



HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT

2006-07

STRATHCLYDE
FIRE & RESCUE





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1 Foreword

BY ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER ANDREW M. SHUTTLEWORTH



It is with great pleasure that I present this Annual Safety Report for the year 2006-2007. In a time of continuing significant change for the Fire and Rescue Service I am pleased to say that Strathclyde Fire and Rescue's Health and Safety performance continues to improve. This is testimony to the continued commitment of the Board, Management Team and Staff in ensuring that, regardless of other commitments, Health and Safety is seen as a priority.

2006 saw the Strathclyde Fire and Rescue subjected to a major external Best Value Audit of Performance. While the organisation as a whole was shown to be a high performing public service, it was particularly pleasing to note the comments relating to our management and implementation of Health and Safety. This is a reflection of the professionalism and commitment of Karen Lockhart, our Health and Safety Manager, and her team and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work and support to the organisation.

The Service continues to strive to realise the challenging targets for the reduction of accidents and near misses set in our VISION 2015 document. Once again I am pleased to note the reduction of injuries and RIDDOR reportable injuries from the previous year, continuing the positive trend. However, 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 on crews attending emergency incidents continue to run at an alarmingly high rate. While this may be seen by some as a reflection of broader societal trends, it remains a primary area of focus for the Service with new initiatives being considered and developed to tackle the problem.

The ongoing terrorist threat and new legislative requirements for a wider rescue role have led to a broad range of activities that have to be assessed for risk and safe working practices adopted. The role of Firefighter is and will remain one where the balance of risk against benefit will inevitably place individuals in dangerous situations and it is vital that we all play our part in ensuring the best possible support for front line emergency workers. However, equally, we must ensure that our own daily activities are carried out in a manner that will not pose a risk to ourselves, our colleagues or the public. This can only be achieved by ensuring we all recognise our responsibilities in terms of Health and Safety.

May I thank all serving members of Strathclyde Fire and Rescue for their continued support in our commitment to making our communities safe places to live, work and visit.

**ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER
ANDREW M. SHUTTLEWORTH**

2 Introduction

BY KAREN LOCKHART, HEALTH & SAFETY MANAGER



Chief Officer, Corporate Management 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 2006 to 31st March 2007.

KAREN LOCKHART

Strathclyde Fire & Rescue Health & Safety Manager

3 The Health and Safety Section

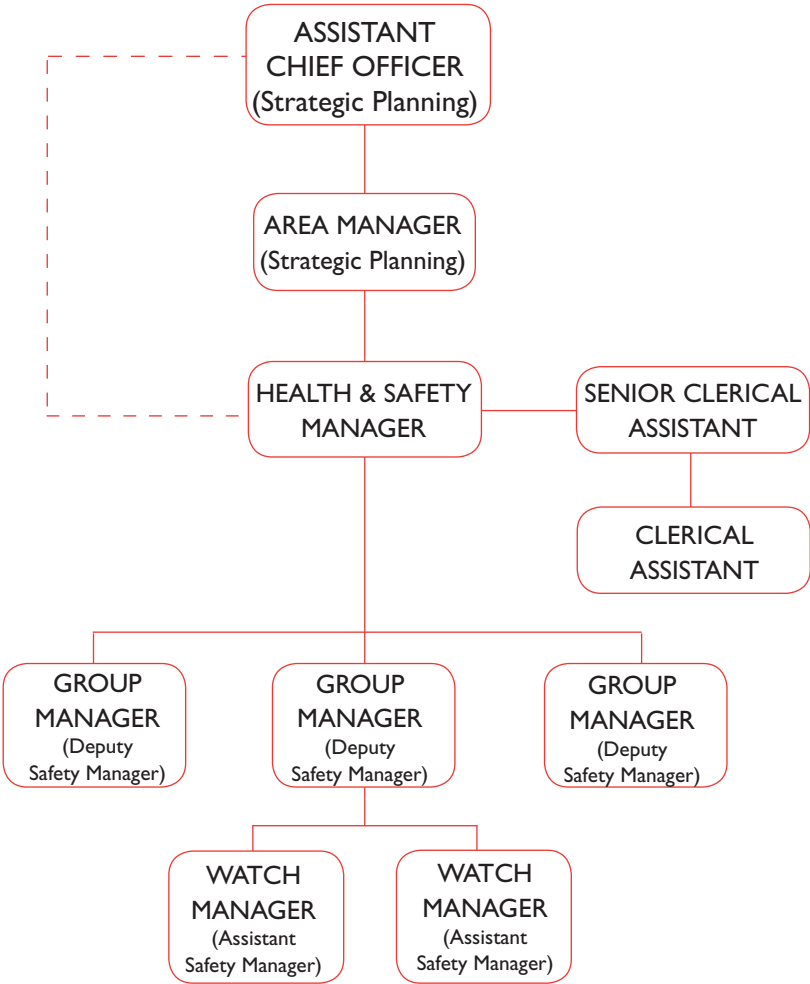
The Health & Safety Section forms part of the Strategic Planning Directorate, with the Assistant Chief Officer (Strategic Planning) having the delegated responsibility to act on behalf of the Chief Officer on all matters relating to the health, safety and welfare of employees and those who may be affected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

