



Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

Health and Safety Annual Report

2020/2021



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1. Executive Summary

Be transparent, open, and accessible.

This report provides an overview of the health, safety, and welfare performance achievements in our Service from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

The report will be provided to members of our Service Leadership Team (SLT), Essex Police Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority, and the Health, Safety and Welfare Strategy Group (HSWSG). It will also be available electronically on our Service intranet for all colleagues.

Our Service seeks continuous improvement in all aspects of safety by promoting a positive safety culture, identifying, and mitigating risk and ensuring personal competence. Our Service strives to keep all colleagues and the County of Essex safe, while delivering against our Service strategy by providing a wide range of essential services to the community. Our performance is constantly monitored and measured against agreed standards to show where and when improvement is needed.

2. Statistical Analysis

Be transparent, open, and accessible. Promote a positive culture in the workplace.

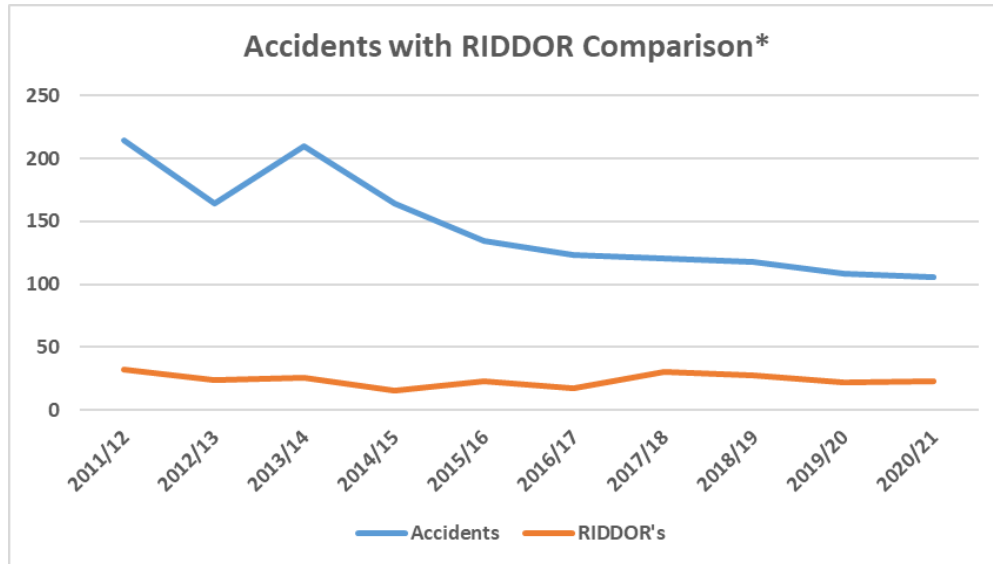
Our Health and Safety department carries out active self-monitoring and reactive monitoring to ensure that key risks are controlled, and that performance standards and risk assessments are used and monitored.

Health and Safety Advisors monitor safety events on the Occupational Safety Health and Environmental Notification System (OSHENS). This enables trends and issues to be identified and monitored with remedial actions taken swiftly and appropriately where required. Risk assessment reviews are carried out after hazards are identified and after accidents occur. The learning outcomes from investigations are used to update risk assessments to mitigate risks as low as is reasonably practicable.



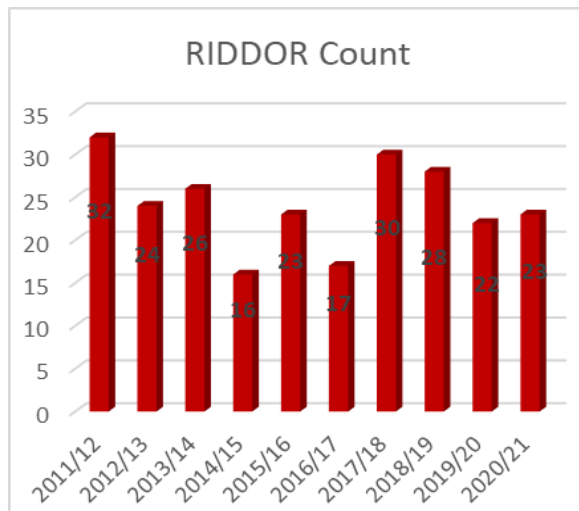
2.1 The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)

RIDDOR puts duties on employers, and their nominated 'Responsible Person' for health and safety to report certain serious workplace accidents, occupational diseases and specified dangerous occurrences (near misses).



*This is the total number of accidents from all groups of staff across our Service.

Since 2011/12 our long-term trend continues to show year on year reductions, and overall, we have seen a 42% reduction in accidents and a 28% reduction in RIDDORs.



