



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Fire and Rescue Service

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service

Monitoring Report: April 2024 – September 2024



Our five principles for keeping communities safe

PEOPLE

PREVENTION

PROTECTION

RESPONSE

ENVIRONMENT

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Our People Principle



1 Sickness Absence

According to the National Fire and Rescue Service Sickness Absence Report for April 2023 – September 2023, the average number of sickness absence duty days per staff member is 4.43, equating to 5.82%. Total time lost, for NWFRS, due to sickness absence has increased to 6.15% during quarter two.

There were 925 posts filled by 876 people during quarter two, which is an increase of 16 posts from the same period in 2023.

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
	Q2 Cases	Q2 Days Lost	Q2 Lost time %	Q2 Cases	Q2 Days Lost	Q2 Lost time %	
Long Term Sickness	66	3,482	4.21%	79	4,318	5.13%	↑ 0.92%
Short Term Sickness	123	769	0.93%	135	861	1.02%	↑ 0.09%
Total	189	4,251	5.14%	214	5,179	6.15%	↑ 1.01%

During quarter two, the number of short-term absence days has increased, although the number of cases has remained the same as quarter one of 2024/25. Short term absence accounted for 1.02% of time lost across all duty types, an increase of 0.09% from the same period in the previous year. The number of long-term sickness cases has also increased in comparison with the same period in the previous year, with long term absence now accounting for 5.13% of time lost.

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 1.02% of lost time during quarter two.

	2023/24 – Q2 Cases	2023/24 – Q2 Days lost	2023/24 – Q2 Lost time %	2024/25 – Q2 Cases	2024/25 – Q2 Days lost	2024/25 – Q2 Lost time %
Wholetime*	39	263	1.05%	50	354	1.42%
RDS /On-Call	57	346	0.81%	65	409	0.94%
Control	9	36	1.47%	4	18	0.68%
Corporate Departments	18	124	0.99%	16	80	0.62%
Total	123	769	0.93%	135	861	1.02%

(*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	26	10.9%
2	Mental Health – Stress	9	15.3%
3	Musculoskeletal – Upper Limb	9	10.7%

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, however short-term absence due to 'mental health – stress' accounted for the highest number of days lost during quarter two.

Whilst not a top three absence reason, the number of employees absent due to 'vomiting and diarrhoea' was at an increased rate than that in the same period in 2023/24. It was also noted within the NHS analysis data that the total number of norovirus laboratory results remained at a higher than average rate in July and August, with September now starting to show a decrease.

1.3 Long Term Sickness

Long Term sickness equates to an average of 5.13% of lost time during quarter two.

Long Term Sickness	2023/24 – Q2 Cases	2023/24 – Q2 Days lost	2023/24 – Q2 Lost time %	2024/25 – Q2 Cases	2024/25 – Q2 Days lost	2024/25 – Q2 Lost time %
WDS Stations	16	751	2.99%	23	1,113	4.46%
RDS /On-Call	35	2,078	4.87%	40	2,447	5.60%
Control	3	188	7.65%	4	214	8.11%
Corporate Departments	12	465	3.73%	12	544	4.21%
Total	66	3,482	4.21%	79	4,318	5.13%

Top 3 Long Term Sickness Absence Reasons (Cases)

	Absence Reason	Cases	Lost Time %
1	Musculoskeletal – Lower Limb	14	20.4%
2	Mental Health – Stress	12	11.7%
3	Failed Medical / Fitness Test	6	10.2%

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

Musculoskeletal – Lower limb absence accounted for the highest number of cases and days lost for long term absence. Due to the physical nature of operational roles, employees that are absent due to musculoskeletal conditions 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 sickness, for both quarter one and quarter two in 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 in July 2024.

Support is provided to employees who are absent due to mental health and musculoskeletal reasons, including access to occupational health, an 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

In comparison with the other Welsh Fire and Rescue Services, North Wales had the lowest percentage of time lost due to short term absence out of all three services. North Wales had the lowest time lost due to long term absence for Fire Control staff, but was slightly higher than Mid and West Wales for wholetime uniformed staff, and was at the average level for non-operational staff, with 7.54% of time lost.

Note, the All Wales data only reported on absence data for wholetime, control and corporate staff and is for the period April 2022 to March 2023, with the next update due in October 2024 (this information was not yet available at the time of preparing the report).

Our Prevention Principle



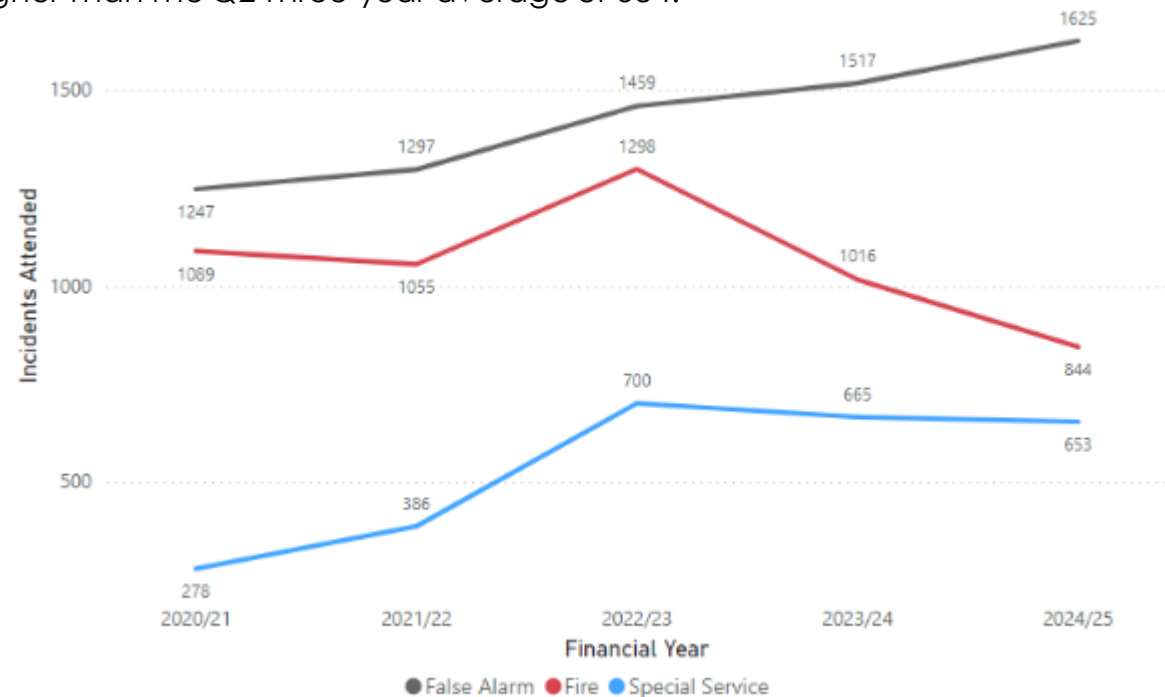
2 All Incidents

All Incidents – **3,122** incidents were attended during the first half of the financial year, which is a 2.4% decrease compared to the first two quarters of financial year 2023/24, and 0.3% below the three-year average of 3,131.