All Health & Safety Managers within the Section have attained the NEBOSH National General Certificate as a minimum standard; some are currently working towards attaining a Post Graduate Certificate and Degree Qualifications. Karen Lockhart is a corporate member of the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health with 15 years experience in this field.

All managers within the Section have received training in accident investigation to ensure that all accident and near miss incidents are investigated in a consistent manner and prevent recurrence.

In addition, Health & Safety Managers are trained to carry out noise and vibration assessments to ensure that the organisation meets its statutory obligations required by the 'Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005' and the 'Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005'.

The structure of the Health & Safety section is shown below:



4 Audit Scotland - SFR Performance Audit Report 2006

During the summer of 2006, an Audit Scotland performance audit team visited Strathclyde Fire & Rescue. The audit team conducted an extensive range of interviews, reviewed relevant documents and analysed performance information.

The key findings on Health & Safety performance were as follows; -

1. Health and Safety is well managed and organised. The Fire & Rescue Authority (FRA) is proactively working to address the challenges associated with attacks on firefighters.
2. The FRA has a robust approach to Health and Safety, which is seen as an integral responsibility for all staff. The FRA has produced a wide range of policies and guidance to ensure that it meets its obligations in terms of compliance with major legislation that impacts on service delivery. The FRA has demonstrated their commitment to Health and Safety through sustained investment in training and development. Between 2003-2006, 158 and 106 members of staff respectively completed the IOSH and NEBOSH courses whilst 8 individuals completed a diploma in Health and Safety at Glasgow Caledonian University. This investment has provided the FRA with competent Health and Safety Advisors who will not only support them in meeting their statutory obligations but also develop a working environment that is safe for all personnel.
3. There is evidence to suggest that the on-going commitment to Health and Safety is having an impact. Incidents reportable under RIDDOR show a downward trend.

5 New Initiatives, Legislation & Additional Responsibilities

ELECTRONIC HEALTH & SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

SFR intends to move their health and safety management systems away from paper forms and Microsoft Excel documents over to an electronic health and safety software system. The benefits of this system includes better visibility of compliance, improved tracking of actions, and standardised processes - all of which are very useful to the organisation which is spread over a number of different locations, and where many people are involved in the implementation of health and safety policy.

Detailed below are some of the key modules and associated benefits:

Risk Assessment

The risk assessment tool will help create and manage risk assessments throughout the service. It will provide a "Risk Assessment folder" for each Directorate/Area. Users would have the facility to create risk assessments at source in a timely and efficient manner.

COSHH

The COSHH tool helps manage hazardous substances. It provides a 'COSHH folder' for each Directorate/Area and allows users to create an inventory of hazardous substances that are used.