The 23 RIDDORs reported in 2020/21 consist of: -

- 2 dangerous occurrences – 1 Breathing Apparatus (BA) set malfunction and 1 bottle jack (small hand operated jack used to raise part of a vehicle) leaked oil during Road Traffic Collision (RTC) training
- 1 fatality – A Firefighter (FF) suffered a brain aneurysm while on duty during a personal fitness workout
- 20 injures exceeding 7 days



2.2 Four Year (medium term) Comparison

Over the past four years the table below identifies a continual steady reduction in accidents by 12%. Attacks of Fire Service Personnel (FSP) remain steady and are mainly verbal abuse. There is a tendency for RIDDORs to fluctuate over the years and the 23 reported this year is just below the 4-year average of 25 and a 23% reduction against 2017/18.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Accidents	121	118	109	106
Attacks on FSP	20	19	18	16
RIDDOR Count	30	28	22	23

OUR GOALS

- Protect people, assets, and the communities in which we work
- Provide and maintain safe plant, equipment, and safe systems of work
- Always apply good practice and recognise that compliance with standards and legislation is a minimum level requirement that must be continually improved upon
- To control workplace hazards by assessing risks and establishing suitable control measures
- Drive a system of open communication and a no-blame culture on safety that fosters strong employee and employer co-operation
- Communicate lessons learnt and share good practice throughout our Service



2.3 Home Office Data 2020/21 Operational Personnel/Injuries

HOME OFFICE DATA 2020/21	Number of Personne l Injured	Number of Over 7 Day Injuries	Number of RIDDOR Major Injuries	Number of Fatalities	TOTAL
Injuries at Fires	33	3	0	0	36
Injuries at Road Traffic Collisions	2	1	0	0	3
Injuries at Special Service Incidents	4	0	0	0	4
Injuries During Operational Training	23	3	0	0	26
Injuries During Fitness Training	13	4	0	1	18
Injuries During Routine Activities	17	2	0	0	19
TOTAL	92	13	0	1	

2.3.1 Injuries During Operational Incidents

There has been a reduction in RIDDOR reportable injuries at operational incidents from 6 during 2019/20 to 3 during 2020/21. However over the same period there was an increase in minor injuries while attending operational incidents from 30 to 39, this led to the total shifts lost rising from 68 to 86. It should be noted that the 86 shifts lost were accumulated from 8 of the 39 injuries and 44 of those shifts lost were from a single injury. Injuries resulting in lost shifts were:

1. FF twisted ankle while running out 70mm delivery hose. Immediate cause recorded as slip, trip or fall on same level. This injury resulted in 44 shifts lost
2. FF jarred shoulder while pulling hose reel which got caught around a tree. Immediate cause recorded as awkward or repetitive movement. This injury resulted in 7 shifts lost
3. FF's back went into spasm after dragging a 45mm hose through the basement area of incident. Immediate cause recorded manual handling. This injury resulted in 5 shifts lost
4. FF slipped on uneven ground and twisted knee while attending to a field fire. Immediate cause recorded as slip, trip or fall on same level. This injury resulted in 2 shifts lost
5. FF suffered a minor ear injury after an explosion at an incident. Immediate cause recorded as exposure to noise. This injury resulted in 4 shifts lost
6. While assisting the Ambulance Service with a casualty on a spinal board, FF jarred their back. Immediate cause recorded as manual handling. This injury resulted in 17 shifts lost
7. FF suffered superficial burns to their hand and arm. Immediate cause recorded as contact with heat. This injury resulted in 3 shifts lost



8. FF rolled their ankle while running the hose out. Immediate cause recorded as slip, trip or fall. This injury resulted in 4 shifts lost.

There were 4 injuries that resulted in shifts lost while using a hose; these injuries made up 70% of the 86 shifts lost. Further work will be done to explore opportunities to reduce accidents relating to hose, in conjunction with our Operations Policy department.

33 of the injuries occurred while attending fires, 2 during attending RTCs and 4 during other Special Services (emergency incidents other than fire).

Immediate causes recorded for operational injuries are as follows:

- 12 awkward or repetitive movements
- 1 contact with door/door frame
- 2 exposures to noise
- 1 failure to use personal protective equipment (PPE)
- 1 hazardous environmental condition
- 3 ill health
- 3 manual handling
- 5 slip, trip or fall on the same level
- 1 attack on FF
- 2 others

2.3.2 Injuries During Operational Training

There has been a decrease in injuries during operational training down from 27 in 2019/20 to 23 during 2020/21, where only 4 resulted in shifts lost. There has also been a reduction in RIDDOR reportable injuries relating to operational training, down from 5 in 2019/20 to 3 during 2020/21. Despite these reductions, shifts lost increased from 56 in 2019/20 to 86 during 2020/21 due to two of the injuries resulting in 69 of the shifts lost. Below is further information relating to the specific injuries:

