



Lancashire Fire
and Rescue Service

Annual Safety, Health and Environment Report 2020-2021



making Lancashire safer

Introduction

This report summarises the arrangements in place to deliver the Service's Safety, Health and Environment Policy and provides a summary of safety, health and environment performance data.

It includes the reporting on occupational safety, health and environmental issues that have arisen during the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) Safety, Health and Environment Management Arrangements

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority (CFA) has overall responsibility for the effective governance of health, safety and environment. The Fire Authority is responsible for agreeing the safety, health and environment policy and for ensuring adequate resources is available for safety, health and environment purposes. The Authority will provide a clear direction for the Executive Board and Senior Management Team to establish policies and procedures and manage safety, health and environment performance effectively.

Whilst individual members of staff, supervisors and managers all have responsibility for safety, health and environment, the Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) Department coordinates and oversees the day-to-day management of health and safety activities and at the same time continues to provide competent professional advice.

The Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS) is based on the Health and Safety Executive model HS (G) 65 – Successful Health and Safety Management and written and implemented to the International Standard for a Health and Safety Management System (HSMS) ISO 45001:2018. The Environment Management System (EMS) is written and implemented to the International Standard ISO 14001:2015.

During 2020/2021 we have continued to enjoy a positive working relationship with the Representative Bodies, particularly the Fire Brigades Union and UNISON. The Service consults formally on a quarterly basis working together to ensure safety, health and environmental concerns are resolved. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic the Representative Bodies have played a key role within the newly formed Health and Safety Subgroup which was established to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of our staff, in particular ensuring effective arrangements were implemented, and health screening arrangements embedded to manage COVID-19 risks. Safety Representatives play a vital role in achieving a healthier and safer workplace and improving our health and safety culture whilst reducing our impacts on the environment.

Controlling Risk within LFRS

The varied nature of the Service's work activities and working environments inevitably means that there is a broad range of risks to manage. The level of risk to both employees and service users can be identified from several the Service's performance measures including the:

- total number of accidents reported by employees and non LFRS employees.
- number of safety events reported to the Health and Safety Executive.
- number of near miss events reported.
- number of days lost following an accident at work.
- type of events that are being reported.
- risks being managed effectively through the development and implementation of policies and procedures contained within the Service's HSMS and EMS.
- carbon emissions from LFRS premises and activities; and
- fitness assessments for operational staff.

The HSMS and EMS and associated policies and procedures are designed to promote safe systems of work and minimise the risk of injury to employees and visitors and reduce the impact to the environment. The SHE Department develops bespoke and proportionate procedures for LFRS, minimising 'red tape' and focusing on controlling real risks in the workplace. Managers, through devolved safety, health and environment responsibilities, ensure that recognised safe systems of work are being applied 'as far as is reasonably practicable'.

To ensure that the Service continues to meet its legal obligations in respect of safety, health and environment we ensure that all policies, procedures, instructions and guidance are regularly reviewed and updated. SHE training is refreshed every three years together with any specific training required by role.

Safety, health and environment performance is reviewed on a regular basis, through high level scrutiny via the CFA Performance Committee and at Director Level through the LFRS Health, Safety & Environment Advisory Group (HSEAG) chaired by the Director of People and Development and Health and Safety Consultation Committee chaired by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer.



External Audit of the Health and Safety and Environment Management Systems

Since initial certification in November 2011, surveillance visits have been conducted annually and re-certification every three years to maintain external certification for our HSMS and EMS. In April 2021, the auditor from British Assessment Bureau carried out a virtual audit against the international standards for health and safety ISO 45001:2018 and environment ISO 14001:2015.

The scope for both standards was '**The Provision of Fire, Rescue and Supporting Services across Lancashire**'. This included all operational activity with virtual visits to five fire stations operating different duty systems together with several supporting departments including Safety, Health and Environment, Fleet and Engineering Services, Procurement, Training and Operational Response, Human Resources and Property. Continued certification has been granted for ISO 45001:2018 and ISO14001:2015. LFRS received no non-conformances and five opportunities for improvement.

