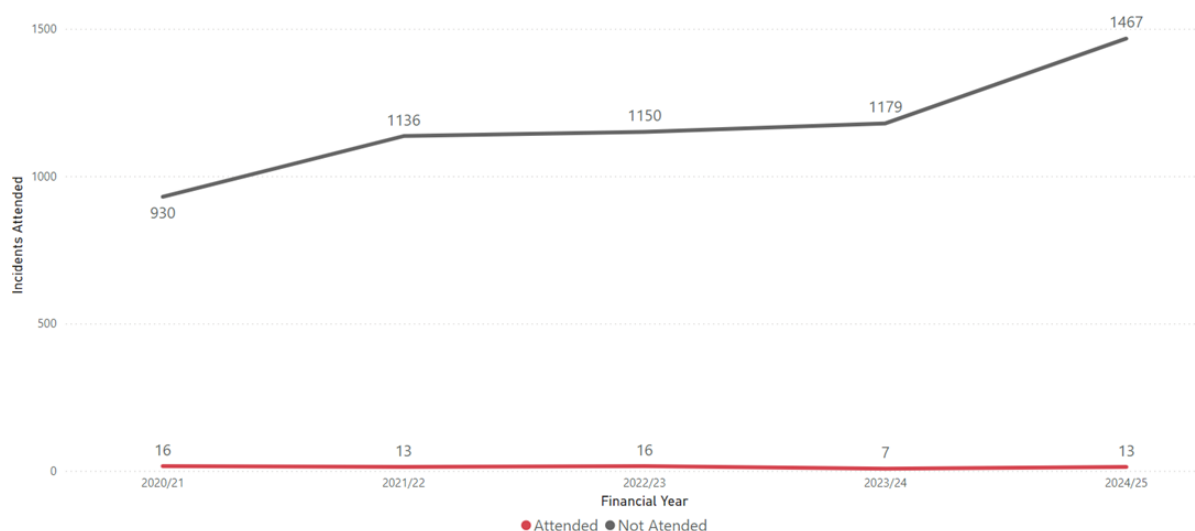


● Fire alarm due to Apparatus ● Good Intent false alarm ● Malicious False Alarm

11 Commercial Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) calls

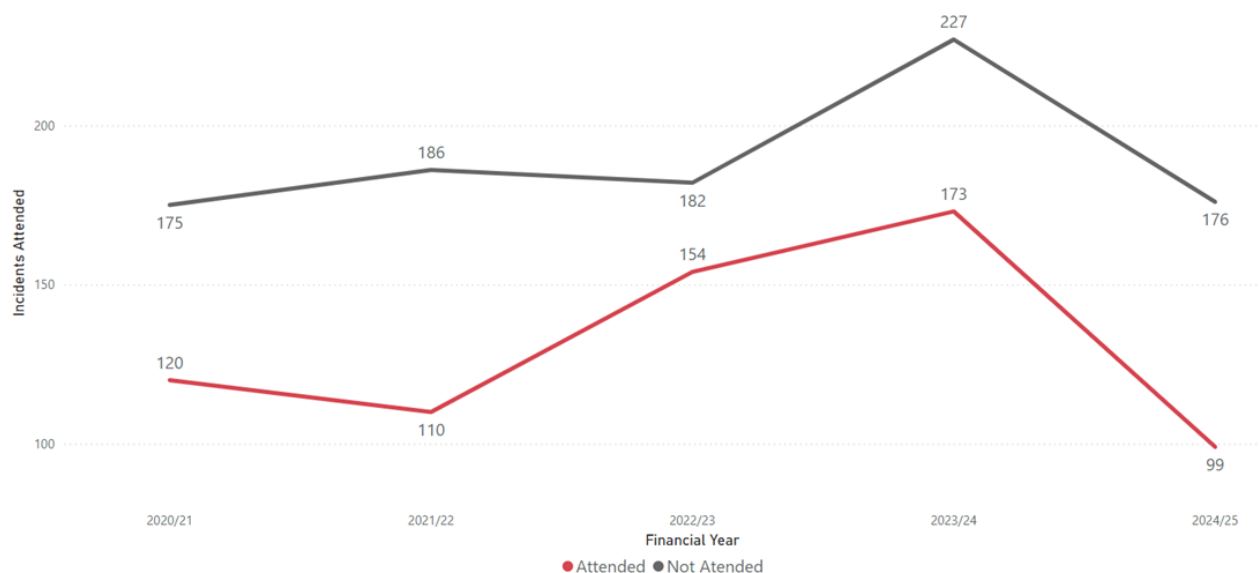
1,480 Commercial AFA calls were received during the reporting period, which is the highest number of calls received during the last five years. Despite this however, less than 1.0% were attended.