1. While participating in Hot Fire training at Wethersfield, a FF sustained burns to their thumbs and shoulder. This injury resulted in 14 shifts lost and was RIDDOR reportable
2. Following a training briefing where all Watch members had full PPE on, a FF attempted to stand from a sitting position and injured their left knee. This injury resulted in 31 shifts lost and was RIDDOR reportable
3. While participating in swift water rescue training. A FF experienced discomfort after water had entered their ear. This resulted in 3 shifts lost
4. During an RTC drill, one FF suffered a broken finger after shoring moved and pinched the end of their finger. This injury resulted in 38 shifts lost

Immediate causes recorded for all injuries during operational training are as follows:

- 4 awkward/repetitive movements
- 3 contact with heat
- 2 contact with machinery, moving tools or equipment
- 1 failure of guards, warning systems or safety devices
- 1 hazardous environmental condition



- 1 hit something stationary
- 5 manual handling
- 1 PPE
- 2 trapped in, under or between objects
- 3 others

2.3.3 Injuries During Fitness Training

Data for injuries sustained while taking part in fitness training has increased from 4 during 2019/20, to 13 during 2020/21. This led to an increase in shifts lost from 4 to 83 over this period. The shifts lost accumulated from 5 of the injuries and were RIDDOR reportable. Injuries sustained during fitness training related to the following activities:

- 3 volleyball – 2 of which were RIDDOR reportable
- 2 treadmill
- 1 ball game – RIDDOR reportable
- 2 circuit training
- 2 not specified – occurred in the gym
- 3 others – 2 of which were RIDDOR reportable

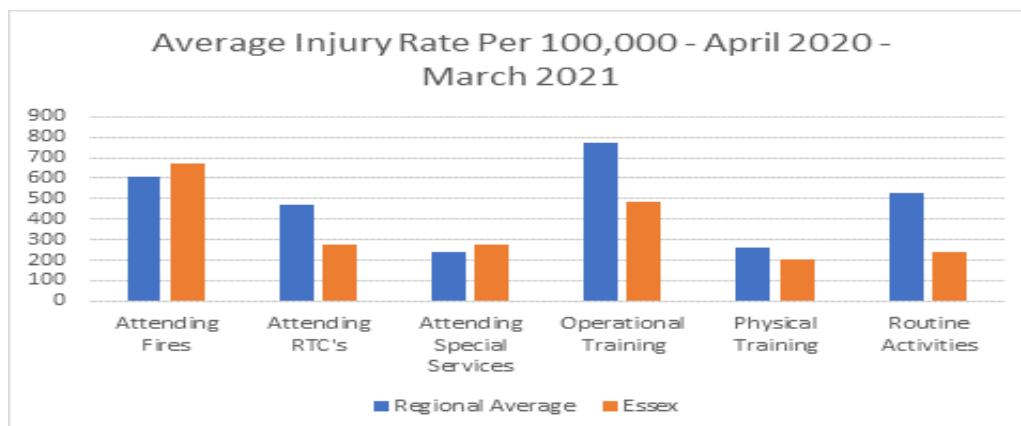
2.3.4 Injuries during Routine Activities

Injuries sustained during routine activities have reduced slightly from 18 during 2019/20 to 17 during 2020/21. There was also a reduction in reportable RIDDORs relating to routine activities from 5 down to 2 over the same period. This led to a 43% decrease in shifts lost from 80 during 2019/20 to 45 this year. There were no notable trends highlighted.

2.3.5 Regional Comparison

To support the development of health and safety across Fire Services in the Eastern Region and London a forum for the seven Fire and Rescue Services was created to engage on strategic and tactical level health and safety management. Partner agencies, subgroups and working groups come together as required to ensure of an appropriate response to health and safety matters.

The Eastern Region and London Health and Safety Group also provides representation at the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) National Health and Safety Committee.



The graph above shows our Service's performance against the region average through data that is collated quarterly and presented as per 100,000 to bring all Services data into alignment. This data is compared and discussed at the Eastern Region and London Health and Safety Group for trend analysis and sharing of notable practices.

The average injury rate for Essex is slightly higher against the regional average for 'Attending Fires' (10%) and 'Attending Special Services' (14%).

However, Essex has significantly less injuries against the regional average for 'Routine Activities' (55%), 41% less for 'Attending RTC's', 36% less injuries for 'Operational training' and 21% less for 'Physical Training'.