During the audit process, the auditor identified several positive aspects, including:

- The Management Systems are well structured and reflect the operational processes through documented procedures.
- Active worker participation with communications founded on mutual trust ensures that the HSMS is effective in its preventive and protective measures.
- The Service has adopted an integrated approach to managing the risk; thereby ensuring safe systems of work for all employees.
- The Recruitment Process is well managed, and this was demonstrated again during this year's audit.
- Successful external communications are achieved through web content, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube accounts.

As part of the audit, where areas for improvement were identified by LFRS staff, these have been developed into an 'improvement action plan' and taken forward through the Service's Health, Safety and Environment Advisory Group.

Improvement Actions during 2020/21

LFRS ensures continuous improvement is made in both the HSMS and EMS each year. During 2020/21 the key focus has been on managing the risks from COVID-19. Below are some examples of the improvements carried out during 2020/21:

- Developed workplace guidance and information to manage the risks from COVID-19.
- Developed information and guidance to support staff and their families through the pandemic.
- Introduced Lateral Flow Testing arrangements into service to control the risk of COVID-19.
- Developed arrangements for homeworking.
- Reviewed the organisational arrangements for health and safety and environment to meet revised meeting structures.
- Continued to provide improved PPE for attending operational incidents.
- Continued to implement National Operational Guidance into service.
- In partnership with the FBU developing best practice to mitigate the potential risks of contaminants on dirty fire PPE.
- Made improvements and refurbished our fire stations at Hyndburn and South Shore together with upgrading facilities at Service Training Centre and commencing a replacement programme for Drill Towers.
- Reviewed our arrangements for Controlling Substances Hazardous to Health.
- Reviewed our arrangements for the management of Legionella within our buildings.
- Reviewed and monitored our waste management arrangements across several sites to increase recycling.
- Introduced Clinical Governance into LFRS to provide support and assurance to medical interventions as an element of the Service's emergency response arrangements.
- Reviewed and strengthened our assurance monitoring systems for operational activity.
- Ensured that all LFRS staff had access to the correct PPE and hygiene items to mitigate COVID-19 risks when responding to operational incidents and working in the community.
- Developed the latest generation of fire appliances for the Service with an improved crew cab design which minimises the risks from fire contaminants and provides more comfortable seating arrangements.
- Reviewed incident ground welfare provision as part of research and development with the design of an improved incident ground welfare trailer which provides enhanced toilet facilities and a rest area for staff who have been deployed at operational incidents.

Health and Safety Performance

Active Monitoring is integrated into day-to-day work. This includes an integrated approach to workplace inspections at station and department level for both health and safety and environmental hazards and risks.

In addition to day-to-day monitoring of health and safety by managers, active monitoring features extensively during operational incidents and forms an essential part of the Incident Command System at all levels. Incidents are monitored, debriefed and outcome reviews are carried out to ensure that continuous learning from incidents is achieved.

The Service has implemented a system of robust reactive monitoring as defined in the accident reporting and accident investigation procedures of the HSMS. The SHE department co-ordinates and controls this system, and heads of department and line managers are responsible for implementation.

During 2020/2021 there were:

- **57 accidents** (55 to LFRS staff and 2 to non LFRS staff) each event being investigated and recorded in line with Service Policy.
- **117 near misses** (92 near misses and 25 near miss attacks on staff) that were investigated, and the recommendations were fed back into the service policy, procedure, or risk assessment as appropriate.
- There were **9 RIDDOR** events that were reported to the Health and Safety Executive; 8 resulting from over 7 day's absence and 1 dangerous occurrence related to a Breathing Apparatus failure.

A summary of the total accident and ill-health statistics for 2020/21 are detailed below in Figure 1.