Fires – **844**, 24.8% less than the Q2 three-year average of 1,123.

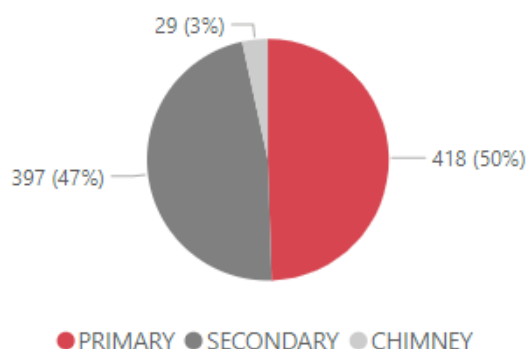
False Alarms – **1,625**, 14.1% more than the Q2 three-year average of 1,424.

SSCs – **653**, 11.8% higher than the Q2 three-year average of 584.



3 Fires, by Category and Motive

844 fires were attended; a 16.9% decrease from the 1,016 attended during Q2 of the 2023/24 financial year.



Primary Fires

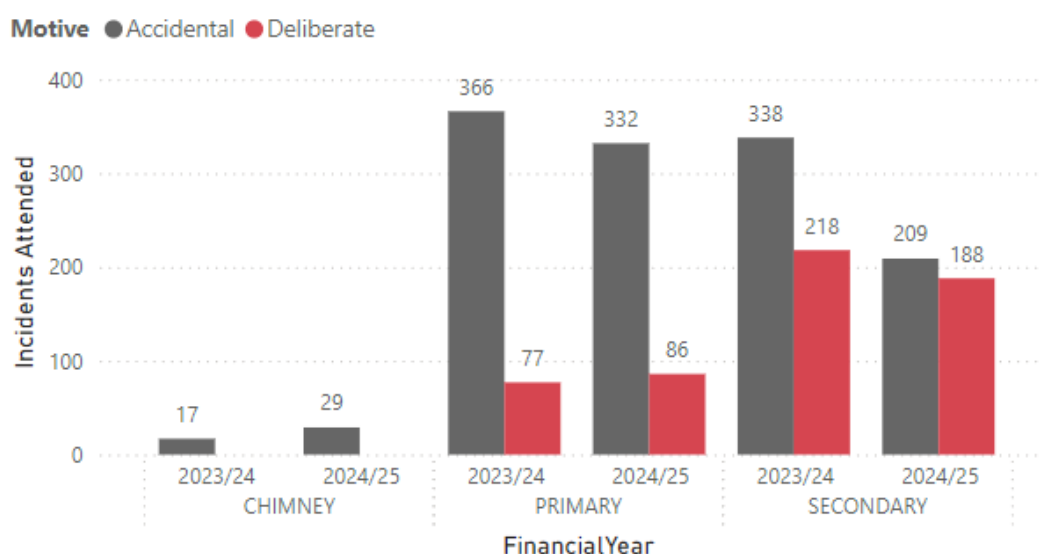
- **Accidental: 332** (79.4%).
- **Deliberate: 86** (20.6%).

Secondary Fires

- **Accidental: 209** (52.6%).
- **Deliberate: 188** (47.4%).

Chimney fires

- **29** (3.4% of all fires attended) - this is an increase of 70.6% from 17 compared with the same period last year.



Further Information on Secondary Deliberate Fires

Whilst it is clear that the Service attended a higher percentage of secondary deliberate fires proportionately to the number of secondary accidental fires compared with the same period last year, it is important to note that the number of deliberate secondary fires has still reduced, and that they are being identified in the same property categories as previous financial years ('Grassland, woodland and crops', 'Other outdoors (including land)', and 'Outdoor structures').

Actions taken to date:

- Investigation took place during Q2 regarding the continued increase in attendance at domestic AFAs.

It has long been perceived that as we are witnessing an ageing society, there will be an inevitable increase in the number of occupiers who have monitored systems. This has been confirmed by one of the major companies that covers the West and Central area of the Service.

This company was able to supply the following information:

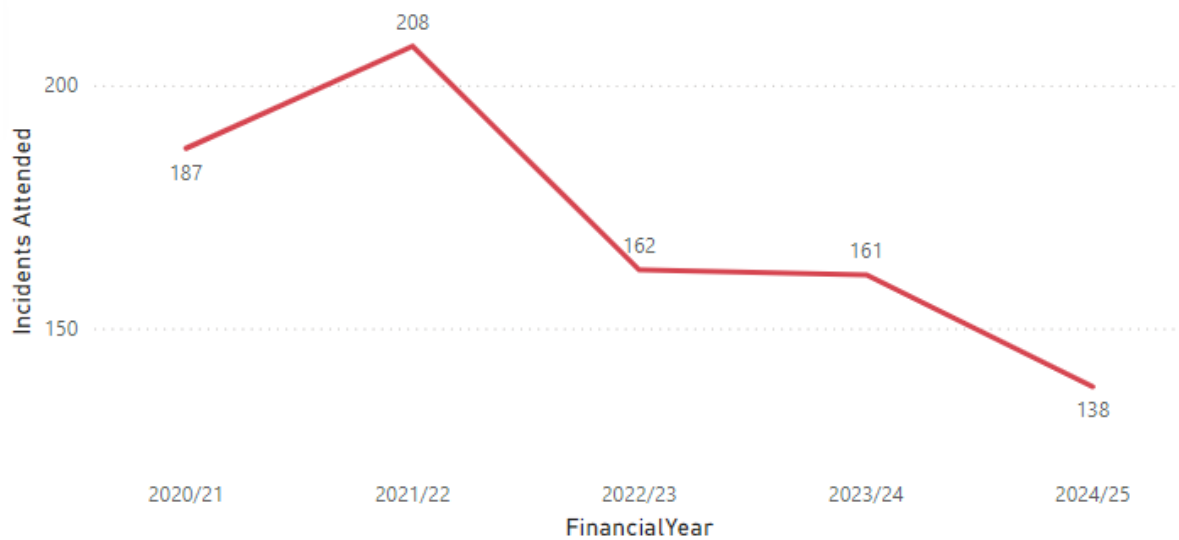
The table below indicates the number of calls (activations of monitored alarms) they receive and the number of times they call the FRS.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Smoke Alarm	1,653	1,537	1,824	1,842	1,763	1,868	1,928	1,557
Fire Service Called	48	51	40	58	65	81	80	62
% Passed to Fire Service	2.90%	3.32%	2.19%	3.15%	3.69%	4.34%	4.15%	3.98%

Attendance of the FRS allows us to complete a SAWC with that occupier and offer interventions and information as required.