Despite 13 Commercial AFAs being attended, it has been confirmed by the Control Management Team (CMT) that all bar one of the attendances were to exempt premises i.e., Control Of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) sites or those with a sleep risk etc. The one exception to this was to a premise which was originally deemed to be domestic, however it was identified as being commercial whilst en route – one appliance was therefore allowed to continue and attend. Commercial AFAs attended are checked monthly by the CMT, and it has been confirmed that if the Service attends a Commercial AFA, it will either be due to it being exempt or due to the information changing after mobilisation.



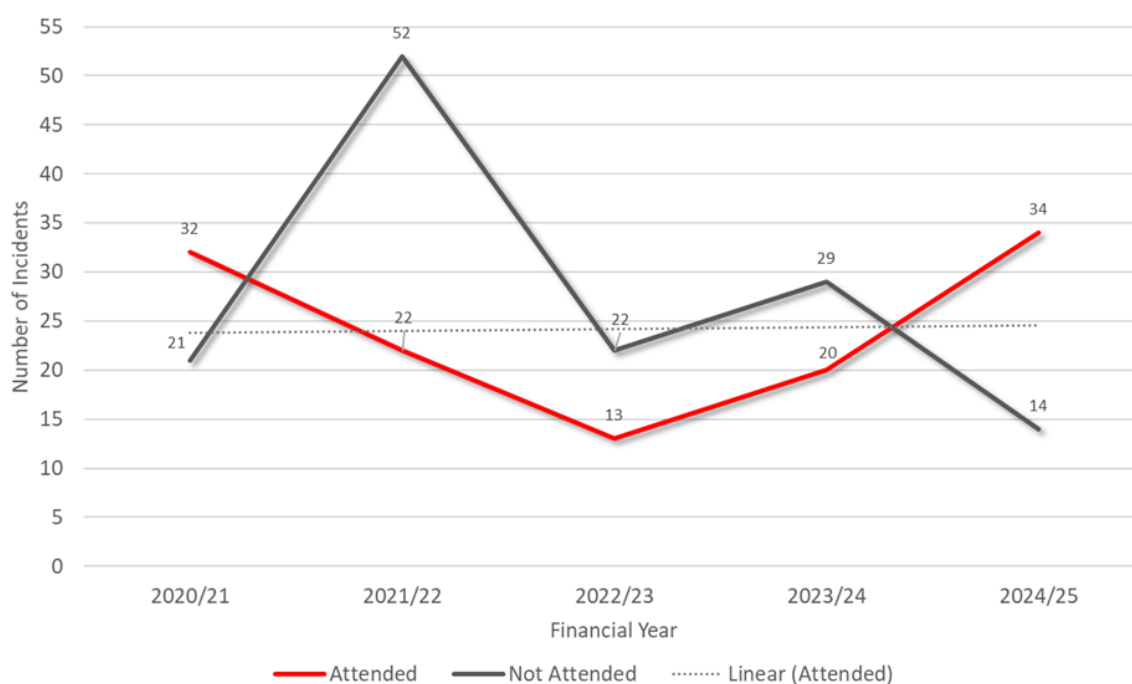
12 Hospital AFA calls

275 Hospital AFA calls were received, which is a reduction of 31.3% and the lowest number of hospital AFA calls received in the last five years. **99** were attended, a reduction of 42.8% from 173.