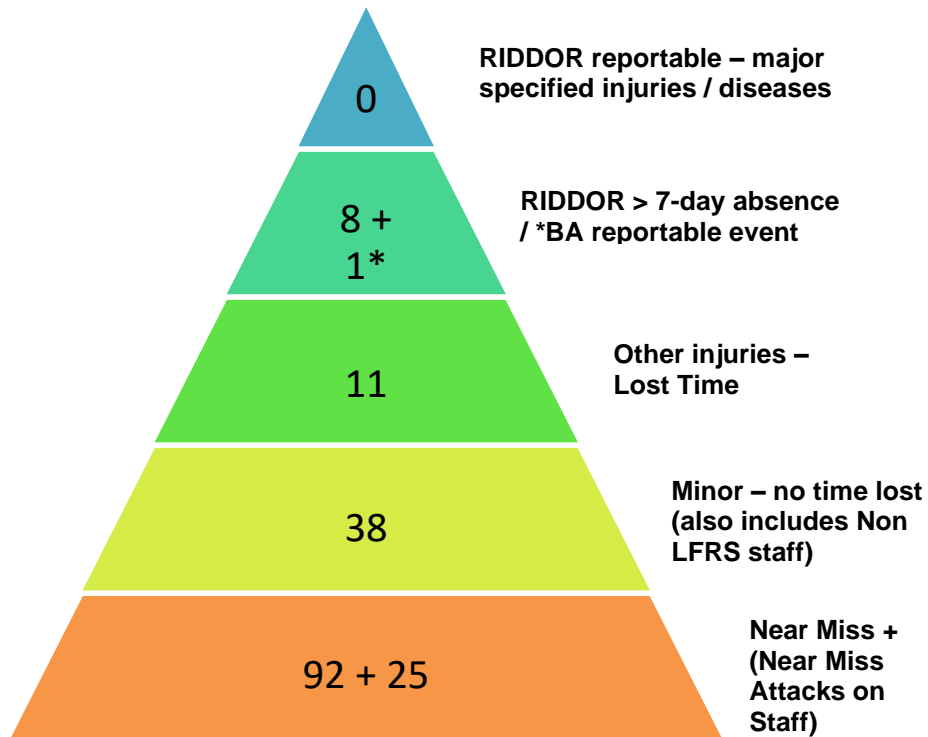


Figure 1 - Hierarchy of safety events

The figures in the following Table 1 relate to working days lost due to work related injury/illness.

The overall trend is downward from absence following work related injury/illness. In 2018/19 one long term absence resulted in 162 days off work which impacted on the performance for that year and in 2020/21 two long term absences impacted the performance.

Year	Days Lost
2015/16	331
2016/17	205
2017/18	245
2018/19	377
2019/20	264
2020/21	352

Table 1 – working days lost to accidents

Figure 2 gives a background position on the safety performance of LFRS since 2016/17:

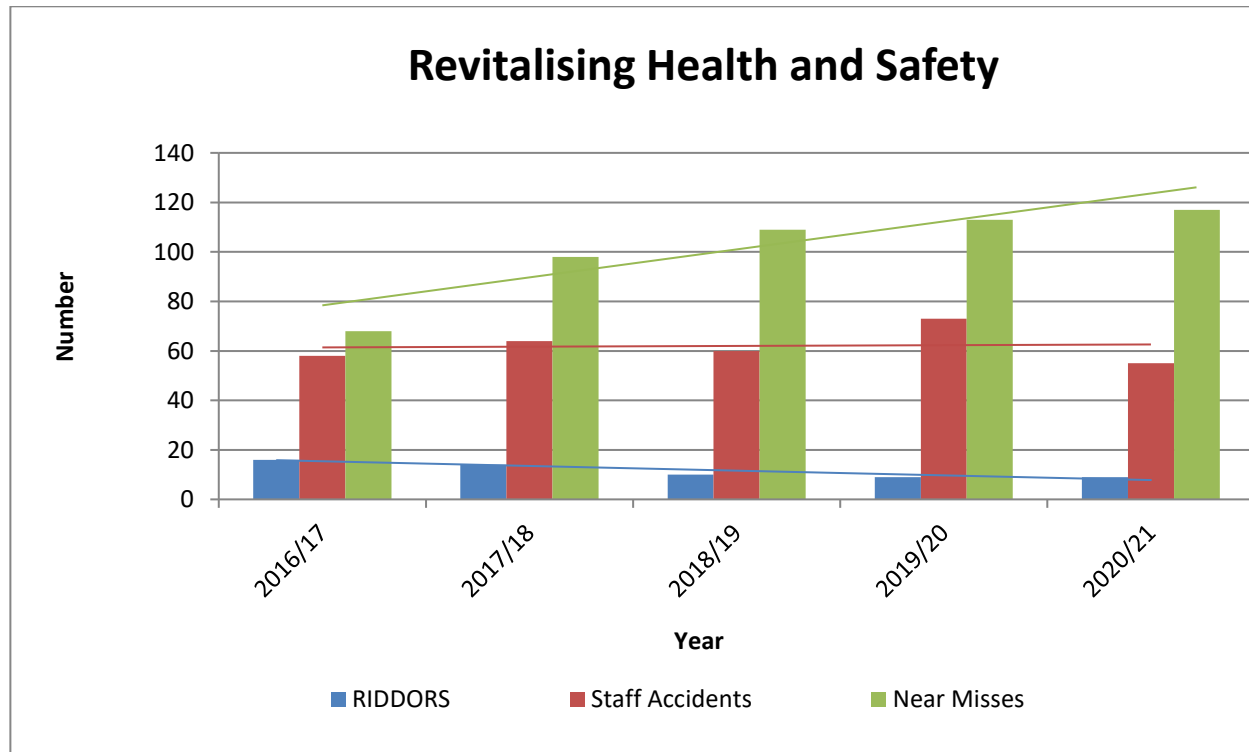


Figure 2 – LFRS Safety Performance 2016/17 to 2020/2021

Table 2 shows the types of accidents that were reported during 2020/21 comparing the last five year's performance with the numbers for each category.

TYPE OF ACCIDENT	LFRS Staff 2020/21	LFRS Staff 2019/20	LFRS Staff 2018/19	LFRS Staff 2017/18	LFRS staff 2016/17	Non LFRS staff 2020/21	Non LFRS staff 2019/20	Non LFRS staff 2018/19	Non LFRS staff 2017/18	Non LFRS staff 2016/17
Handling lifting or carrying	11	18	7	15	17		1	2	1	4
Hit by moving, flying or falling object	4	12	4	7	5		2	2	4	
Slip trip fall	5	12	11	9	12		2	2	1	4
Hit something fixed or stationary	3	4	10	8	6		5	3	6	1
Other	10	15	12	7	11		2	-	1	4
Injured by an animal		2	1	3				-	-	
Fall from Height	1	1	3	4			2	-	1	1
Exposed to fire	5	1	6	3				-	1	
Exposed to harmful substance	11	4	4	7	3	1		2	-	3
Exposed to an explosion			-	1	-			-	-	-
Contact with Electricity	1		-	-	2		1	-		-
Hit by a moving vehicle	1	1	1	-	2			-		-
Contact with Moving Machinery	1	1	-	-	-	1		-		-
Drowned or Asphyxiated			-	-	-			-		-
Physically assaulted by a person	2	2	1	-	-			2		8
Trapped by Something Collapsing			-	-	-			-		-
TOTAL	55	73	60	64	58	2	15	13	15	25

Table 2 – Types of accidents in 2020/21 compared to 2016/17 – 2019/20.

Near Miss Reporting

A near miss event is an unplanned and unforeseeable event in which there is no injury, but the potential to cause injury or other form of loss exists should it occur again.

Table 3 below shows the increasing number of near misses being reported each year in the prevention of accidents within the workplace. A wide range of learning opportunities have been captured in relation to stations/building, equipment, appliances, operational procedures and breathing apparatus issues.