Accidents & Investigation

This module will help manage and monitor accidents and near misses across the service. By storing accident and investigation reports electronically. This will ensure that, unlike traditional paper-based systems, valuable information is never lost, and that the individuals' personal information is protected.

Best Practice Library

This function will be used to store all health and safety documentation allowing instant access to all relevant literature from a single source.

Asbestos

To comply with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 and afford employees the required "Duty of Care" the Health and Safety Section has consulted our partners in the Local Authorities to obtain information regarding the risk of asbestos within their premises. In response each of the Local Authorities has provided us with information relating to their Asbestos Risk Register.

The information received from each Local Authority varies in a number of aspects including, the detail of what is recorded and the type of survey conducted; the format of the records, paper or electronic and how they propose to make these records accessible to Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, i.e. on line, by appointment or by disc.

To progress this matter further consultation with the Operations Directorate, Legal Services, Data Services and the I.T. Department is planned. This will establish the depth of information required and how it can be communicated between stakeholders. On completion of the internal consultation we will work in partnership with the Local Authorities to develop a plan, which will be to our mutual benefit for the protection of personnel, and to minimise any disruption caused to the community by an operational incident involving an asbestos risk.



DNA Collection Kits (spit kits)

DNA collection kits have been introduced as part of Strathclyde Fire & Rescue's ongoing commitment to the protection of personnel from the threat of violence at work.

The kits are used in many organisations throughout the United Kingdom, and have been effective in gaining convictions for assault, and are also proven to be a deterrent to assaults on staff. In some cases, the kits have also been effective in convicting the attackers whilst sparing the victim the ordeal of having to appear in court.

DNA Testing Kits work by taking samples of saliva, which can be positively matched to an attackers DNA. Samples are passed to the Police for analysis and checked against the national DNA database. If no match is found the DNA sample is permanently stored on the database. A monthly automatic search is conducted for new additions. The alleged attacker may have a clean criminal record at the time of the attack, but if they are charged with an offence in the future, their DNA will be added to the national database, it is then only a matter of time until identification is made.



Operational Review

The Service has a statutory duty to manage our workplace safely, and part of our duty under the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations is that we are required to monitor workplace activity, which in our case includes activity on the incident ground.

Systems are currently being put in place that will allow the monitoring of a range of operational activity and realistic training events in order to confirm the efficiency and effectiveness of SFR policies, procedures and equipment. The performance of individuals and teams will also be monitored in order to evaluate the effectiveness of training and to support development. This will enable us to improve incident ground safety by confirming that our procedures and equipment are correct and that they are being applied and being used properly and competently. The identification and promotion of good practice will be another important part of the whole process.

It must be stressed that SFR views this monitoring/operational review function as being supportive towards individuals and teams by:

- Giving guidance and support to incident commanders when appropriate.
- Identifying and promoting best practice.
- Addressing individual or team development needs as necessary.

An important first step in the implementation of this process is a requirement for Station Managers to attend operational incidents and realistic training events within their own station area. They will be required to monitor and report on both personal and organization performance, focusing on:

- Procedures
- Equipment
- Team
- Individuals



Technical Rescue Training Centre

Construction work on the Technical Rescue Training Centre was completed in October 2006 and since then the centre has provided training to personnel in urban search and rescue, trench awareness, RTC, trauma, boat handling and safe working at heights (SWAH). This training ensures SFR's operational readiness as well as promoting community and firefighter safety by providing a realistic training environment, which will introduce the students to conditions comparable to those they would face at incidents, without exposing them to uncontrolled hazards.

Instructional staff have developed a SWAH course, which will be delivered to all operational personnel under the administration of the Service Training Centre as a core skill. However, TRTC instructors are running pilot courses for Hamilton, Motherwell and Bellshill personnel in response to identified local risks.

The course content and the provision of new SWAH equipment purchased by SFR will enable the organisation to meet the requirements of The Working at Heights Regulations 2005.