4 Accidental Fires in Dwellings (ADFs)

138 accidental dwelling fires were attended during the first half of 2024/25, 14.3% less than the previous year (161), and 22.0% less than the three-year average of 177.



5 Main cause of accidental dwelling fires

There were numerous main causes of ADFs during the first half of the financial year.

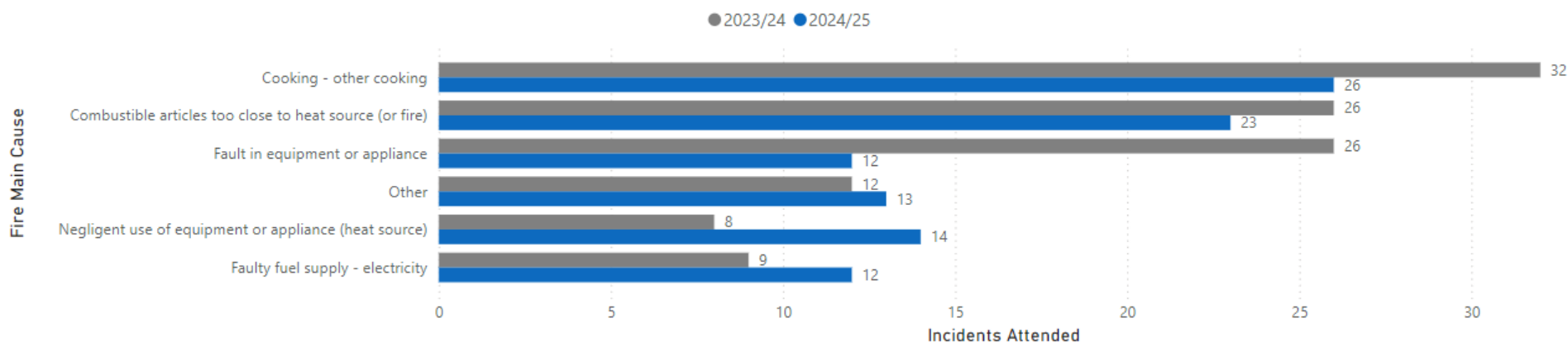
Although the most common during Q2 of 2024/25 was 'Cooking – other cooking', this still showed a 18.8% decrease from 32 to **26** compared with the same period last year.

Other main causes which saw a reduction included:

- 'Fault in equipment or appliance' which showed a significant reduction of 53.8% from 26 to **12**
- 'Careless handling – due to careless disposal' which decreased 42.9% from 14 to **eight**
- 'Cooking – chip pan/deep fat fryer' which decreased 58.3% from 12 to **five**.

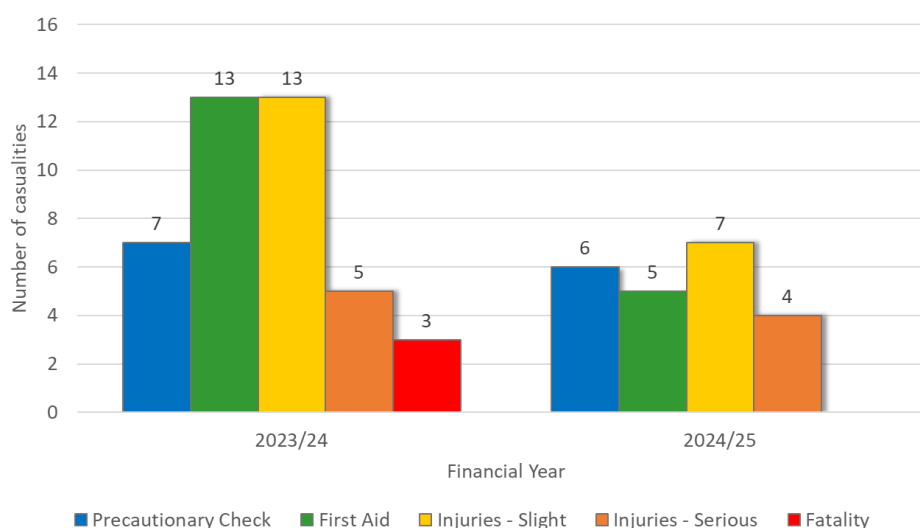
Despite this, a few main causes saw a rise during this half. These included:

- 'Faulty fuel supply – electricity' increased by 33.3% from nine to **12**
- 'Negligent use of equipment or appliance (heat source)' increased by 75.0% from eight to **14**.



6 Fatalities and Casualties from Accidental Fires in Dwellings

During Q2 of 2024/25, **22** people sustained injuries at **19** ADFs. No fatalities were recorded during the quarter.



Of the 22 casualties, **12** (54.6%) were 'Overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes; asphyxiation', **four** sustained slight burn injuries, **three** sustained severe burn injuries, **one** had 'Breathing difficulties (other than 'overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes; asphyxiation)', and **another** had a 'Combination of burns and overcome by gas/smoke'. The **one** other casualty's injury type was recorded as 'Other'.