Year	Number of Near misses
2016/17	68
2017/18	98
2018/19	109
2019/20	113
2020/21	117

Table 3 - Near Miss Reporting 2016/17 to 2020/21

Vehicle Accidents

Year	Number of Vehicle Accidents
2016/17	67
2017/18	58
2018/19	74
2019/20	69
2020/21	67

Table 4 Number of Vehicle Accidents

Table 4 shows the number of accidents involving fleet vehicles from 2016/17 to 2020/21

Analysis of the type of accidents LFRS vehicles have been involved in during 2020/21 has shown that most accidents occur during vehicle maneuvering at slow speeds and there is an increasing trend.

To look at ways of help reduce vehicle accidents a working group has been established to examine current working practices and to develop a Management of Occupational Road Risk framework.

Health and Wellbeing

Sickness Absence

During 2020/21 sickness absence has remained above the services target of not more than 5 shifts lost. To improve performance, the service aims to continue with:

- Early intervention by Occupational Health Unit (OHU) doctor/nurse/physiotherapist.
- Support to managers in following the Absence Management Policy managing individual long-term cases and dealing with capability off staff due to health issues.
- Encouraging employees to make use of our Employee Assistance Programme provider and The Firefighters Charity.
- HR to attend Stress Risk Assessment meetings, to support managers and to offer appropriate support to the employee along with signposting.
- Support from Service Fitness Advisor/ Personal Training Instructors.

Health Promotion & Wellbeing Framework

During 2020/21 the focus for health and wellbeing has been on supporting staff, colleagues, families, and friends in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A range of material has been developed to support staff through this difficult time. This included:

- Developed and promoted wellbeing material jointly with the Firefighters Charity:
 - A short, guided relaxation session led by the Wellness & Behaviour Change Coach.
 - Resilience online workshop.
 - Managing anxiety; returning to work after lockdown, online workshop.
- Information to help managers support staff in adjusting to homeworking.
- Coping with a change in our working environment.
- Coping with grief during the COVID-19 pandemic; how you might feel and support details.
- Support for volunteers during COVID-19; how to access support if you are volunteering at this time.
- 7 steps to creating a new habit; tips to help you create a new habit during COVID-19 that will last.
- Mental health menu (wellbeing) - ideas to support your wellbeing during COVID19 & beyond.
- Wellbeing support during COVID19; Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME).
- A booklet to support conversations with a child or young person, who may be struggling with their mental health.
- A leaflet for signposting or accessing urgent mental health support.

Environmental Performance

Fire-fighters' Charity Recycling Banks

LFRS continues to support the Fire Fighters Charity with eighteen fire stations currently having recycling banks on site and one at a neighbouring B&Q. For each tonne of clothing, a donation is made to the Fire-fighter's Charity.

In 2020/21, the banks had collected over 82 tonnes of textiles. This has raised £10,172 for the charity.



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Waste Management

There has been a 2% increase in waste collected from April to March 2019/20 to April to March 2020/21. The total of waste collected is 113 tonnes. The percentage of recycled waste during 2020/21 is 30% which shows a slight decrease from last year with 9 sites having a recycling rate of 40% or above.

There are several sites that stand out with excellent waste management and others where there may be issues which are being investigated. Overall, on-call stations are performing well and have comparatively low waste.



Carbon Emissions

LFRS updated Carbon Management Plan was agreed by the Combined Fire Authority Resources Committee in September 2020. The plan included a target of 40% carbon emission reduction by March 2030 from a baseline of 4352 tonnes of CO² in 2007/08.

The Service achieved an overall reduction of **23%** by March 2021 which equates to **1020** tonnes of CO².

The Carbon Management Team continues to meet and make progress against a new plan and revised target of 40% carbon emission reduction by March 2030. The team will deliver projects accepting these will be fewer and more targeted in the future. The Plan is overseen by the Director of People and Development.