Operations Directorate - Ongoing projects

Water Rescue

An evaluation process is being undertaken on the body recovery net assembly at stations Knightswood and Polmadie.

High Volume Pump

The Operations Directorate are identifying procedures when working with the high volume pump including management of the 'outer cordon' when it is in use.

Working at Height

The Operations Directorate and Technical Rescue Training Centre are collectively developing procedures for 'Working at Height' and the development of 'High Line Rescue' techniques.

Incident Ground Catering

The Operations Directorate is at the initial design stage with regard to a Welfare Pod, which has been identified, as a business need. The pod will provide toilet facilities for larger incidents.

The Directorate is also conducting a pilot programme on the effectiveness of providing high-energy bars /packs and drinks for operational personnel at protracted incidents.

Operational Intelligence

This relates to the identification of information available from internal and external sources that may have an impact on operational preparedness.

Data from external agencies such as Local Authority Licensing, Building Control and the HSE can be collated and included into the VMDS system.

The Directorate are looking at the definition of the term 'risk' and are liaising with Community Safety and Strategic Planning Directorates with a view to reaching a corporate definition.

6 Injury Statistics

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 |
| 2006/07 | 4 | 48 | 153 | 205 |

Support Staff

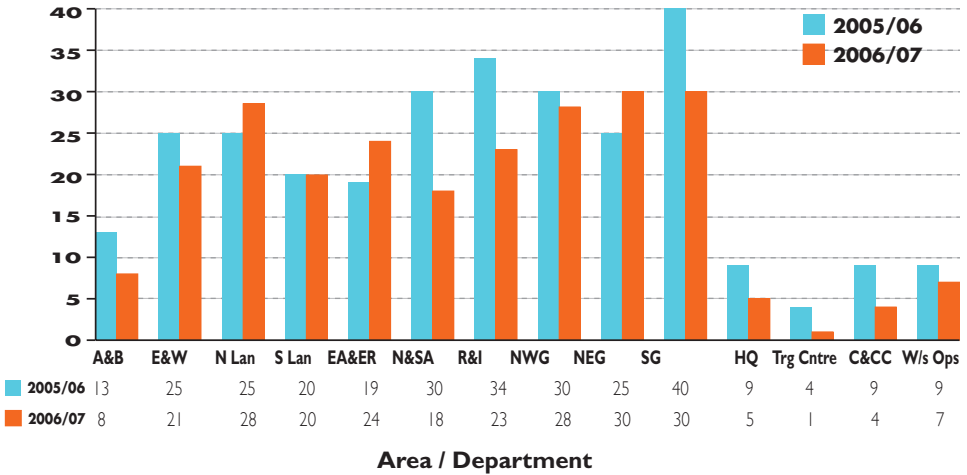
| Year | Major Injuries | Over 3 Days | Minor Injuries | Total Injuries |
|---------|----------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1999/00 | 1 | 8 | 40 | 49 |
| 2000/01 | 0 | 7 | 23 | 30 |
| 2001/02 | 0 | 1 | 26 | 27 |
| 2002/03 | 0 | 2 | 26 | 28 |
| 2003/04 | 0 | 3 | 41 | 44 |
| 2004/05 | 0 | 4 | 28 | 32 |
| 2005/06 | 0 | 5 | 70 | 75 |
| 2006/07 | 0 | 5 | 37 | 42 |

Total injuries for SFR 2006/07 247

Trainee Firefighter Injury Statistics

| Activity Location | 2005/2006 | 2006/2007 |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Scottish Fire Service College | 6 | 13 |
| Incident | 6 | 5 |
| On Station | 17 | 15 |
| Totals | 29 | 33 |