13 HMP Berwyn

48 primary fires were started deliberately at HMP Berwyn, and of these **34** were attended. This is 70.0% more than last year.



Actions taken to date:

NHS

In January a meeting was held with the NHS Senior Estates Officer for Legislation & Fire, regarding all incidents including unwanted fire signals. A discussion was held on how to reduce human interactions as there are some easy to reduce interactions on the calls we have received.

A discussion was also held on Health Technical Memoranda legislation and compliance with system issues which may result in NWFRS attendance.

Whilst calls are on a downward trend, they can be further reduced with a collaborative approach and through working together. A collective agreement on a way forward to introduce joint working and partnerships on Continuous Professional Development training and possibly formal training if circumstances allow.

HMP Berwyn

In February a meeting was held with the Crown Estates Inspector to discuss an upturn of incidents in HMP Berwyn, and also to discuss the inspection programme and involvement of NWFRS with that programme.

Incidents increasing can be attributed to a number of factors, but is predominantly due to the human element and then the secondary factors within the prison environment of opportunity/victimisation/wanting to move prisons/of vapes and other electrical items within the cell that can be utilised to become the ignition point for a fire.

We have also agreed that as part of the audit process we will expose more Compliance & Operational officers to the premises so we do not have a single point of failure between us and the Crown Estates as has historically been the case.

During the audit process we will also ask for the Station Commander of Wrexham to meet the fire management team to discuss any issues and quality assure current practices to ensure correct standard operating procedures.

Our Response Principle



14 RDS Station Availability

The below table shows the average pump availability for all RDS Stations between 06:00 and 18:00. The availability is broken down by month, showing the respective weekday and weekend/bank holiday availability.

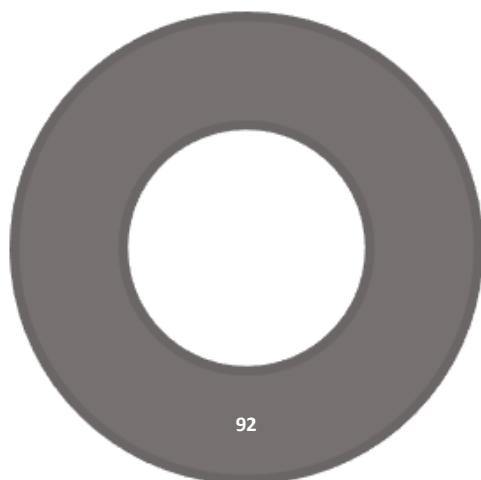
The table is representative of all RDS watches that are not based at wholetime or day crewed stations.

Average of RDS Stations Availability 06:00-18:00				
Day/Month	October	November	December	Q3
Weekday	4	5	6	5
Weekend (incl. Bank Holiday)	11	12	14	12
Overall Average	6	7	9	7

N.B. Availabilities have been rounded down to the nearest whole number.

15 Planned 18 Pump Availability

■ 100% Pump Availability Met ■ 100% Pump Availability Not Met



Number of Days Planned Availability Achieved	
100% Pump Availability Met	
Weekday	64
Weekend/Bank Holiday	28
100% Pump Availability Not Met	
N/A	0

16 Emerging Technologies

As technology evolves and our societal reliance upon it increases, it has become apparent that new and complex risks are presented to our Fire Service. Emerging technologies can make up a variety of forms, including things like:

- Electric Vehicles
- Wind Farms
- Devices containing Lithium-Ion Batteries

As many of these technologies are not currently captured within the Home Office's Incident Recording System (IRS), key word searches are conducted on incident logs in order to find the relevant incidents. Work is currently being undertaken by the Home Office and FRs across the UK to integrate these technologies into their new incident recording system, the Fire and Rescue Data Platform (FaRDaP), with a view of this data being captured from the start of Q2 in 2025/26. Incidents recorded before this period will still need to be extracted using key word searches.