OUR COMMITMENTS

- Create a non-judgemental environment where our colleagues can be open and willing to share something that with hindsight they could have done better. This enables us to learn and reduce the likelihood of a similar occurrence or accident being repeated
- Assign health and safety risks the same priority as other critical organisational activities
- Provide a healthy working environment and appropriate facilities for the welfare of all colleagues
- Provide a strong safety management framework that sets and reviews safety objectives and targets
- Motivate and drive commitment of all colleagues by providing health, safety and welfare awareness training
- Use, handle, store and transport articles and substances safely
- To ensure continual improvement, all colleagues are reminded of their responsibility: Colleagues have an obligation to take reasonable care of their own safety and the safety of others who may be affected by their activities
- When safety events occur, we will engage with colleagues to reinforce safety messages and procedures to mitigate the likelihood of risk
- Provide an annual report on health and safety statistics and trends to enable us to continually seek to improve on performance



3. Current Resourcing

Make best use of resources. Promote a positive culture in the workplace.

Line management of the Health and Safety department, during the reporting period, sat with the Director of Innovation, Risk and Future, while the Deputy Chief Fire Officer maintained governance via the Health, Safety and Welfare Strategy Group. Line management will sit with the Deputy Chief Fire Officer in 2021/22.

The Head of Health and Safety, and designated “Competent Person,” is a Chartered Member of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH), and a registered consultant on the Occupational Safety and Health Consultants Register endorsed by the HSE.

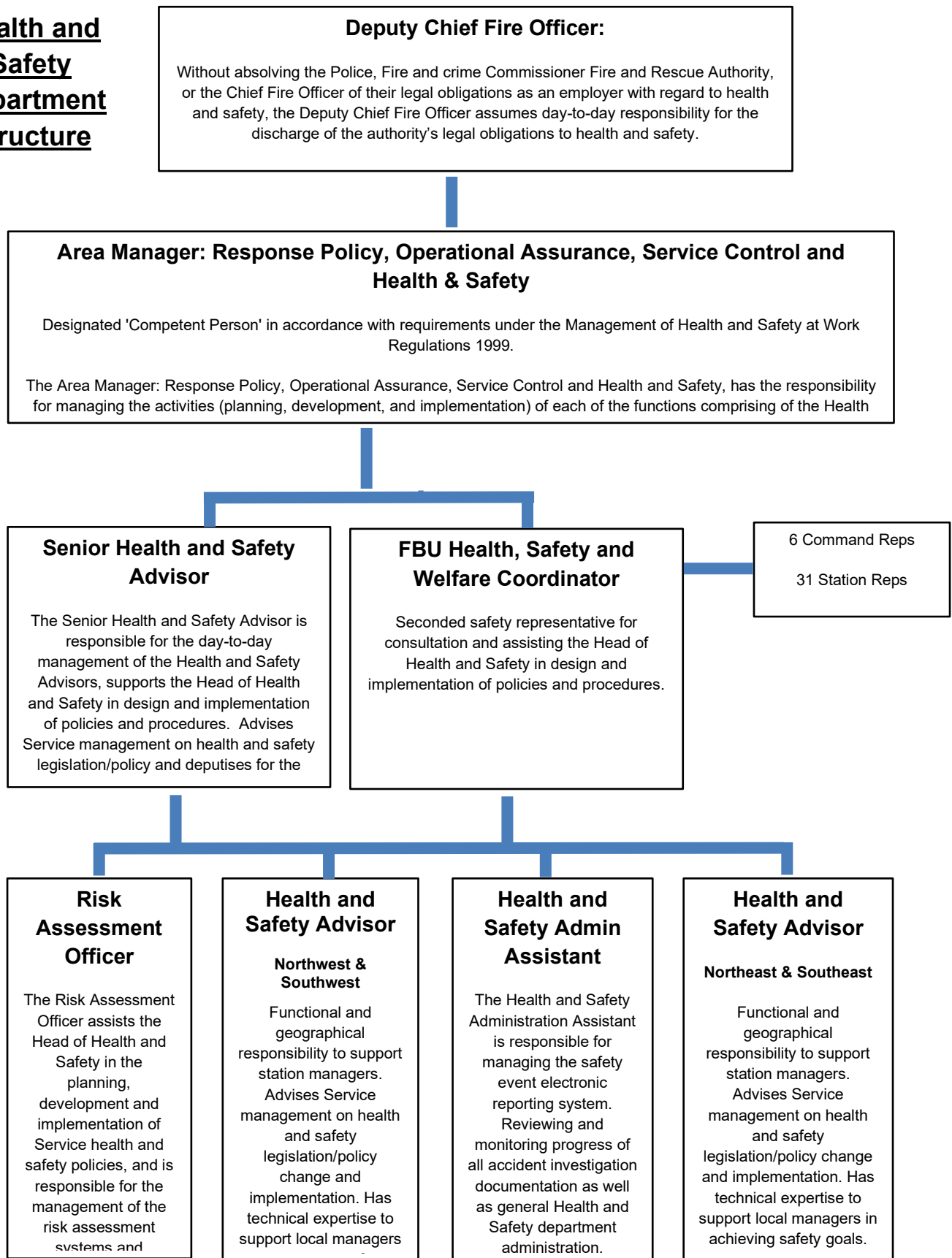
Over the last year, there has been a continual emphasis in expanding the core skills of the Health and Safety team to facilitate internal training courses and to enable them to continue to carry out their roles competently.

