



# **HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2005-06**



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It is with great pleasure that I present this Annual Safety Report, the first since the Health and Safety reference was transferred to the Strategic Planning Directorate. I am pleased to say that Strathclyde Fire and Rescue's Health and Safety performance continues to improve.

Over the past year the organisation has seen many significant changes. A major re-structure from the previous four commands to ten new areas has been accompanied by a restructuring of Headquarters departments and references and a change of name from Strathclyde Fire Brigade to Strathclyde Fire and Rescue. However, throughout this period the commitment of the Board, Management Team and Staff to health and safety has never wavered.

We have also seen a significant turnover of staff within the safety section with a number of both uniformed officers and support staff moving on to new posts. One significant change has been to welcome our new Safety Manager, Karen Lockhart, to Strathclyde Fire and Rescue. Karen has a long and distinguished career as a safety professional spanning both the public and private sector and has brought a wealth of experience and expertise to the department.

Within Strathclyde Fire and Rescue's VISION 2015 document are some challenging targets

for the reduction of accidents and near misses. I am pleased to note the reduction of injuries and RIDDOR reportable injuries from the previous year, continuing the positive trend. Over the same period it is notable that we saw an increase in near miss reports, a fact that I believe to be worthy of mention. While we would all want to see our workplaces free of dangerous occurrences, it is vital that near misses continue to be accurately reported as it is through this practice that we will be able to identify those areas of concern and so minimise the associated risks.

Acts of violence were seen to increase over the reported year. However, this may be as a result of increased awareness and consequent reporting. Nevertheless, I welcome the range of initiatives that are being introduced across Strathclyde Fire and Rescue to effectively deal with this abhorrent trend in modern society.

Once again the development of new legislation, policy and guidance has proved challenging but, as in previous years, the challenge has been more than met by the hard work of the Health and Safety section. In acknowledging their commitment may I thank them and all staff throughout the organisation for their continued support and professionalism in ensuring safety in the workplace and the promotion of a positive safety culture. Their contribution is vital in making our communities safe places to live work and visit.

# Introduction

BY KAREN LOCKHART, HEALTH & SAFETY MANAGER



*Chief Officer, Corporate Strategy Team, and Members of the Safety Committee.*

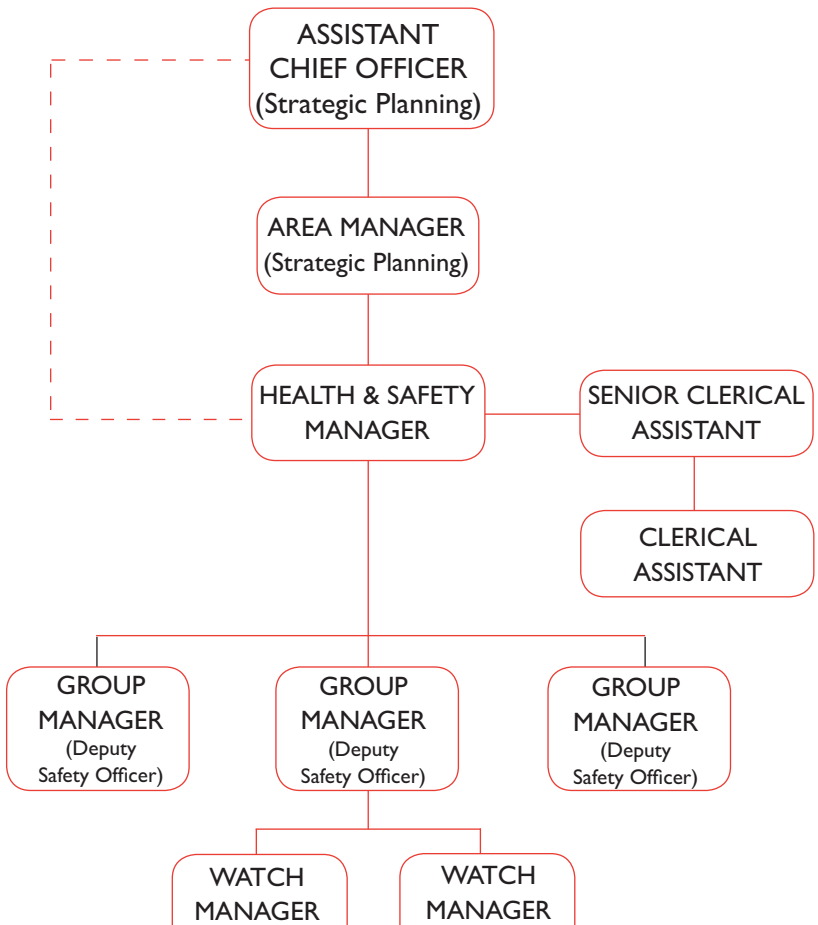
It is my privilege to submit for your consideration the Annual Report of the activities of Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Health and Safety Section for the period 1st April 2005 to 31st March 2006.