Monthly meter readings for Gas, Electric and Water continue to be collated together with fuel data collated by Fleet and Engineering Services, providing a full picture of carbon emissions for all LFRS premises.

Table 5 shows the carbon emission performance for 2020/21 against the 2007/08 baseline and previous year 2019/20 together with the carbon emissions for 2016/17 to 2018/19.

	Baseline 2007/08	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	% change on previous year	% change since baseline 2007/08
Buildings	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)		
Electricity	1600	1581	1592	1495	1478	1484	0.4%	7.3%
Gas	1594	934	1025	901	988	1032	4.5%	35%
Total	3194	2515	2617	2396	2466	2516	2.1%	21%
Transport	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)		
Fuel	1158	796	858	968	882	816	7.5%	29.5%
	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)		
Service Total	4352	3311	3475	3364	3347	3332	0.4%	23.4%
<i>Shown separately in Carbon Management Plan</i>								
Water	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)		
	9.1	5.8	5.4	4.9	6.4	5.7	10.9%	37.4%

Table 5 Carbon Emissions Reductions 2020/21

A Look Ahead to 2021/22

Looking to 2021/22, key safety, health and environment priorities are to:

- Continue to manage the impact of COVID-19 on LFRS activities and ensure that LFRS complies with Government COVID-19 workplace safety requirements.
- Rationalise and refresh the existing risk assessments, standard operating procedures/service orders and training requirements following the introduction and publication of National Guidance for Fire and Rescue Services together with legislative changes.
- Reduce the number of accidents and related sickness absence whilst increasing the number of near miss events reported.
- Maintain LFRS certification to ISO 45001:2018 and ISO14001:2015 standards and continually improve the HSMS and EMS.
- Embed Safety, Health and Environment through continued training and interaction with staff to enable proportionate and informed workplace safety, health and environmental decisions to be made.
- Continue to engage our Environmental Champions to assist in reducing carbon emissions from energy and fuel use through a refreshed Carbon Management Plan and reduce waste collected and increase the percentage of waste being recycled.
- Develop the health, safety and wellbeing plan to continue to deliver a program of support to engage staff in maintaining fitness, reducing injury and absence, informing staff about the support available to maintain health and wellbeing whilst promoting ways to enhance personal resilience.
- Develop a Management of Occupational Road Risk policy.
- Embed our Leadership framework.
- Review Climate Change impacts and develop our approach to decarbonisation of our buildings and fleet vehicles.
- Evaluate the current LFRS position for the management of PPE Contaminants against newly released guidance and introduce best practice arrangements to manage the risk.

Overall Summary

COVID-19 has been a significant challenge to LFRS during 2020/21, requiring significant focus across all areas of the Service to ensure that operational response and safety critical community work within the Lancashire communities could continue to be carried out safely for both LFRS staff and members of the public we meet. Whilst the vaccination programme is providing a route out of restrictions, LFRS will continue to ensure that the Service complies with COVID-19 workplace safety requirements and these are reviewed as restrictions change.

2020/21 has again seen a very positive year in terms of overall safety, health and environment performance of LFRS.

The number of accidents to LFRS staff 55 has decreased from last year however the severity from injury has remained at 17 lost time safety events. HSE were notified under RIDDOR regarding 9 events: 8 over 7-day absences following accidents and 1 dangerous occurrence related to a Breathing Apparatus failure.

LFRS continues to deliver continuous improvement within the HSMS and EMS maintaining ISO 45001:2018 and ISO 14001:2015 certification through external examination receiving no non-conformances and five opportunities for improvement.

Projects and work to manage and improve health and wellbeing, learn from incidents, and provide operational assurance, reduce carbon emissions, review National Operational Guidance, research and develop equipment and firefighting techniques to ensure firefighter safety continue to deliver a safe person and safe working environment.

The good relationship with the Fire Brigades Union and UNISON continues working together to maintain a positive culture within LFRS.