Area/Department Injury Statistics



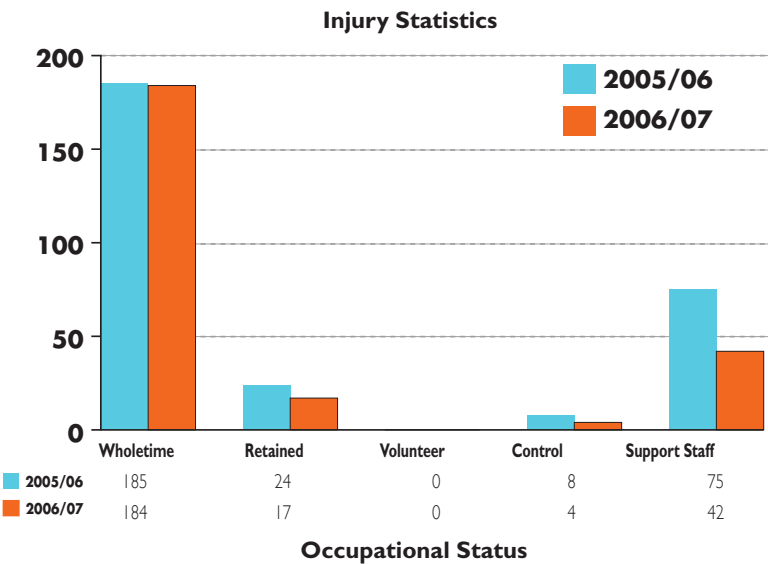
15.4% FALL IN INJURIES

SFR's geographical areas and functional centres have reported an 15.4% reduction in injuries in the years 2005/06 and 2006/07, 45 fewer employees suffering physical harm. This is the lowest figure recorded in the 8 year statistical information on file.

Only 3 areas recorded an increase - North Lanarkshire (+3), East Ayrshire and East Renfrewshire(+5) and North East Glasgow(+5).



Occupational status injury statistics



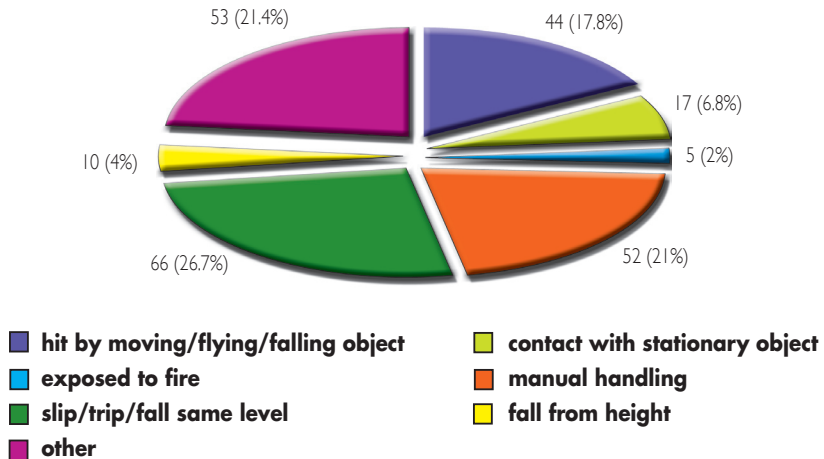
SUPPORT STAFF INJURIES

SFR's Support Staff showed a 44% reduction decreasing from 75 to 42.

CONTROL INJURIES

The Command & Control Centre shows a 50% fall, from 8 to 4 injuries.

Accident Type



SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

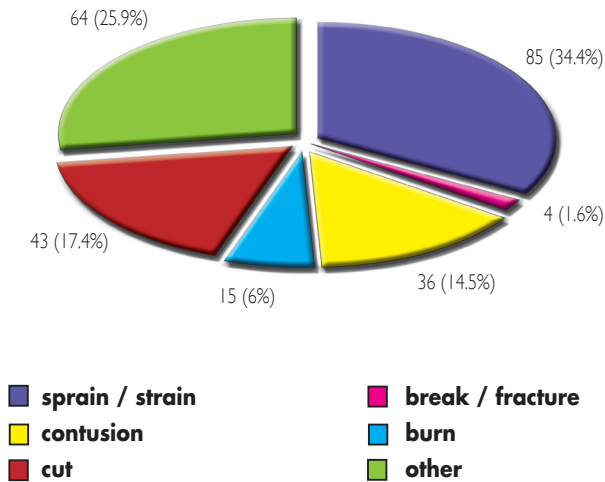
Slips, trips and falls are the most common cause of injury with 26.7% or 66 who slipped, tripped or fell.