KAREN LOCKHART

Strathclyde Fire & Rescue Health & Safety Manager

The Health & Safety Section now forms part of the Strategic Planning Directorate, with the Assistant Chief Officer (Strategic Planning) having the delegated responsibility to act on behalf of the Chief Officer on all matters relating to the health, safety and welfare of employees and those who may be affected by the activities of Strathclyde Fire and Rescue.

The revised structure of the Health & Safety Section is shown below:



# **New Legislation & additional responsibilities**

The recent introduction of new legislation and the revision of existing legislation, have placed significant additional legal obligations and responsibilities on Strathclyde Fire and Rescue. The Health & Safety Section has been actively involved in ensuring compliance with these additional obligations and responsibilities.

## **The Working at Height Regulations 2005**

The Health & Safety Section have been providing advice and guidance to the Technical Services Directorate in order to identify and source the most suitable equipment available, ensuring the safety of personnel who may have to work at height as part of their duties, whilst at the same time ensuring legal compliance.

Equipment has now been purchased, suitable training sites are being identified and risk assessed to allow realistic training to be carried out.

## **The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005 and The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005**

Key Strathclyde Fire and Rescue personnel have received training from an accredited external organisation, and are now qualified to assess equipment so that any potential hazards from noise or vibration can be identified and adequately controlled.

This training has proved invaluable and has not only allowed existing equipment to be assessed, but has also assisted with the identification and management of potential risks associated with the new specialist equipment carried on Major Incident Units.

## **Water Rescue**

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue is now the lead agency in relation to inland water rescue activities. The Health and Safety Section has been providing support and assistance, in the form of advice and guidance, to identify suitable training sites. In addition support has been given in the completion of suitable risk assessments, so that personnel can be safely trained to the high standard required to carry out this function.

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue is working towards becoming a declared resource for MIRG, which is a National initiative established to respond to emergency incidents at sea. The Health and Safety Section has, and will continue to be heavily involved in various aspects of this ongoing project, which forms part of the 'Sea of Change' initiative.

### Technical Rescue Training Centre

This construction of this new facility at Headquarters is now well underway. The Health and Safety Section has again been proactive in assisting personnel from the Technical Rescue Training Centre during the preplanning and construction stages and will continue to provide support until construction is complete and whilst the centre is operational.

### RTCs involving SFR Vehicles

A concerning trend that has recently been identified is the increase of road traffic collisions (RTCs) involving Strathclyde Fire and Rescue vehicles. Work is currently ongoing to identify the reasons behind this trend so that steps can be taken to reduce these events.

Consideration is also being given to establishing a specialist Investigation Group to attend RTCs involving Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Vehicles in order that investigations can be commenced at the earliest possible opportunity, with the objective of preventing recurrence.



## Uniformed Staff

Year	Major Injuries	Over 3 days	Minor Injuries	Total Injuries
1999/00	1	102	251	354
2000/01	7	74	215	296
2001/02	6	84	207	297
2002/03	7	50	181	238
2003/04	5	73	245	323
2004/05	5	74	193	272
2005/06	2	55	162	217

## Support Staff

Year	Major Injuries	Over 3 Days	Minor Injuries	Total Injuries
1999/00	1	8	40	49
2000/01	0	7	23	30
2001/02	0	1	26	27
2002/03	0	2	26	28
2003/04	0	3	41	44
2004/05	0	4	28	32
2005/6	0	5	70	75

## Area and Department injury statistics

Area/ Department	2004/2005	2005/2006
Argyll & Bute	15	13
East & West Dumbartonshire	25	25
North Lanarkshire	20	25
South Lanarkshire	31	20
East Ayrshire & East Renfrewshire	22	19
North & South Ayrshire	29	30
Renfrewshire & Inverclyde	34	34
North West Glasgow	28	30
North East Glasgow	38	25
South Glasgow	27	40
HQ	11	9
Training Centre	3	4
Command & Control	11	8



Occupational Status	2004/2005	2005/2006
Wholetime	235	185
Retained	26	24
Volunteer	0	0
Control Staff	11	8
Support Staff	32	75
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>292</b>

There has been an overall decrease in the total numbers of injuries reported for the period of this report, with the number of Major injuries reduced from 5 to 2.

### Trainee Firefighter injuries

A total of 29 injuries involving Trainee Firefighters were reported in comparison to 23 for the same period in 2004/2005. Continued monitoring will allow specific trends to be identified so that preventative measures can be implemented to reduce the likelihood of similar injuries taking place.

### Trainee Firefighter Injury statistics

Activity Location	2004/2005	2005/2006
Scottish Fire Service College	6	6
Incident	10	6
On Station	7	17
<b>Totals</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>29</b>

## Exposure to hazardous substances

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue experienced a substantial increase in the number of EHS/I forms submitted in comparison to last year's figures. Although it is Strathclyde Fire and Rescue's objectives to minimise the exposure of personnel to any hazardous substance, it is important that any potential exposure experienced by personnel is recorded so that health and welfare issues can be addressed.