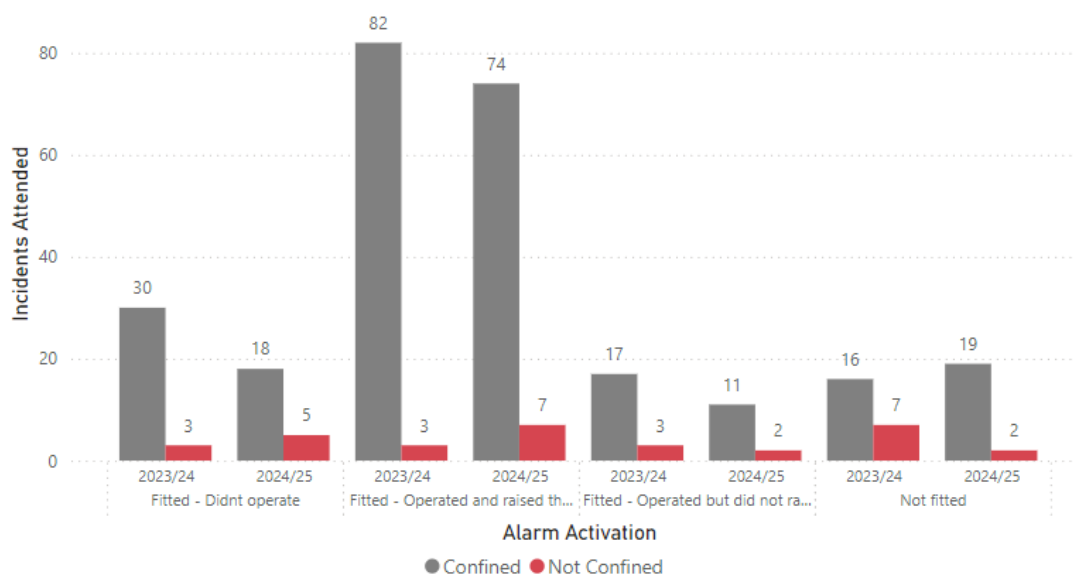
7 Smoke Detectors – Accidental Dwelling Fires

Detectors: smoke/heat detectors were present at **117** (84.8%) accidental dwelling fires attended during Q2 of financial year 2024/25.

Alarms operated and raised the alarm at **81** (58.7%) ADFs.

Alarms were not fitted at **21** of the ADFs attended.

Of the **138** ADFs attended, **122** were confined to the room of origin, and **16** were not confined.



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

- Two-day course conduct with Denbighshire CC with homeless young people. FS teams and Operational crew involved.
- Engagement sessions run with dementia groups, university students, asylum seekers and the Traveller community.
- Numerous attendances at summer fetes, county shows and open days across the service area.
- Campaign Steering Group (CSG) continues to work with Corporate Communications to proactively promote fire, road, and water safety across all media platforms.
- Summer Safety campaigns included engagement with all identified caravan and camp sites across the service to promote safe use of BBQs and controlled burning. Contact highlighted the need to “police” their sites to discourage deliberate fire setting.
- 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.

Educational Visits to Schools

- 37 school visits, engaging with 3,888 children and young people.
 - This includes six Crucial Crew visits with engagement with 811 students.
- One Station visit engaging with 30 students.
- Three Summer club visits.

Phoenix

- Number of Phoenix courses = four
- One short intervention supporting the Skittles Course.
- Number of Phoenix participants = 35
- 100% positive feedback, 45% achieving full Agored Cymru qualifications.

Fire Setter Interventions

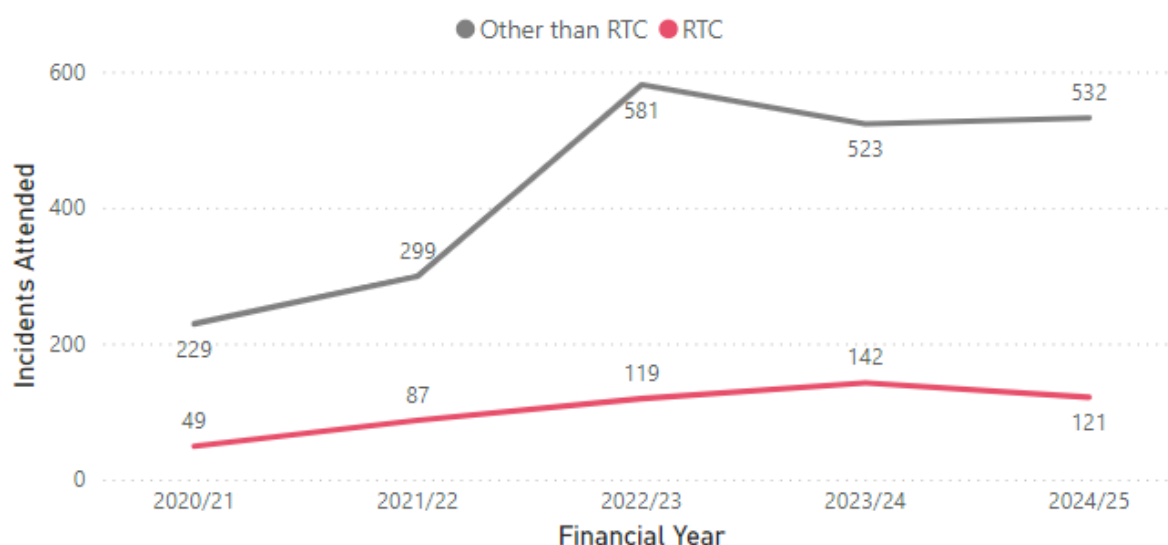
- FACE = three
- FireSafe = 10
- Adult intervention = 0

DangerPoint

- 3665 YP through the Home Safety scenario up to the end of Q2.

8 Special Service Calls (SSCs)

A total of **653** special service calls (including RTCs) were attended during Q2 of 2024/25. This is a 1.8% decrease compared with the previous financial year.



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

- **53** 'Other rescue/release of persons' incidents – an increase of 35.9% from 39.
- **30** 'Lift Release' incidents – an increase of 36.4% from 22.
- **23** 'Removal of people from objects' incidents – an increase of 27.8% from 18.
- **12** 'Rescue or evacuation from water' incidents – an increase of 33.3% from nine.
- **10** 'Hazardous Materials' incidents – an increase of 66.7% from six.
- **Four** 'Medical Incident – First Responder' incidents – an increase of 33.3% from three.

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

- **31** 'Effecting entry/exit' incidents – a decrease of 40.4% from 52.
- **29** 'Flooding' incidents – a decrease of 17.1% from 35.
- **27** 'Animal assistance' incidents – a decrease of 40.0% from 45.
- **Two** 'Other Transport' incidents – a decrease of 60.0% from five.

Actions taken to date:

- Olivia's Story is now embedded into 'StayWise' Cymru.
- Olivia's Story continues to be delivered by the FS WMs and remains current and extremely impactful.
 - Five sessions during Q2 with 61 interactions.
- Biker Down, and Biker Brew events continue and are virtually fully booked for the remainder of the year.
 - Three sessions during Q2 with 56 students.
- Op Ugain
 - 701 roadside presentations (this does not include the September figures).
 - Four prosecutions

Month	Total Number of Cars	Roadside Presentations	Prosecutions
January	356	64	0
February	7,301	192	3
March	13,422	143	1
April	12,187	109	0
May	10,745	216	1
June	13,167	324	0
July	19,311	353	0
August	12,327	348	4

Op Ugain Totals

Further Actions:

- New groups that would benefit from receiving the 'Olivia's Story' are being explored, such as Bangor and Wrexham University Students.

