



Unwanted Fire Signals (UWFS)

Current LFRS Performance & Options for Improvement





Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA)

Incidents where the initial call to North West Fire Control is generated by an **Automatic Fire Alarm** system (AFA)

The fire alarm system activates and sends a signal to a Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisation (FAMO) who in turn contact the relevant Fire Control

FAMOs should call the premises back

Occupied premises should make a back up 999 call confirming whether the incident is a false alarm (1 pump still continues to check) or genuine fire (full predetermined attendance sent)



Unwanted Fire Signals (UWFS)

Attendance by one or more Fire Appliances to a premises where, on arrival, there is found to be **no fire or emergency**

Where the initial call to North West Fire Control was generated by an **Automatic Fire Alarm** system (AFA)

The term **UnWanted Fire Signal** can only applied after arrival



Impact of UWFS on LFRS & Community

Unwanted Fire Signals:

- Divert essential resources from emergencies
- Create disruption for businesses employing On-Call FF's
- Create risk to crew and public whilst responding
- Disrupt Community & Business Safety activities
- Disrupt operational training
- Create environmental impact
- Drain public finances
- Cause call handling delays in NWFC (exemption dependent)

NFCC publishes national guidance to assist FRS' in reducing the risks created by Unwanted Fire Signals.

Tactics to reduce risk **at the time of call** include:

- Undertaking **call challenge** in Control rooms (NWFC do this)
- Ensuring Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations (FAMO's) undertake **call-back** (NWFC do this)
- Sending **reduced or no attendance** under risk based and defined conditions (LFRS partially does this)



National Guidance

NFCC also provides guidance on tactics to **reduce risk by reducing chance of recurrence** by:

- Setting reasonable expectations for UWFS
(LFRS applies these)
- Providing **Business Advice** to continually nudge compliance
(LFRS does this)
- Using **Fire Safety Enforcement** to secure compliance
(LFRS does this)
- Exercising capability to **Raise Charges**
(LFRS does not do this)