### Comparison table of personnel exposed to hazardous substances

Hazardous Substance	Personnel Exposed in 2003/2004	Personnel Exposed in 2004/2005	Personnel Exposed in 2005/006
Asbestos	123	19	157
Biological	2	0	0
Chemical	5	5	0
Dusts	0	0	0
Fumes	0	0	0
Gases	0	0	0
Acids	0	0	0
Radiation	0	0	0
Raw Sewage	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>157</b>



Acts of violence directed against Strathclyde Fire and Rescue personnel continues to present challenging situations for all staff. The introduction of the Emergency Workers Act and the high profile given to this matter by the media has highlighted the scale of this problem and its consequences to the public and politicians.

Last year saw a rise of 19 reported cases, up from 143 to 162, with stoning and incidents involving missiles having the highest number of instances recorded.

Personnel are actively encouraged to report all Acts of Violence via the existing reporting channels so that an accurate database can be maintained. Then information gathered allows identification of trends and sharing of relevant information with the Community Safety Directorate and other relevant partners. Initiatives can then be developed implemented to address this unwelcome problem.

Work is currently underway to update the existing database used for recording Acts of Violence with the aim of making it more accessible to all personnel. This will hopefully make it easier to report incidents, therefore encouraging timeous reporting ultimately reducing the problem of underreporting. As a result the most up to date and accurate information would be readily accessible to relevant personnel at all times.

The table below details the types of attacks experienced by employees.

**Acts of violence by classification and year**

ACT	2004/2005	2005/2006
Stoning	63	80
Weapons	7	7
Missiles	39	41
Verbal Abuse	25	19
Other	9	15
<b>Totals</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>162</b>

Area/ Department	2004/2005	2005/2006
Argyll & Bute	1	2
East & West Dumbartonshire	11	11
North Lanarkshire	20	20
South Lanarkshire	7	9
East Ayrshire & East Renfrewshire	7	6
North & South Ayrshire	4	8
Renfrewshire & Inverclyde	23	32
North West Glasgow	23	12
North East Glasgow	18	29
South Glasgow	23	33
HQ	0	0
Training Centre	0	0
Command & Control	0	0
Workshops	0	0
<b>TOTALS*</b>	<b>137*</b>	<b>162*</b>

\* Note: Totals may be subject to change due to late reporting

# o Near miss reporting

Near miss reporting is vital element of the Health and Safety Management System. It allows incidents, which could have resulted in injury, damage or loss to be investigated so that action can be taken to prevent recurrence, therefore eliminating any actual injury, damage or loss thus contributing to the overall safety performance of the Service.

It is vital that all personnel are aware of the importance and benefits of reporting near misses and are encouraged to do so no matter how insignificant an incident may seem.

## Near miss reporting statistics

Type of Near Miss	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
General	200	126	144
Act of Violence	167	122	162
<b>Totals</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>306</b>

# training and qualifications

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue continues to satisfy its legal requirement to provide employees with training, enabling them to carry out their various functions in a safe and competent manner. This has been achieved by utilising the skills of both internal and external training providers ensuring the validity of safety qualifications held.

The Health and Safety Section have Officers currently undertaking the Diploma in Health and Safety Management at Glasgow Caledonian University. This, with other courses, provides the organisation with competent Health & Safety Advisers as required by the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Course providers and course content are constantly monitored to ensure they provide maximum benefit and value for personnel and the organisation.

## INTERNAL COURSES

### Safety induction courses Personnel attending

Type of	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
Induction Course			
Wholetime Trainee	49	80	61
Retained Trainee	55	46	32
Volunteer Trainee	15	25	9
Control Staff Trainee	0	0	5
Support Staff	77	27	10
<b>Totals</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>117</b>

Type of Course	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
Working Safely	15	30	0
Managing Safely	12	60	41
<b>Totals</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>41</b>

## EXTERNAL COURSES

### Specialist Health and Safety training courses

A total of 33 personnel attended NEBOSH General Certificate courses held at SFR Training Centre and the Scottish Fire Service College, Gullane.

Key personnel also attended Noise and Vibration Assessors courses, provided by an accredited external company, so that any potential hazards produced from equipment we use can be identified and adequately managed.

Type of course	Personnel attending 2003/2004	Personnel attending 2004/2005	Personnel attending 2005/2006
NEBOSH	28	45	33
Kelvin Topset			
Accident Investigation	33	0	19
Diploma in H & S Management	3	2	3
Vibration Assessor	-	-	10
Noise Assessor	2	0	8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>73</b>

## Medical Retirements

The following table gives a breakdown of all ill health retirements from the Organisation. These figures show a slight reduction from the previous year.

	Service Wholetime	Non service Wholetime	Service Retained	Non Service Retained	Support Staff
2004/05	2	11	2	1	3
2005/06	0	10	1	1	1





The Health & Safety Section would once again like to thank the Health and Safety Executive for its continued assistance and support. This support is invaluable in ensuring the smooth running of the Section.

Thanks is also extended to the Board of Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, the Chief Officer and the Management Team for their commitment in establishing and maintaining a positive Health and Safety Culture. This commitment is vital so that all personnel who work within Strathclyde Fire and Rescue are aware of the importance of embracing the culture of Health and Safety at work so that a safe working environment can be achieved and maintained.