9 Safe and Well Checks

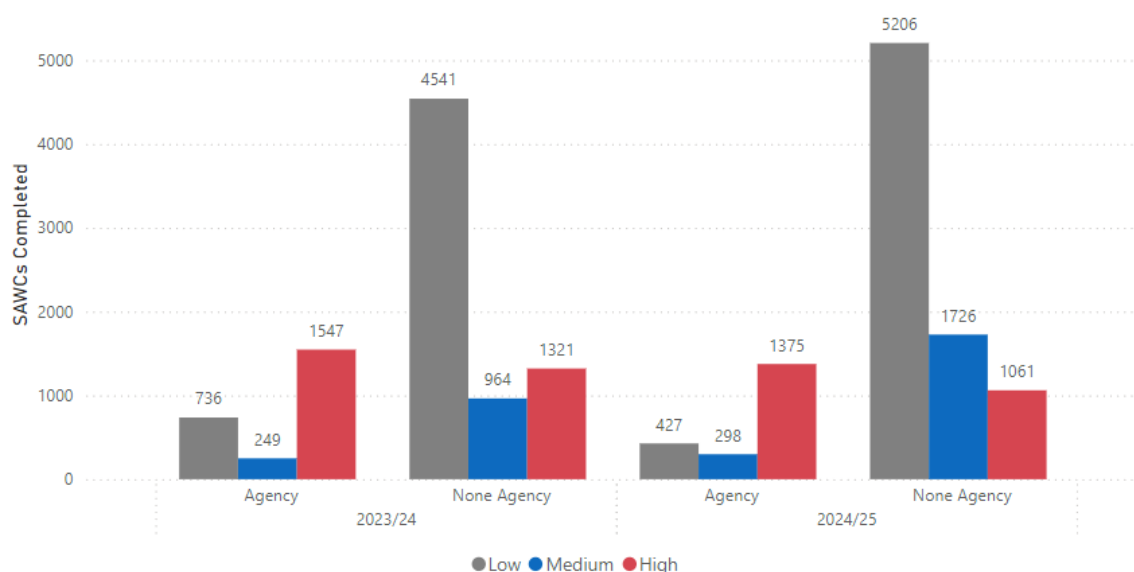
During the first half of financial year 2024/25, a total of **10,093** SAWCs were completed, of which:

- **2,436** (24.1%) were High priority, with **1,375** (56.4% of high priority checks) coming from a partner agency.
- **2,024** (20.1%) were Medium priority, with **298** (14.7% of medium priority checks) coming from a partner agency.
- **5,633** (55.8%) were Low priority, with **427** (7.6% of low priority checks) coming from a partner agency.

Whilst there has been a **7.9%** increase in the number of SAWCs completed compared with the same period last year, there has been a **15.1%** decrease in the number of high priority SAWCs completed. This is the lowest number of high priority checks conducted during the first half of the last five financial years.

Despite this however, it goes without saying that low and medium priority SAWCs completed are still valuable. Analysis of ADF casualties by age shows that the vast majority of individuals who are injured by fire are aged under 50; a group of individuals who are most likely going to fall into having a low or medium priority SAWC. The aging UK population also means that one day, those who have had a low or medium priority SAWC today, will likely become a high priority in the future, meaning the preventative work conducted today is done in anticipation of the risks the occupier will one day face.

Furthermore, many of the low priority checks may have been completed as a consequence of a street being targeted as part of the Exeter Data initiative. One street may have held many low priority households in the midst of several Exeter checks, which themselves may also have come out as being low priority.



Actions taken to date:

- Since the start of Q2 all WT/DC crews have been informed to use the same “scoring” system to correctly identify an occupier as Low, Medium or High. This will take time to effect the overall figures and may not be completely visible until 25/26, however changes are already identified as demonstrated by the increase in the number of Medium level SAWCs completed.
- Agency Seminar: An event was delivered during September where invited representatives from the main referring agencies received input from the Prevention team to help them identify our target audience. It is imperative that our referrals are as targeted as possible to ensure we have the most impact, and are able to deliver in a timely manner.
 - The Partnership Managers will now utilise this presentation to continue work locally.
- Local campaigns were conducted throughout the summer months by all three FS area teams. Locations were chosen on the basis of post incident information and available Exeter data.
- Hotspotting is monitored at the tri-weekly FS meetings. Any shortcomings are identified and dealt with accordingly.
- Impact/co working days continue to be delivered.

Further Actions:

- Work is being undertaken to match as many Exeter Data addresses to UPRNs (Unique Property Reference Numbers) as possible.
 - Corporate Planning and Performance is working to develop a solution, as well as liaising closely with NHS Wales to try and match as many addresses with ONS data.
 - To date, over 100,000 addresses have been matched to UPRNs out of the 170,000~ Exeter addresses.