The below table summarises attended incidents relating to emerging technologies. This data covers the period of October 2024 to December 2024 and includes all incident categories.

E-Cigarette / Vape, 4	Phone Charger, 2	Electric Car, 2	Hybrid Vehicle / Lithium Ion Battery, 1
	E-Bike / Lithium Ion Batteries, 2	Hybrid Vehicle, 2	E-Scooter, 1

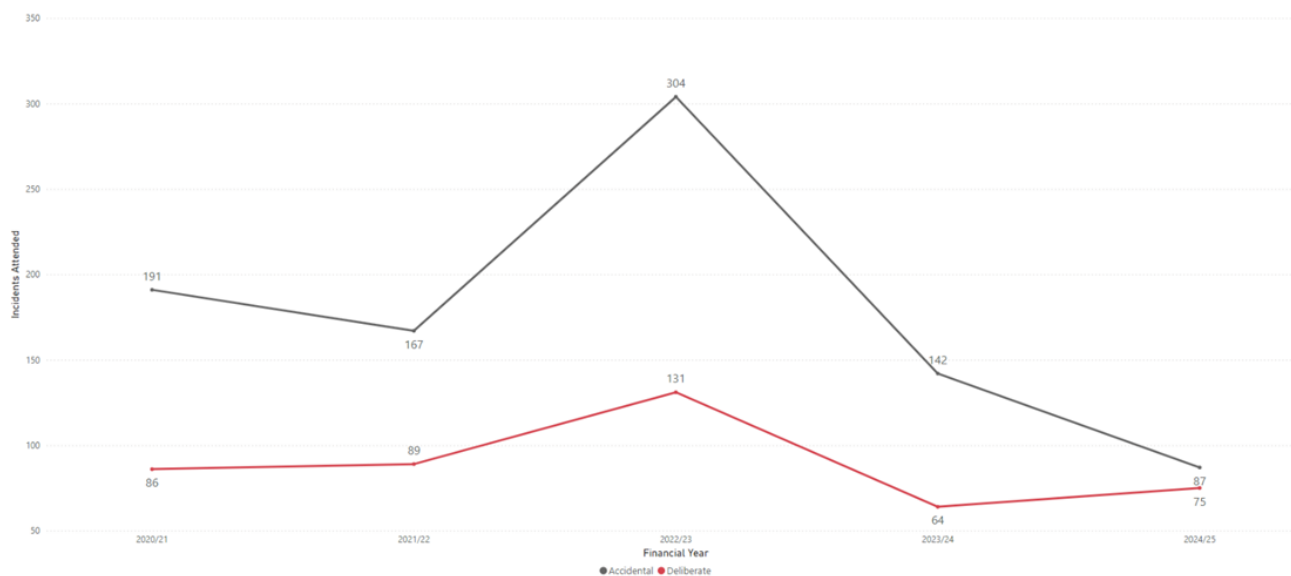
N.B. In some cases, the cause has been assumed rather than confirmed due to the nature of the incident.