Our Service acknowledges the right of colleagues to nominate health and safety representatives and will consult and communicate with all trade union representatives, and colleagues, in good time. Currently our Service engages in consultation, and values all contributions from the following trade union health and safety representatives:

- Fire Officers Association
- Unison
- Fire and Rescue Services Association
- Fire Brigades Union



Health and Safety Department Structure





4. 2020/21 Department Achievements

Promote a positive culture in the workplace. Develop and broaden roles and range of activities undertaken by the Service. Be transparent, open, and accessible. Collaborate with our partners. Make best use of our resources.

In 2020/21, the Health and Safety department completed several achievements summarised below:

4.1 13 new Safety Flashes were created to identify urgent safety messages:

SF10	Sanitisers and Hygiene Guidance
SF11	Operational Response where COVID-19 is Suspected, or Confirmed
SF11a	Operational Response where COVID-19 is Suspected, or Confirmed
SF12	Station Cleaning Routines
SF13	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
SF15	Use of Oxygen at Operational Incidents
SF16	Crew of 4 on Frontline Appliances
SF16a	Revised Crew of 4 on Frontline Appliances
SF16b	Returning to Rising with 5 on Frontline Appliances
SF17	Service Actions in response to Government Coronavirus; 3 Tiers of Lockdown Levels
SF18	Removal of Spare Thermal Imaging Camera Battery Packs
SF19	Usage and Wearing of Seatbelts in Service Appliances
SF20	BA Cylinder Valve Ratchet Mechanism Not Engaging

4.2 A Toolbox Talk was created to inform operational crews on updated health and safety information:

TBT 42	The Importance of Reporting Hazards
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4.3 The following departmental policies were reviewed in the last 12 months:

Policies	Date Reviewed
Service Arrangements for the Workplace	March 2020
Service Arrangements for the Health and Safety Display Screen Equipment	September 2020
Health and Safety Policy Document, Including Statement of Intent	October 2020
First Aid Policy	November 2020



4.4 No Time to Lose Campaign

The Health and Safety department have made significant progress in our 'No Time to Lose' campaign, where we have pledged to raise awareness of occupational cancer, and to act in protecting our colleagues from carcinogens. Our action plan includes:

- Assessing whether work activities that form part of our business have the potential to cause occupational cancer
- Developing and delivering a prevention strategy that reflects the risks of developing occupational cancer in our workplaces
- Ensuring senior and operational managers understand relevant occupational cancer risks and manage them proactively as a significant health issue
- Ensuring our colleagues use the preventative measures in place properly and consistently, and check that our preventative measures work effectively
- Demanding the same standards of our supply chain as we do of ourselves
- Including our protective measures against occupational cancer risks in our Annual Report or other public reporting format

The following Service Interventions have been undertaken in the last year:

- Three guidance documents that cover the control of cross contamination of equipment and PPE were reviewed and updated to provide procedural clarity for operational FFs
- Working in conjunction with our Technical Service department, we increased the level of protection in our face mask filters which are provided to specialist officers when dealing with hazardous substances
- Our Operational Assurance department carried out a 'Gas Monitoring' thematic review and gathered information regarding potentially harmful gases that crews may be exposed to without the necessary respiratory protective equipment (RPE). The findings will be used to update our risk assessments and guidance relating to Hazard Zones, RPE requirements during the developing and closing stages of an incident and the requirement for gas monitoring equipment on front line appliances
- A review of Service-supplied vacuum cleaning equipment has taken place, this identified the need for a "High Efficiency Particulate Air" (HEPA) filter to clean appliance cabs
- In consultation with the Health and Safety department all BA training venues have incorporated the "Safe Undress Procedure" (SUP) into their BA training presentations
- A presentation has been created and is now delivered to all new operational FFs (transferees and new starters) for early awareness and education of the operational environment and the control of contaminants
- New starters now receive a theoretical presentation on the 'No Time to Lose' campaign and how to control cross contamination from incidents, this includes a practical session on the 'Safe Undress Procedure' for Structural firefighting PPE and breathing apparatus
- A clean cab policy has been implemented and a 6-month cab deep clean programme has been put in place



4.5 National Carcinogenic Project

Our Service volunteered to support a carcinogen project commissioned by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) in conjunction with the University of Lancashire. Several work locations were sampled over a four-day period, including wholetime and on-call stations, Fleet Workshops, BA workshops and Wethersfield Training Centre, this phase of the project focused on air quality and swab sampling of all work areas and looked at the effective cleaning of operational work wear clothing worn under PPE following varied wash cycles.