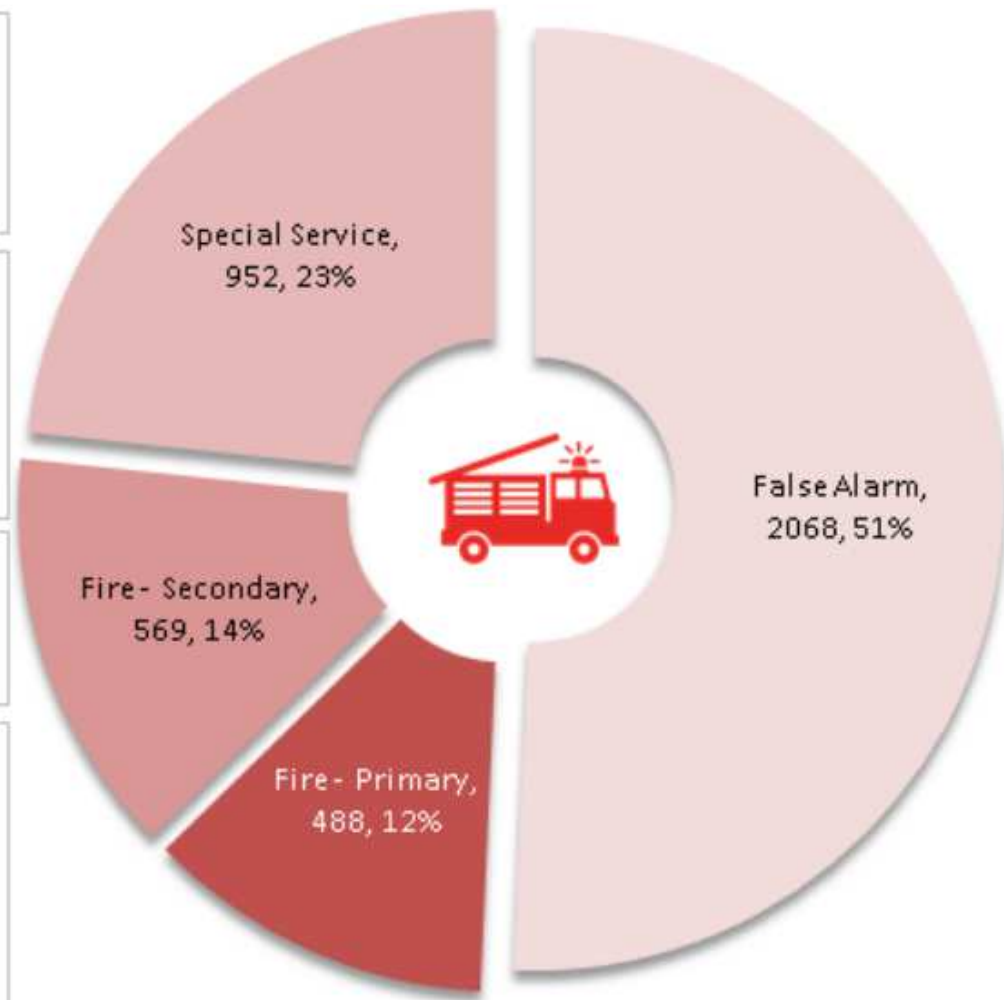


Advice and Enforcement

- Business safety advice is provided to help premises owners and operators to comply
- Where business safety advice is not followed the case is escalated and a full Fire Safety Audit is undertaken
- Fire Safety Order Legal powers are used - Enforcement Notices issued to secure compliance (Fire Alarm not suitable)
- To withstand legal scrutiny (appeal) LFRS has to demonstrate the fire alarm system generating the AFA is poorly installed, defective or poorly managed against criteria in BS5839:1

False Alarm Incidents Oct – Dec 2020

FALSE ALARM:	
Fire alarm due to Apparatus	62%
Good Intent false alarm	34%
Malicious False Alarm	4%
SPECIAL SERVICE:	
Critical Incidents (KPI 2.2.1)	64%
Gaining Entry*	23%
RTC*	16%
Flooding*	10%
FIRE - SECONDARY:	
Anti-Social Behaviour (1.6.1)	51%
Accidental Fires	49%
FIRE - PRIMARY:	
Accidental Dwelling Fires (1.3)	47%
Accidental Building Fires (1.5)	16%
Dwellings (1.6.2)	6%
Non Dwellings (1.6.3)	6%
Other Primary	25%





LFRS UWFS demand as a proportion of overall incident activity over 10 years

Overall Appliance attendance at incidents (KPI 1.2) and proportion of which are 'False alarm due to Apparatus'