This was followed by manual handling - generally regarded as lifting/moving/pushing/carrying, with 21% or 52 persons reported as being injured whilst carrying out manual handling activities.

A SFR awareness campaign will be run by the end of 2007 to highlight this problem and the possible preventative measures. A generic manual handling training package will be introduced and training is scheduled to commence in October. Personnel will continue to receive instruction in manual handling techniques for specific equipment handling during practical training sessions.



Type of injury

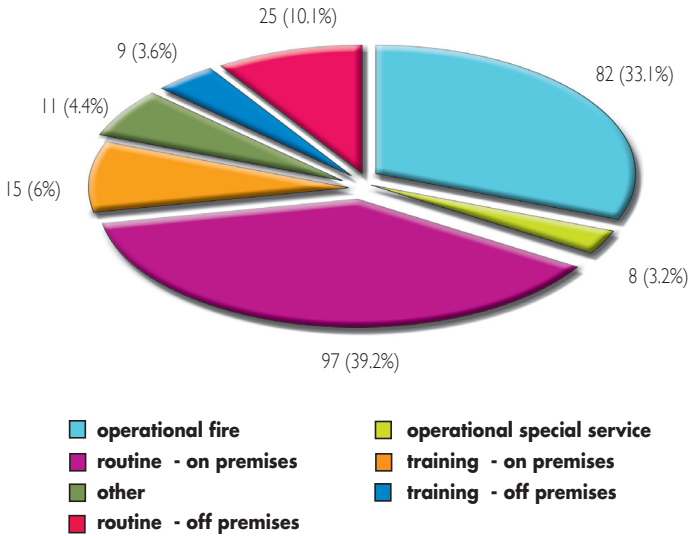


SPRAIN OR STRAIN MOST COMMON TYPE OF INJURY

Sprains and strains are the most common injury type with 34.4% or 85 persons suffering this type of injury.

Over the next 12 months there will be a phased introduction of a new electronic health & safety management system, which will utilise a new risk assessment format. The Health & Safety Section will work in partnership with all SFR Directorates to undertake a complete review of all current risk assessments.

Injury location



SFR PREMISES ARE WHERE MOST INJURIES HAPPEN

- 97, or 39.2% of injuries occurred during routine duties on SFR premises.
- 82, or 33.1% of injuries occurred when attending operational incidents.
- 25, or 10.1% of injuries occurred during training on service premises.

Working safely and managing safely courses, certified by the Institute of Occupational Safety & Health will take place throughout the year at SFR Training Centre. The courses will provide personnel with information, instruction and training in hazard identification and control measures to reduce the risk of injury in the workplace.

7 Exposure to Hazardous Substances

A total of 26 EHS/I forms were submitted. As with previous years the majority of instances involved exposure to asbestos, with 21 personnel being exposed. All 21 personnel were exposed to asbestos at just 2 operational incidents - at a fire in St. Jeromes School in Glasgow (12), and at a fire in a commercial printing works in East Kilbride (9). There has been a significant decrease in the number of EHS/I forms submitted in comparison to last year's figures. It is important any potential exposure experienced by personnel is recorded so that health and welfare issues can be addressed.