The University of Lancashire carcinogen sampling in our Service highlighted several locations in most of the sampled fire stations contained levels of contaminants which exceeded the acceptable excess lifetime cancer risk level. The findings serve to illustrate the importance of respiratory protective equipment for protecting FFs' health.

A gap analysis has been created to rectify areas of concern and our Service is reviewing the risk assessments and control measures in place. The Operational Assurance and Health and Safety teams continually promote this work and liaise with relevant department heads to delegate responsibility for improving the work environment for operational colleagues. We are committed to implement and maintain industry-wide best practice to ensure a safe work environment for operational colleagues.

5. Case Study: Health and Safety – COVID-19 Pandemic

Prevention, Protection & Response. Develop and broaden the roles and range of activities undertaken by the Service. Make best use of our resources.



This section of the report highlights the work that the Health and Safety department have undertaken for the last year in relation to COVID-19.

5.1 COVID-19 Handbook and Appendices

A COVID-19 handbook was published titled “COVID-19 Workplace Safety Guidance” which highlights our Service’s response to the Government guidance in relation to COVID-19. The primary focus was to ensure we adopt COVID-19 safe workplaces, and working practices, while continuing to function as a Service, meeting the needs of the public we serve.

5.2 COVID-19 Flow Chart and Guidance

Flow charts and guidance were created for colleagues who become symptomatic in the workplace. A full review of the flow chart and guidance “What you need to do if you experience COVID-19 Symptoms” was undertaken by the Health and Safety department in conjunction with Human Resources (HR) and Operational Policy departments in December 2020.



5.3 Lateral Flow Testing

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, our Service has continuously worked on control measures that have helped reduce the risk of transmission of the COVID-19 virus between colleagues. The Health and Safety department assisted the early adoption of Lateral Flow Testing at the end of December 2020. When in limited supply, this was implemented taking a risk-based approach for staff groups that move between different work environments.

5.4 Prevention and Protection

Two risk assessments were produced by the department for the NFCC to be used nationally relating to Protection and Prevention activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This allowed these vital activities to be restarted with specific control measures put in place to mitigate the risks associated with the pandemic.

5.5 Test and Trace

The Health and Safety team worked with relevant departments to implement our Service's response to Test and Trace.

5.6 Service Risk Assessments

- 8.1 Generic ECFRS COVID-19 Model Risk Assessments
- 8.2 Generic ECFRS COVID-19 Risk Assessments
- DSE (Display Screen Equipment) communications were created and published in conjunction with Corporate Communications, ICT and Property Services departments to encourage all homeworkers to undertake a DSE assessment. Joint work with Property Service and ICT ensured equipment requirements were actioned after completion of the DSE Assessments
- The Health and Safety department were asked by NFCC to professionally critique 2 national risk assessments for the flu pandemic work which were "Assisting the Ambulance Service" and "COVID-19 body handling" which have now been released to all Fire and Rescue Services
- Model risk assessments have been continuously reviewed and updated during the year. Our Service's response to a flu pandemic risk assessment was reviewed and consulted on 23 times since the end of March 2020, with new activities and control measures added every time government guidance was updated
- The Health and Safety department reviewed 12 tri-partite risk assessments that were agreed nationally, taking into consideration local control measures in preparedness for voluntary activities our Service could support other emergency services in our community:
 1. Ambulance driving instruction
 2. Delivering PPE and essential supplies to NHS and care homes
 3. Mass casualty movement of bodies
 4. Vulnerable persons delivery of essential items
 5. Driving ambulance, no blue lights



6. Face fit testing frontline staff
 7. Ambulance assisting with driving and support
 8. Transfer to Nightingale hospitals COVID-19
 9. Transfer to Nightingale hospitals non COVID-19
 10. Packing of food and essentials
 11. Assisting in taking samples for COVID-19
 12. Face shield assembly
- The Health and Safety department created a risk assessment for “returning to work” in preparation for colleagues to return to their normal working environments. DSE assessments and COVID-19 inductions were completed for all colleagues returning to Service Headquarters as priority cases
 - Consultation took place with trade union safety reps on all COVID-19 work in accordance with our statutory duties under “The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977”

5.7 Workplace Risk Assessments

All COVID-19 workplace risk assessments for all Service sites were created; 61 risk assessments in total:

- A new risk assessment template was created electronically, and the Health and Safety department supported Station Managers to complete their COVID-19 safe workplace risk assessments
- A model risk assessment was produced, for consistency when risk assessing activities relating to our response to the pandemic. This was used in conjunction with site specific risk assessments and since the start of the pandemic more than 80 have been produced
- All Service locations now have a COVID-19 safe workplace risk assessment in place. A COVID-19 safe risk assessment was created for Service Headquarters and improvements were made to make the location COVID-19 safe. One-way systems, signs and extra control measures were installed for when colleagues begin to return to the building
- Risk assessments for physical assessment days in February were conducted so that On-call recruit assessment centres could continue with COVID-19 control measures in place across our workplaces.
- Wholetime COVID-19 assessments at Ongar and Orsett were conducted so that our Service could continue to run our Wholetime recruitment process
- The Health and Safety department reviewed several workplaces to ensure COVID-19 workplace risk assessments have been applied appropriately and the control measures work in practice



5.8 Internal and External Validation of our Service's COVID-19 Response

- **Operational Assurance Report** – A COVID-19 PPE compliance review took place over 3 months. Specialist officers attended 694 specific incidents where there was likely to be close contact between FFs, other emergency responders and the public. Overall, compliance with COVID-19 PPE and procedure guidance was good. On occasions there was scope for improving PPE controls, and further guidance was issued to managers to improve COVID-19 safe PPE procedures
- **Joint Inspections with Trade Union Safety Representatives** – The inspections were unannounced, at various times of the working day, and covered the shift changeover period. The inspections took place over 8 sites, including training venues as part of assurances to check that control measures are being followed appropriately and good practices were observed at all those sites. Some general feedback was given to managers to share best practice identified across our Service
- **HMICFRS COVID-19 Inspection** - In August 2020, the HMICFRS were commissioned by the Home Secretary to inspect how Fire and Rescue Services in England were responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The report praised how our Service prepared for the pandemic, continued to respond to incidents and carry on our prevention and protection work, made sure colleagues' wellbeing was a priority, supported our partners and adapted to new ways of working
- **Bureau Veritas COVID-19 Workplace Assurance Assessment** – A Workplace Assurance Assessment was commissioned utilising Bureau Veritas to undertake an external assessment of the measures that we have taken as a Service to support COVID-19 safety in the workplace, both from an operational, and wider Service perspective.

The Health and Safety department supported site visits including at Service Headquarters, Service Workshops, Stores, Fleet Transport, Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), Braintree, Ongar, and Halstead.

All sites were found to be sufficiently following and adhering to government guidelines with regards to COVID-19 and our own internal COVID-19 measures, policies, and procedures. It is evident that COVID-19 controls have been considered in depth and implemented, to achieve compliant status.

Any non-compliances were swiftly rectified and verified as resolved by the lead consultant and our Service has been awarded with a full assurance certification from Bureau Veritas

- **HSE COVID-19 Investigation in relation to Test, Trace and Isolate** – In February, the HSE contacted us to review our compliance with Test, Trace and Isolate across our Service. The Health and Safety department collated and submitted all the COVID-19 documentation that had been published since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. After thorough document inspection, the HSE advised that they were satisfied our Service was following all Government, and sector specific guidelines, with sufficient control measures in place

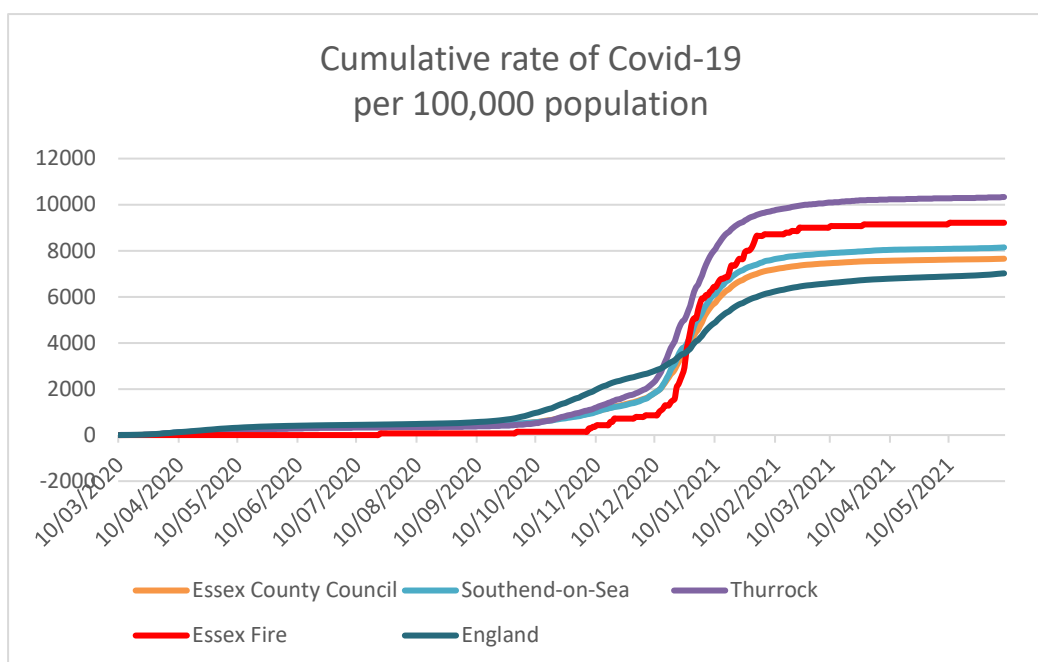


5.9 Decontaminating Workplaces

A process was initiated for the Health and Safety team to provide a 24/7 response to decontaminate workplaces using the fogging units following a colleague falling unwell at a Service site with COVID-19 symptoms:

Month	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Deep Cleans	2	3	9	2	1	8	11	2

5.10 Absences due to COVID-19 March 2020 – February 2021



National Fire Chiefs Council strategic intent is to support Fire Services to gradually recover and transition to a new normality, enabling a prioritised and safe resumption of activities disrupted by the pandemic, while maintaining the ability to respond to further peaks, either locally, regionally, or nationally.

The Health and Safety team invested considerable time to ensure our COVID-19 risk assessments, guidance and procedures mitigated risks of our colleagues being absent because of the virus, while still enabling our colleagues to meet the strategic intentions throughout the pandemic, which were:

- **To proactively protect our communities** - limit the spread of COVID-19 by following extant government guidance
- **To ensure the safety and wellbeing of our colleagues** - through the maintenance of measures aligned to the COVID-19 Secure premises
- **To maintain an effective Emergency Response** – we will continue to respond to all incidents



- **To maintain Preparedness activity** – we will continue to prepare, train and exercise against foreseeable risk
- **To Protect our communities from fire** – we will continue a risk-based approach to Protection activities
- **To Prevent the impact of fire and other emergencies on our communities** – we will continue a risk-based approach to community facing activities, balancing the need to protect staff against the objective of preventing fires and other emergencies from occurring in the community

To date, our Service has not had any occupational reportable COVID-19 RIDDOR cases. The graph above tracks the rate of infections in our workplace against the communities of Essex and the national trend. Our Service remained below the general trends until December 2020 when Lateral Flow Testing was introduced ahead of the wider community.

This led to an increase in positive tests during December 2020 and January 2021, when the pandemic was at its peak in our community. This ensured colleagues that had tested positive could self-isolate, protecting the rest of our workforce and mitigating the risk of localised outbreaks in the workplace.

One cluster was identified in Service Control, where the workplace risk assessment was reviewed, and additional control measures were put in place, including providing a dedicated fogging unit for use at change of shifts.

6. 2020/21 Health and Safety Department Objectives Review

Promote a positive culture in the workplace. Develop and broaden roles and range of activities undertaken by the Service. Be transparent, open, and accessible. Collaborate with our partners. Make best use of our resources.

Below are the key objectives from 2020/21 with updated commentary on progress:



- Replace the current Health and Safety Management System (OSHENS)
 - Work on this project has significantly progressed in 2020/21 and this will continue through to implementation in 2021/22
- Support our Service in the works relating to the COVID-19 pandemic
 - Work is continually ongoing and has been added as a department objective for 2021/22
- Trial iAuditor software for our Service accident investigation process
 - A health, safety and welfare accident/incident investigation template was produced in iAuditor for the initial investigation of an accident/incident in our Service and the trials were successful
- Review and implement “Managing Safely” as an eLearning package to support blended learning
 - A trial eLearning package has been produced with test modules being completed by a small group of newly appointed Watch Managers to test the



process and gather feedback. An accompanying study book was also produced to aid learning. This was successful and will be rolled out across the Service

- Implement a refresher “Working Safely” package for our Service
 - An initial and refresher ‘Working Safely’ package has been produced and is now available via eLearning as part of mandatory training
- Continually review the “No Time to Lose” pledge
 - See page 13 for work completed

7. 2021/22 Health and Safety Department Objectives

Promote a positive culture in the workplace. Develop and broaden roles and range of activities undertaken by the Service. Be transparent, open, and accessible. Collaborate with our partners. Make best use of our resources.

The Health and Safety departmental objectives for the coming year are to:

- Replace the current Health and Safety Management System (OSHENS)
- Implement a Service-wide training package for the new management system prior to going live
- Review reporting data for quarterly and annual health and safety reports
- Review of hose management and guidance
- Support our Service in the continual works relating to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Review DSE requirements for staff that continue to work from home post pandemic
- Continual review and promotion of our “No Time to Lose” pledge
- Review the effectiveness of the induction process
- Review the Health and Safety department structure
- Continue to support the Eastern Region and London Health and Safety Group



For further information, please contact:

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Our mission is to make Essex a safe place to live, work and travel.