Our Environment Principle



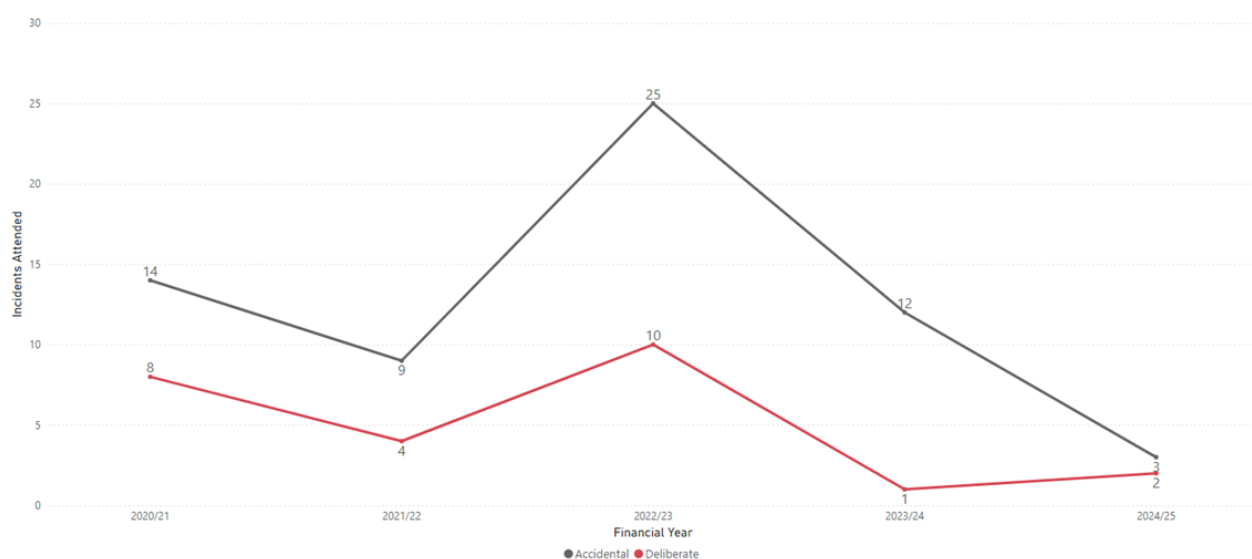
17 Grassland, woodland and crop fires

162 Grassland, woodland and crop fires were recorded, a 21.4% decrease from 206. This is 45.8% below the three-year average of 299.



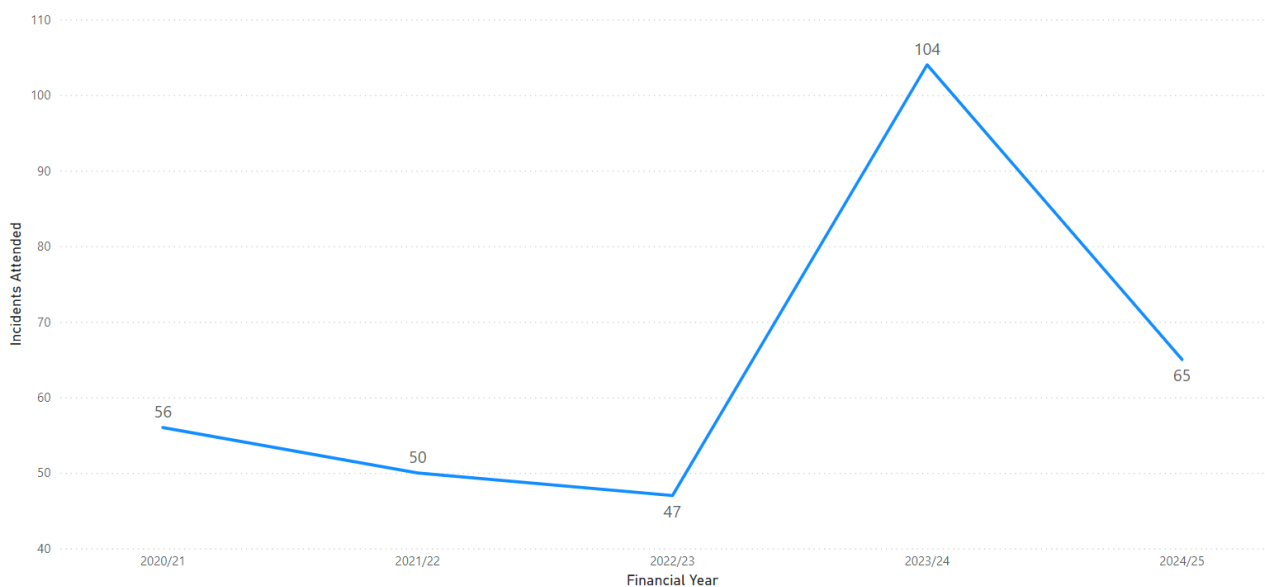
18 Wildfires

Five wildfires were attended, a reduction of 61.5%, and 75.0% below the three-year average of 20. As a result, the time spent monitoring wildfire incidents decreased to just over 232.5 hours, compared with almost 477 hours during the same period of the previous year.