Our Protection Principle

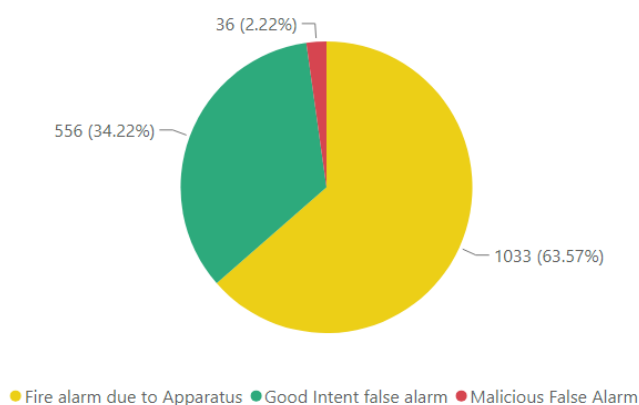


10 False Alarms

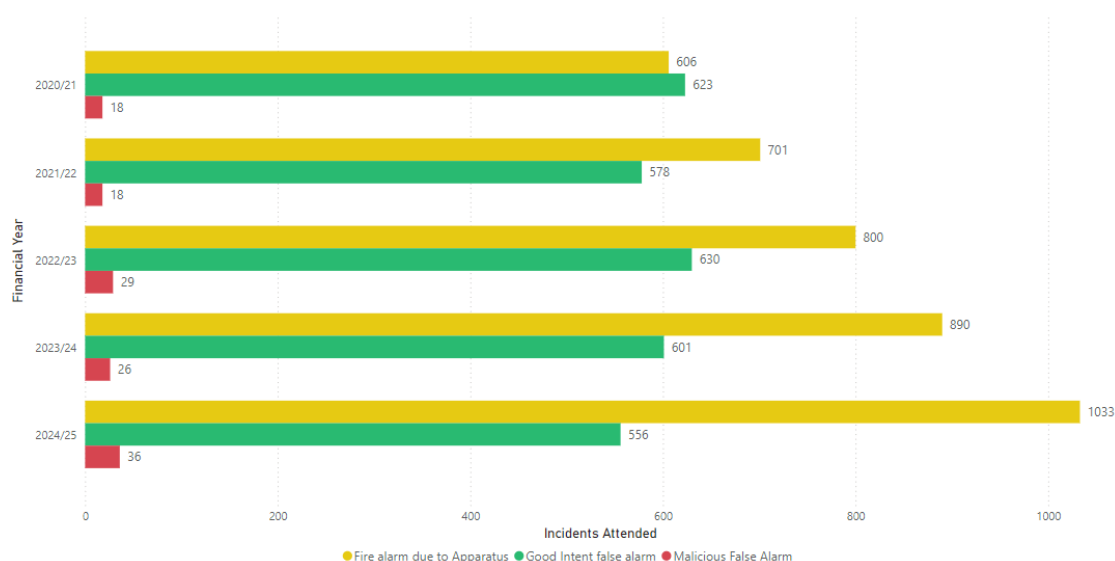
A total of **1,625** False Alarms were attended during the reporting period. This is an increase of 7.1% compared with the same period of the previous financial year.

This rise in False Alarms can be attributed to a 16.1% increase in Fire alarm due to apparatus (890 to **1,033**), as well as a 38.5% rise in Malicious False Alarms (26 to **36**). Both of these are now at their highest levels based on the last five financial years.

Good intent false alarms saw a decrease from 601 to **556**. This the lowest number of incidents of this nature recorded over the first half of the last five financial years.

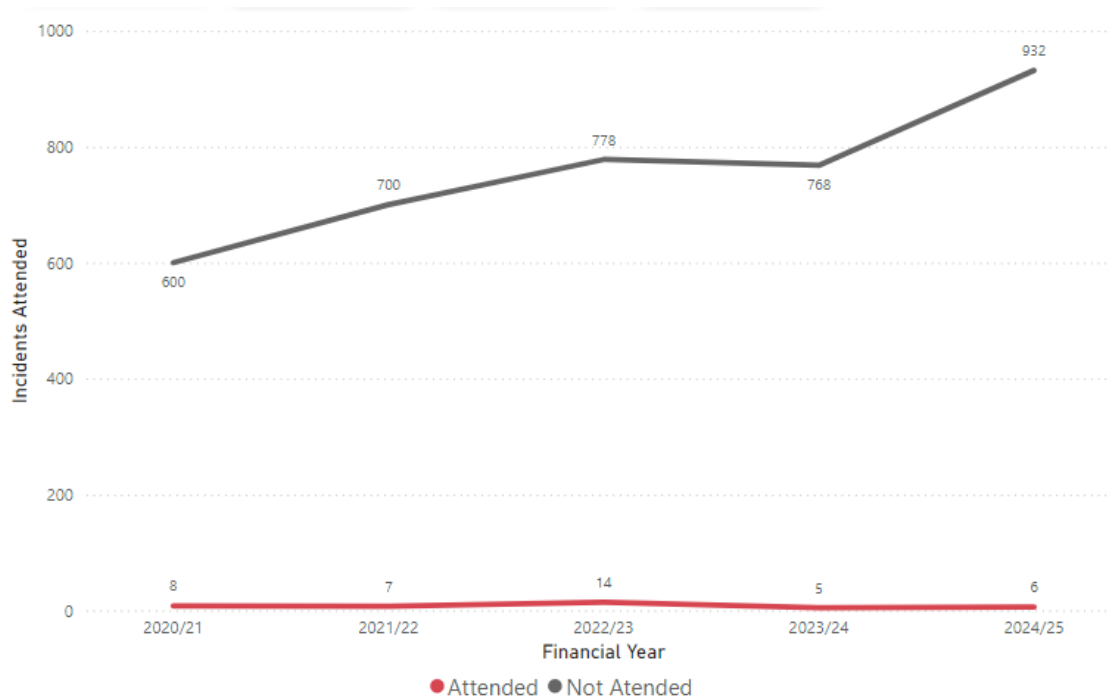


In addition, the total number of AFAs recorded during Q1 has decreased since the last quarter, and the number of False Alarm Good Intent (FAGI) incidents has increased. This was due to a recording error, whereby Control had been recording some FAGI incidents as False Alarm AFAs. This error has since been rectified, and guidance has been provided to Control's Watches by the CMT on the correct practices that need to be adhered to.



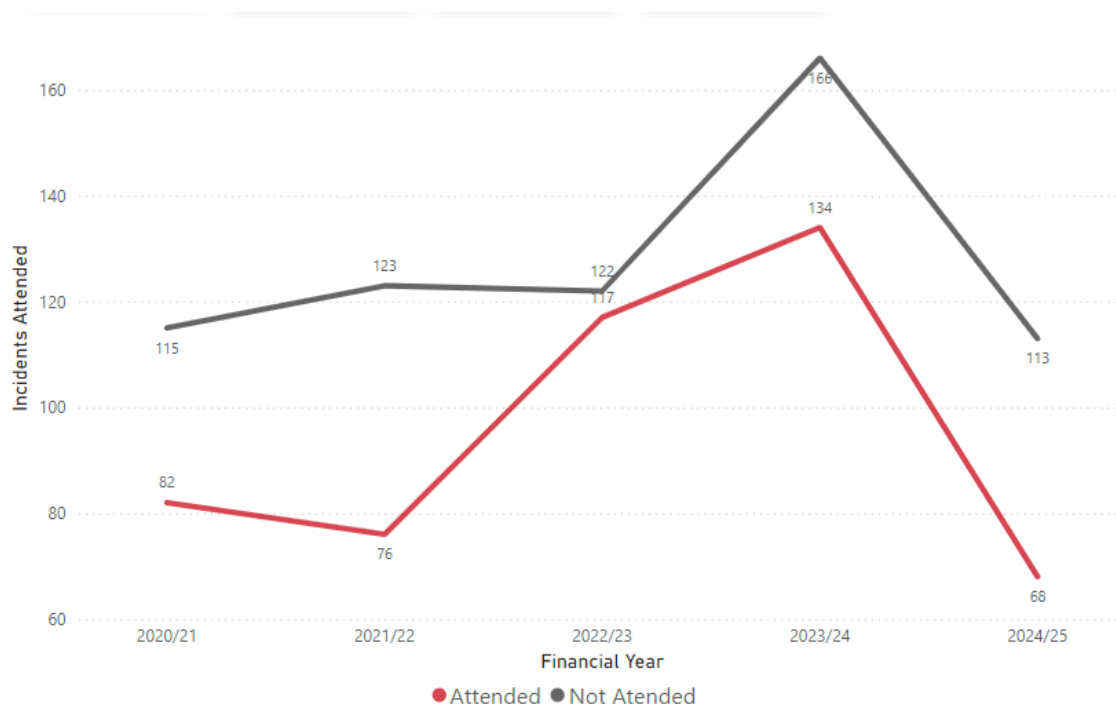
11 Commercial AFA calls

938 Commercial AFA calls were received during the reporting period, which is the highest number of calls received during any Q2 period in the last five years.



