



**Hampshire  
& Isle of Wight**  
FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

## HIWFRA Full Authority

Purpose: **Noted**

Date: **6 DECEMBER 2022**

Title: **2022/23 MID-YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Report of **Chief Fire Officer**

## SUMMARY

1. The Mid-Year Performance Report (**Appendix A**) explores how the Service has achieved our core purpose over the last six months of making life safer. Performance is described against each of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire Authority's Safety Plan priorities. The report explores how the Service performed against a range of measures, with comparisons made against previous years and to national trends, where relevant and applicable.
2. This report explores how Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (HIWFRS) performed against key operational and corporate health measures in the period 1 April 2022 through to 30 September 2022.
3. We use performance and assurance reporting to assess our effectiveness, efficiency, and financial position. Our performance measures help us find areas for improvement, as well as identify successes and good practice to be shared, where applicable, across public services and the fire sector. We also assess progress against our Safety Plan improvements and the national fire standards on an ongoing basis.

## HIGHLIGHTS – SERVICE PERFORMANCE 2022/23 (APRIL TO SEPTEMBER)

4. In the first six months of this financial year, we saw unprecedented weather with three extreme heatwaves coming to the UK in June, July, and August. This caused significant impact to our people and communities, as well as

our partner agencies, and resulted in a 39% increase in fires between April and September 2022 compared to the previous year, primarily due to significant increases in fires in the open. However, despite the increase in these resource-intensive incidents our critical response times remained broadly stable. Overall, the number of incidents between April and September 2022 was 3% higher than the same period in 2021, as the increase in fires was offset by reductions in special service calls, including co-responder calls. See pages 4 to 6 for more detail.

5. The number of rescues (including rescue with and without injury) carried out between April and September 2022 was 701, a significant 19% reduction (-165) compared to the same period in 2021. The majority of rescues are special service calls, and the top four types were lift release, effecting entry/exit, assisting other agencies and other rescues/release of persons.
6. Our average critical response time (measured from the time the first appliance was mobilised by our control room to the time the first appliance arrived) from April to September 2022 was 7 minutes 34 seconds – up by just 3 seconds, from 7 minutes 31 seconds from April to September 2021. Rural response times have increased by 18 seconds over the same period, up from 10 minutes 40 seconds to 10 minutes 58 seconds. This is owing to incidents in more remote (rural) or difficult to access locations, the impact of reduced on-call availability, and the resource impact of the extreme weather conditions experienced throughout the summer heatwaves (June through to August).
7. Our response time performance when compared nationally continues to remain strong. National figures are split by incident types and by urban/rural locations. The latest Home Office statistics (August 2022) showed that in the fiscal year 2021/22, significantly rural Services (17 in total) – including Hampshire and the Isle of Wight – had an average response time for dwelling fires of 8 minutes 54 seconds (measured from the time the call was received to the time the first appliance arrived). This compares to 8 minutes 19 seconds in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. We also compare favourably to the non-metropolitan average of 8 minutes 47 seconds, and other similar services like Essex (8 minutes 36 seconds) and Kent (8 minutes 51 seconds).
8. For predominantly urban Services (15 in total), the latest Home Office statistics (August 2022) showed that in the fiscal year ending March 2022 – including Hampshire and the Isle of Wight – these Services had an average response time (including call handling) for dwelling fires of 6 minutes 55 seconds. This compares to 8 minutes 19 seconds in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

9. It is important to note that, despite the increase in the number of fires, there has been a sizeable and positive reduction in fire-related casualties (down 39% from the 2021 period, to 39). Furthermore, most casualties were minor, with 44% (17) receiving first aid on scene with no requirement to attend hospital. 36% (14) of casualties went to hospital for treatment where their injuries appeared to be slight and 16% (6) of casualties went to hospital for treatment where their injuries appeared to be serious. Nationally, the latest data across the whole of England for 2021/22 shows, compared to the previous year, a 15% growth in fire fatalities but a 1% reduction in severe fire casualties (which nationally make up around 9% of all casualties). We perform well against these comparators.
10. The number of Safe and Well visits completed from April to September 2022 was 5,848, a significant increase (+41%) compared to the same period in 2021. Furthermore, we know around a quarter of our contacts with vulnerable people do not result in a completed Safe and Well visit. We are looking into this with our partners to understand what the causes of this are, particularly in urban areas where completing a visit has at times proved more challenging.
11. We have seen an increase in sickness levels compared to the same period last year. 11,185 shifts were lost between April and September 2022, equating to 7.1 average shifts lost. This represents a 28% increase from 8,916 (6.1 average shifts lost) in the same period in 2021. This is owing to increases in all staff groups other than Control, and an increase in long-term sickness. Long-term sickness has increased compared to last year with 56% of sickness in April to Sept 2022 being attributed to long-term absence (short-term, 44%), up from 49% in the same period in 2021. Green book saw the largest increase in overall sickness levels from 1,241 shifts lost in April to Sept 2021 compared to 2,159 for the same period in 2022. This is owing to increases in COVID-19 and mental health sickness (up from 448 shifts lost to 614). The upward trajectory of sickness, and changing nature of sickness types, correlates with national trends and benchmarks, both within the Fire and Rescue sector and in other sectors. HIWFRS sickness data shows we are slightly above the national average based on the latest benchmark data.
12. In terms of health and safety, injuries have decreased slightly this year in comparison to April to September 2021. It is also important to note that, positively, leading indicators (66), e.g. near misses, outweigh lagging indicators (51) by 15 cases. Most injuries happen during training and operational incidents, because of the environment they are more at risk. These mostly involve strains, sprains, slips, trips and falls, manual handling, and burns. Between April and September 2022, there were 11 injuries reported under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous

Occurrences Regulations) preventing Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) staff from working 7 days or more. This is the same amount as April to September 2021.