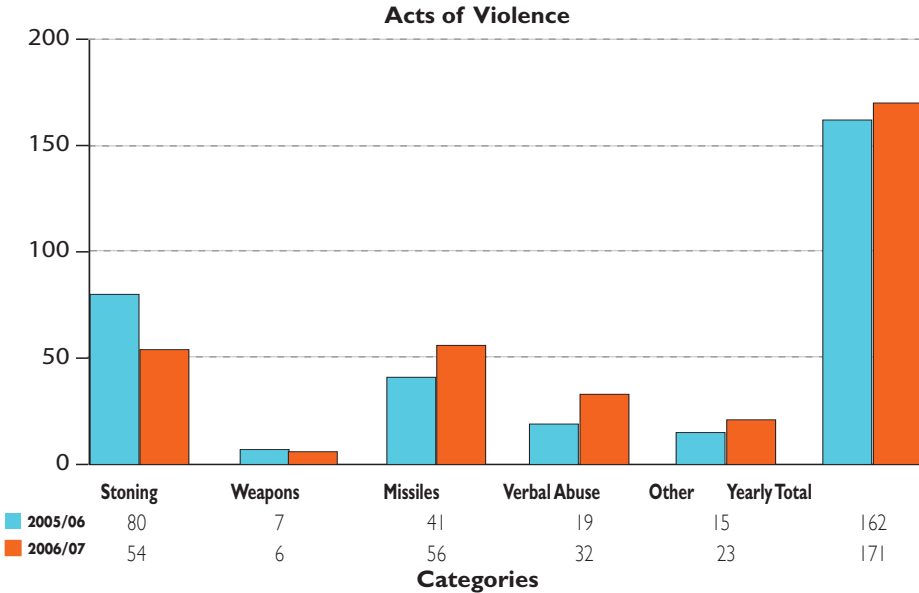
Comparison table of personnel exposed to hazardous substances

| Hazardous Substance | Personnel Exposed in 2004/2005 | Personnel Exposed in 2005/2006 | Personnel Exposed in 2006/007 |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Asbestos | 19 | 157 | 21 |
| Biological | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Chemical | 5 | 0 | 4 |
| Dusts | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fumes | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Gases | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Acids | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Radiation | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Raw Sewage | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Totals | 24 | 157 | 26 |

8 Acts of Violence

In general there was a recorded increase of 9 incidents overall. This was an approximate increase of 5.5% on last years figures. There was a decrease in the number of reported stoning incidents, although incidents involving missiles and verbal abuse showed a slight increase.

Acts of violence by classification and year



*Please note, more than one classification can occur at some incidents.

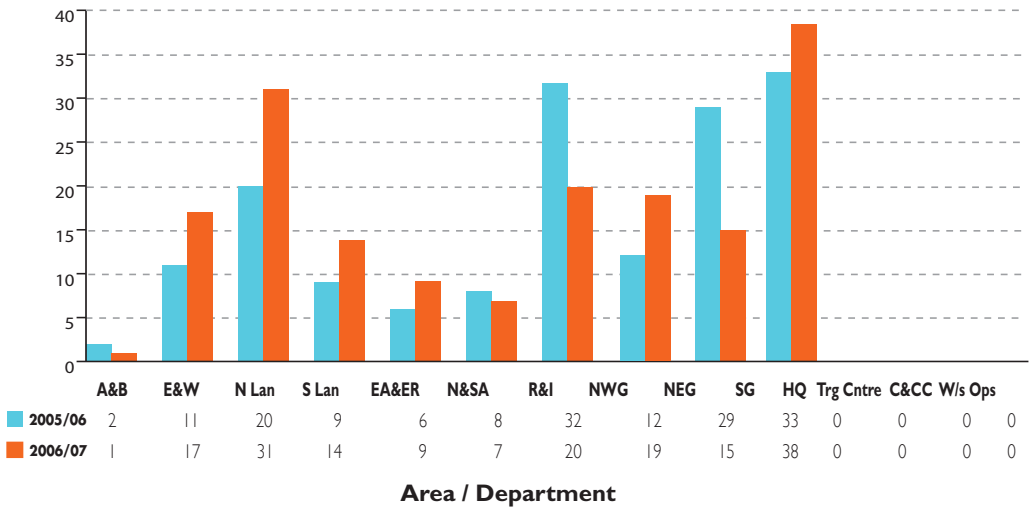
ACTS OF VIOLENCE RISE

The total number of acts of violence showed an increase of 5.5% rising from 162 to 171. The most common assaults involved throwing of stones or missiles. On further analysis an increase was also noted on verbal abuse, which rose from 19 reported incidents in 2005/2006 to 32 incidents in 2006/2007, an increase of 68.4% or 13 reported incidents.