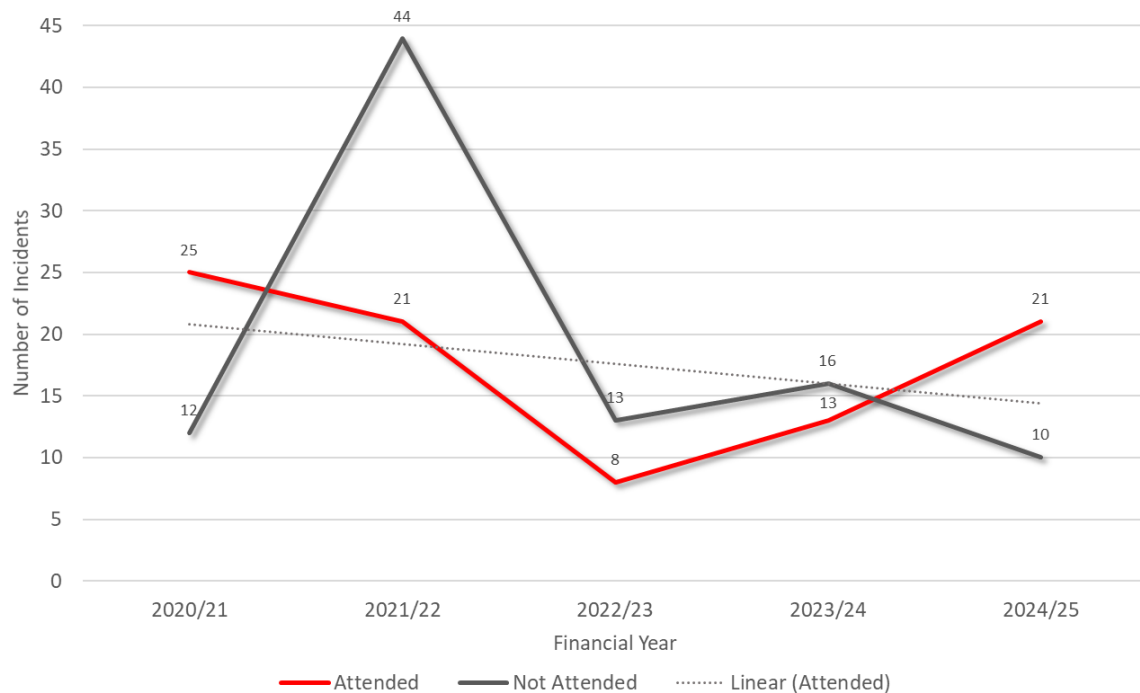
12 Hospital AFA calls

181 Hospital AFA calls were received during Q2 of 2024/25, which is the lowest number of calls received during any Q2 period in the last five years. **68** were attended, 49.3% less than last year (134).



13 HMP Berwyn

21 primary fires were started deliberately at HMP Berwyn. This is 61.5% more than last year.



Actions taken to date:

- The communication procedure between HMP Berwyn and Control room continues to work well, with a number of incidents not being attended or resulting in crews being stood down before attendance.
- NWFRS maintains a working relationship with the HMP Berwyn Management team to continue the reduction in attendances where possible.

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.

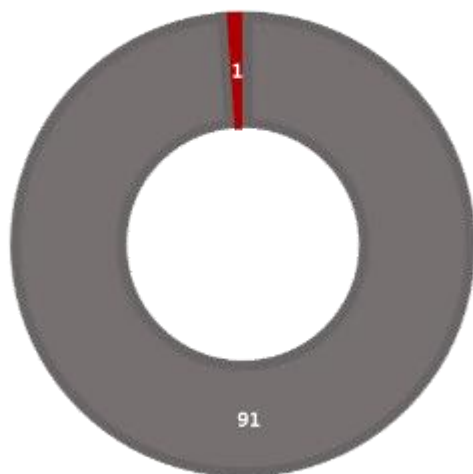
The table is representative of all RDS watches that are not based at wholetime or day crewed stations.

Average of RDS Stations Availability 06:00-18:00				
Day/Month	July	August	September	Q2
Weekday	5	4	4	4
Weekend (incl. Bank Holiday)	11	11	10	11
Overall Average	6	7	6	6

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	27
100% Pump Availability Not Met	
Weekday	1

N.B. Control's Availability Manager stated that 18 pump availability was not achieved on the 29th August 2024 for a two-hour portion of the day.

16 Emerging Technologies

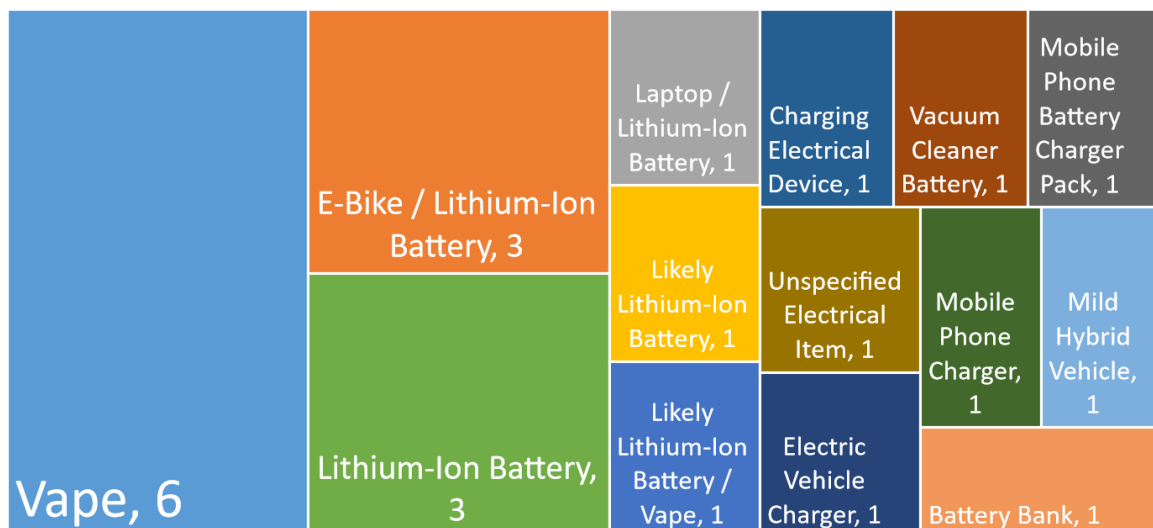
As technology evolves and our societal reliance upon it increases, it has become apparent that new and complex risks are presented to our Fire Service. Emerging technologies can make up a variety of forms, including things like:

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

The purpose of this new addition to the Performance Monitoring Report is to highlight what incidents NWFRS attends that relate to these emerging technologies, by indicating the number of incidents by technology type that we attend.

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 to integrate these technologies into their recording system, with a view to this being rolled out potentially by Q1 2025.

The below table summarises the incident data that relates to emerging technologies. This data covers the period of April 2024 to September 2024.



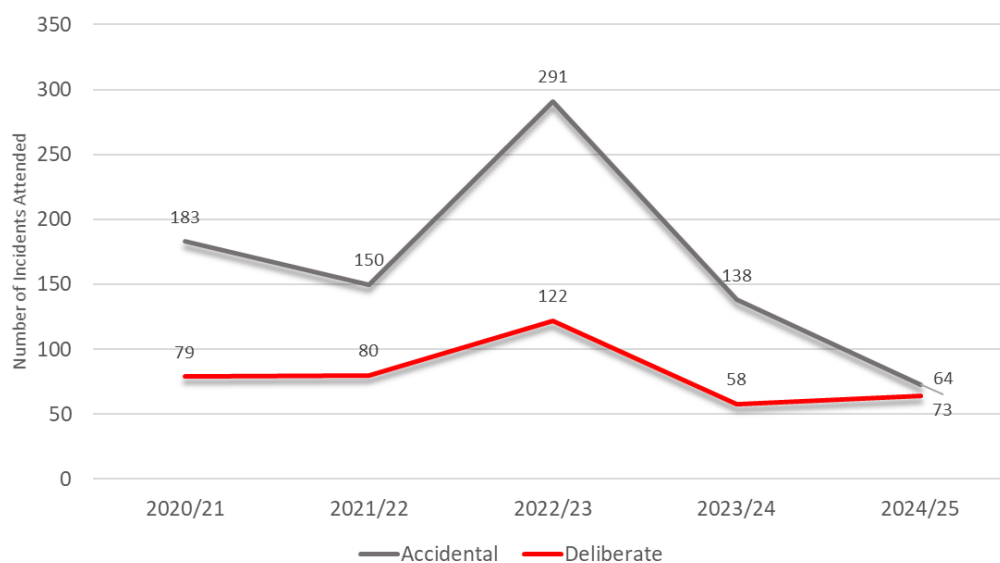
N.B. Some of the above incidents involved the deliberate ignition of goods to start a fire. Furthermore, other incidents involved apparatus being damaged which then subsequently started a fire.

Our Environment Principle



17 Grassland, woodland and crop fires

137 Grassland, woodland and crop fires were recorded during the quarter, a 30.1% decrease from the 196 recorded during the same period last year. This is 51.1% below the three-year average of 280.



18 Wildfires

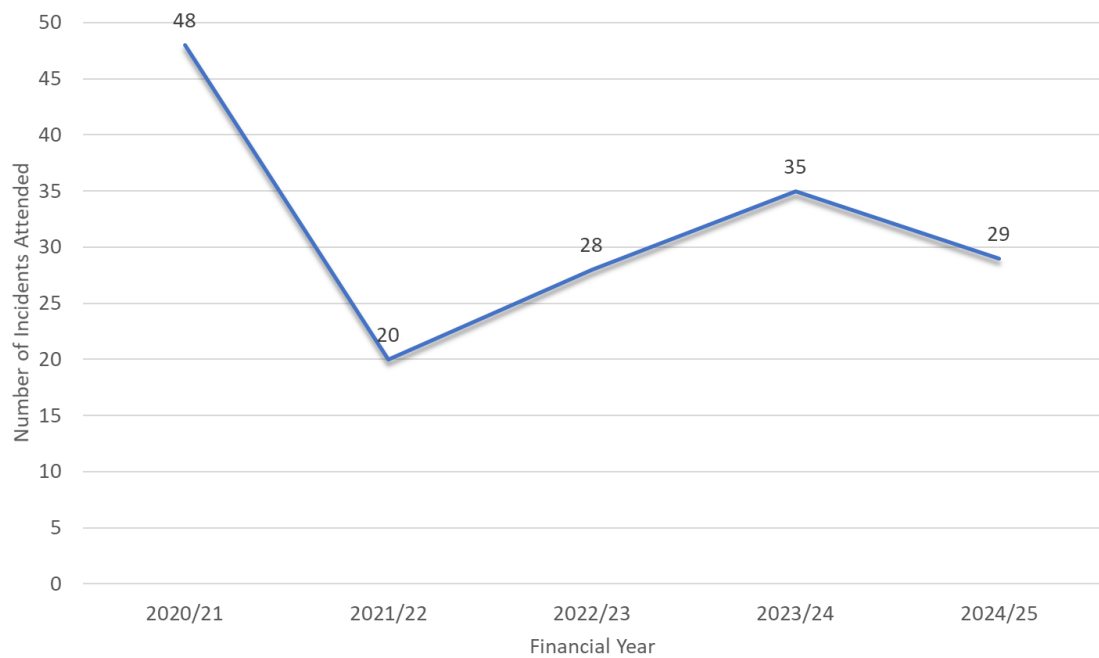
Four wildfires were attended during the period. This is 80.0% below the three-year average of 20. As a result, the time spent monitoring the incident decreased to over 229 hours, compared with almost 477 hours during the same period of the previous year, where 13 wildfires were attended.



19 Flooding

There were **29** flooding incidents attended during the half of 2024/25. This is a 17.1% decrease in incidents attended compared to the same period of the previous year, and is a 3.6% increase over the three-year average (28).

Advice was given at **13** incidents, whilst **eight** 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. 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.