13. We have introduced a new approach to Premises Risk Information, consisting of 5 levels of risk information, including Site Specific Risk Information (SSRIs), Operational Pre-Plans and Post Incident Support Plans. As at September, 93% of SSRIs were in date and various work is underway to improve this figure and our risk information processes and assurance more widely.
14. Finally, it is important to note, there are significant ongoing financial pressures relating to inflation, offset by additional income, the use of contingencies and lower capital financing costs. The inflationary pressures impacting now will inevitably have a significant impact on the budget for 2023/24 and subsequent years.

#### HIGHLIGHTS – SAFETY PLAN IMPROVEMENTS AND FIRE STANDARDS ASSURANCE

15. The five-year HIWFRA Safety Plan was launched in April 2020, setting out our priorities, values, how we will build on our strengths, and how we will address the areas that require more focus and improvement.
16. For Year 3, we committed to completing 23 improvements. At this mid-year point, we have completed 2, with 16 activities on track, 4 not yet started and one is delayed. Overall average self-reported progress across the Safety Plan improvements stands at 33%. Owing to the interdependencies of Safety Plan improvement work with the Service's wider change programme and routine activities, the profile of work associated with Year 3 activities will change over the 12 month period.
17. The Fire Standards Board has published 12 national fire standards, with a total of 155 requirements ('desirable outcomes') across the 12 standards. The Service has undertaken a significant amount of assurance activity to assess our compliance with the standards, which has shown that we have 'reasonable' or 'substantial' assurance in 94% (145) of the 155 desirable outcomes. 9 requirements are rated 'limited' assurance with various improvement actions underway; with more detail provided via six monthly Fire Standards assurance reporting into the Standards & Governance Committee, most recently at the end of September. One of the remaining three desirable outcomes is also not applicable to HIWFRS.

## SUPPORTING OUR SAFETY PLAN AND PRIORITIES

18. The Mid-Year Performance report provides a view of performance in all the Safety Plan priority areas, with specific progress against the Safety Plan improvements reported as part of Appendix A. More detailed reporting forms part of an additional appendix to the End of Year Performance report, which is scrutinised by the Authority in June. We regularly check and report progress against the Safety Plan – across our Directorates and within our Executive Group.

## CONSULTATION

19. There has been a wide range of internal consultation and collaboration to help develop this report. External consultation has not been required.

## RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

20. The cost associated with the production of the Mid-Year Performance report is within existing resources.

## IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

21. This report does not lead to any change activity, so no impact assessments are required. However, we have ensured we utilise dyslexia and colour-blind friendly fonts and colours in our appendices to ensure the reports are as accessible as possible.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

22. There are no legal implications resulting from this report.

## RISK ANALYSIS

23. Failure to regularly report on and scrutinise our performance and progress against our Safety Plan could result in no action being taken to address reducing deficient performance which may affect the outcomes for our communities and our people. The information may, in some cases, show increasing (or reducing) risks for the Authority.

## EVALUATION

24. Monitoring and assessing performance and progress against the Safety Plan are a key part of various evaluation activity that the Service carries out

– it also forms a core part of our assurance activity and procedure, being used by the Service to identify areas for continuous improvement and to flag and share good practice across public services and the fire sector.

25. Evaluating performance, and change activity more widely, are core activities of the Integrated Performance and Assurance Group and of management teams across the Service. This is aided by an increasing amount of data and reporting available, with the breadth and depth of real-time performance and assurance information accessible to our staff and stakeholders continually increasing.

## CONCLUSION

26. As we have moved out of the period of the last two years where the pandemic has had a significant impact on our people, our communities, our partnership working, and on our performance; it is another risk – extreme weather conditions – that features heavily in this report as the July and August heatwaves impacted the Service. The extreme weather conditions had a significant impact on our fire incidents, particularly to outdoor and grass fires where, for example, we saw an 800% increase in the first week of August 2022, compared to the previous year, with an 80% increase in outdoor fires over the whole six-month period compared to 2021. Overall, we have seen a 39% increase in fires in the first 6 months of this fiscal year compared to the same period in 2021/22.
27. We have also seen many changes to the UK economy which are impacting on people's lives in the communities that we serve. In response to the increased cost of living, our new [5Cs fire safety campaign](#) (carbon monoxide, cooking, clothing, candles, and chimneys) increases public awareness of the dangers and empowers them to reduce the risk of fire in their home. Economic factors, including deprivation, are a significant fire risk factor – and between April to September we saw 508 dwelling or other residential fires, up 7% from the same period last year. Therefore, there is also continued focus on delivering Safe and Well visits, with a substantial increase of 40% (up to 5,812 visits). This provides further support to our communities, with visits targeted based on risk.
28. Despite the stark impact of the heatwave on our resources, reduced on-call availability, increase in sickness, and increased cost pressures primarily driven by inflation, we have still maintained our average critical response time at around 7 minutes 30 second; increased our Safe and Well visits by over 40%; and seen significant reductions in the number of fire casualties (despite the increase in fires overall).

RECOMMENDATION

29. That the 2022/23 Mid-Year Performance Report be **noted** by the **HIWFRA Full Authority**

APPENDICES ATTACHED

30. [Appendix A – 2022/23 Mid-Year Performance Report](#)

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