19 Flooding

There were **65** flooding incidents attended, a 37.5% decrease from 104, and two less incidents than the 3-year average of 67.



Advice was given at **30** incidents, whilst **12** incidents were attended to make the scene safe.

Glossary

Fires	All fires fall into one of three categories – primary, secondary or chimney.
Primary Fires	<p>These are fires that are not chimney fires, and which are in any type of building (except if derelict), vehicles, caravans and trailers, outdoor storage, plant and machinery, agricultural and forestry property, and other outdoor structures such as bridges, post boxes, tunnels, etc.</p> <p>Fires in any location are categorised as primary fires if they involved casualties, rescues or escapes, as are fires in any location that were attended by five or more fire appliances.</p>
Secondary Fires	<p>Secondary fires are fires that are neither chimney fires nor primary fires.</p> <p>Secondary fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes, and will have been attended by four or fewer fire appliances.</p> <p>Secondary fires are those that would normally occur in locations such as open land, in single trees, fences, telegraph poles, refuse and refuse containers (but not paper banks, which would be considered - in the same way as agricultural and forestry property - to be primary fires), outdoor furniture, traffic lights, etc.</p>
Chimney Fires	<p>These are fires in occupied buildings where the fire is confined within the chimney structure, even if heat or smoke damage extends beyond the chimney itself.</p> <p>Chimney fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes, and will have been attended by four or fewer fire appliances.</p>
Special Service Incidents	<p>These are non-fire incidents which require the attendance of an appliance or officer and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Local emergencies e.g., flooding, road traffic incidents, rescue of persons, 'making safe' etc; b) Major disasters; c) Domestic incidents e.g., water leaks, persons locked in or out etc; d) Prior arrangements to attend incidents, which may include some provision of advice and inspections.
False Alarm (general guidance)	<p>Where the FRS attends a location believing there to be an incident, but on arrival discovers that no such incident exists, or existed.</p> <p>Note: if the appliance is 'turned around' by Control before arriving at the incident it is not classed as having been attended and does not need to be reported.</p>
False Alarms - Malicious	These are calls made with the intention of getting the FRS to attend a non-existent incident, including deliberate and suspected malicious intentions.

False Alarms – Good Intent	These are calls made in good faith in the belief that the FRS really would attend a fire or special service incident.
False Alarms - AFA	These are calls initiated by fire alarm and fire-fighting equipment. They include accidental initiation of alarm apparatus or where an alarm operates and a person then routinely calls the FRS as part of a standing arrangement, i.e., with no 'judgement' involved, for example from a security call centre or a nominated person in an organisation.
Building - Dwellings	A property that is a place of residence, i.e., occupied by households, excluding hotels, hostel and residential non-permanent structures.
Building - Non-Residential	Properties such as hospitals, offices, shops, factories, warehouses, restaurants, cinemas, public buildings, religious buildings, agricultural buildings, railway stations, sheds, prisons.
Building - Other Residential	Properties such as hotels, hotels and residential institutions B&Bs, Nursing/care homes, student halls of residence.
Vehicle (Road and Other Transport)	Road vehicle, rail vehicle, aircraft, boat.
Outdoor	Fields, grassland, woodland, refuse containers, post boxes.
Wildfires	A grassland, woodland and crop fire where the incident was attended by 4 or more vehicles, or the Service was in attendance for 6 hours or more, or where there was an estimated fire damage area of over 10,000 square meters.
Short Term Sickness (STS)	Absences 27 calendar days and under.
Long Term Sickness (LTS)	Absences 28 calendar days and over.