Strathclyde Fire & Rescue has introduced DNA collection kits as part of its ongoing commitment to protecting personnel from the threat of violence at work.

The kits are kept on appliances carrying crew which face the risk of being spat at while attending fires and other incidents. The kits are available to all 2,200 wholetime, 613 retained and 271 volunteer firefighters.

Acts of Violence



SOUTH GLASGOW STILL BIGGEST TARGET

The yearly total for 2005/2006 was 162 increasing to 171 in 2006/2007. During 2006/07 Firefighters in South Glasgow faced the most Acts of Violence - as they did in 2005/2006, rising by 5 from 33 to 38 reported incidents. North Lanarkshire also reported a significant increase in AOVs rising by 11 from 20 to 31 reported incidents. Reported AOVs dropped significantly in North East Glasgow from 29 in 2005/06 to 15 in 2006/07. Renfrewshire and Inverclyde's AOVs dropped by 12 from 32 to 20.

The introduction of the electronic Health & Safety Management system will allow areas to analyse statistics in greater depth, highlighting hotspots within local authority areas.

9 Near Miss Reporting

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

The term near miss can be defined as an “unplanned, uncontrolled event, which has the potential for injury, damage or some other loss”.

It is estimated that for every serious accident there will be approximately six hundred near miss reports. Near miss reports can be seen as an important management tool in identifying system failures.

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 | 2004/2005 | 2005/2006 | 2006/2007 |
|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| General | 126 | 144 | 115 |
| Act of Violence | 122 | 162 | 171 |
| Totals | 248 | 306 | 286 |

10 Health and Safety

Training and Qualifications

Strathclyde Fire & Rescue provides a range of safety related courses and continues to satisfy its legal requirements to provide employees with training, enabling them to carry out their various functions in a safe and competent manner.

INTERNAL COURSES

Safety induction courses Personnel attending

| Induction Course | 2004/2005 | 2005/2006 | 2006/2007 |
|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Wholetime Trainee | 80 | 61 | 100 |
| Retained Trainee | 46 | 32 | 42 |
| Volunteer Trainee | 25 | 9 | 30 |
| Support Staff | 27 | 15 | 82 |
| Totals | 178 | 117 | 254 |

Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) courses

| Type of Course | 2004/2005 | 2005/2006 | 2006/2007 |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Working Safely | 30 | 0 | 0 |
| Managing Safely | 60 | 41 | 76 |
| Totals | 90 | 41 | 76 |

EXTERNAL COURSES

Specialist Health and Safety training courses.

| Course | Personnel attending 2004/2005 | Personnel attending 2005/2006 | Personnel attending 2006/2007 |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| NEBOSH | 45 | 33 | 76 |
| Kelvin Topset | | | |
| Accident Investigation | 0 | 19 | 0 |
| Diploma in | | | |
| H & S Management | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Vibration Assessor | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Noise Assessor | 0 | 8 | 10 |
| Totals | 47 | 73 | 88 |

11 Ill Health 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 |
|---------|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| 2005/06 | 0 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2006/07 | 4 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

12 Acknowledgements

The Health & Safety Section would like to thank the Health & Safety Executive for its continued assistance and support.

Thanks is also extended to the Board of Strathclyde Fire & Rescue, the Chief Officer, Management team, all Strathclyde Fire & Rescue employees and their representative bodies for their commitment in establishing and maintaining a positive health & safety culture.