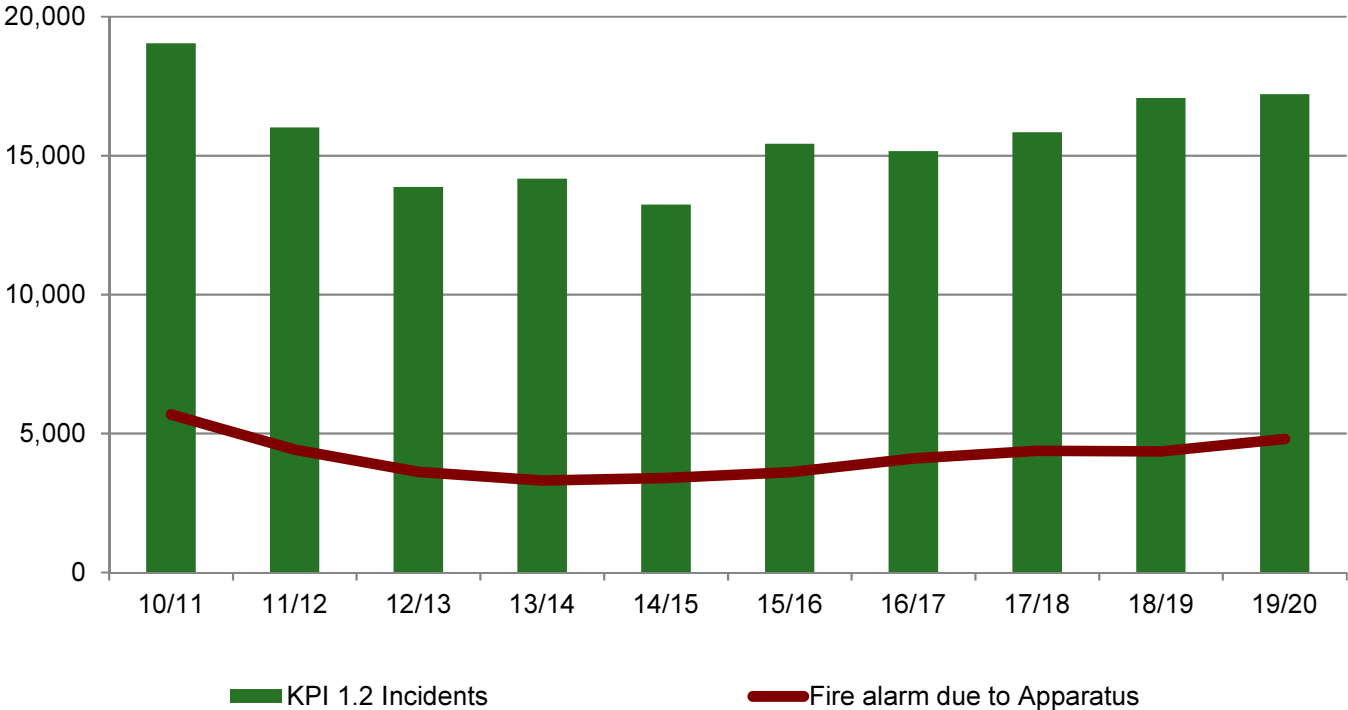
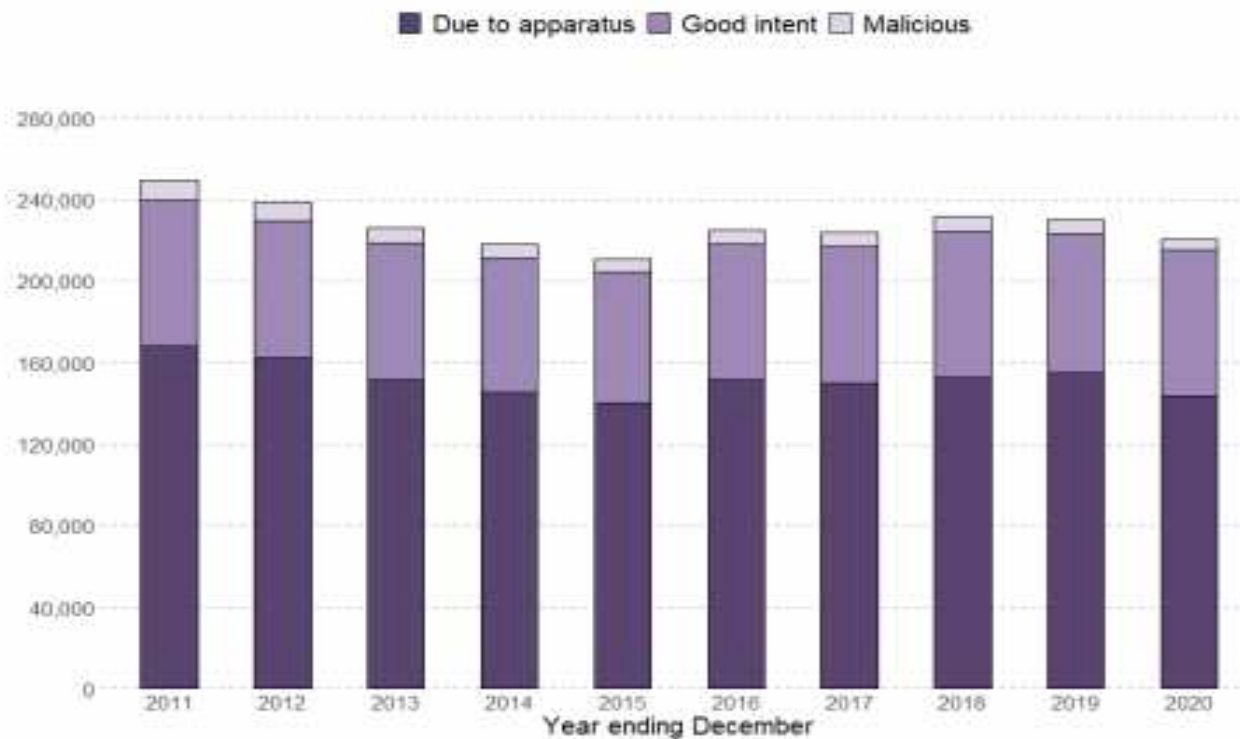


Figure 3.1: Total fire false alarms by type of false alarm, England; year ending December 2011 to year ending December 2020

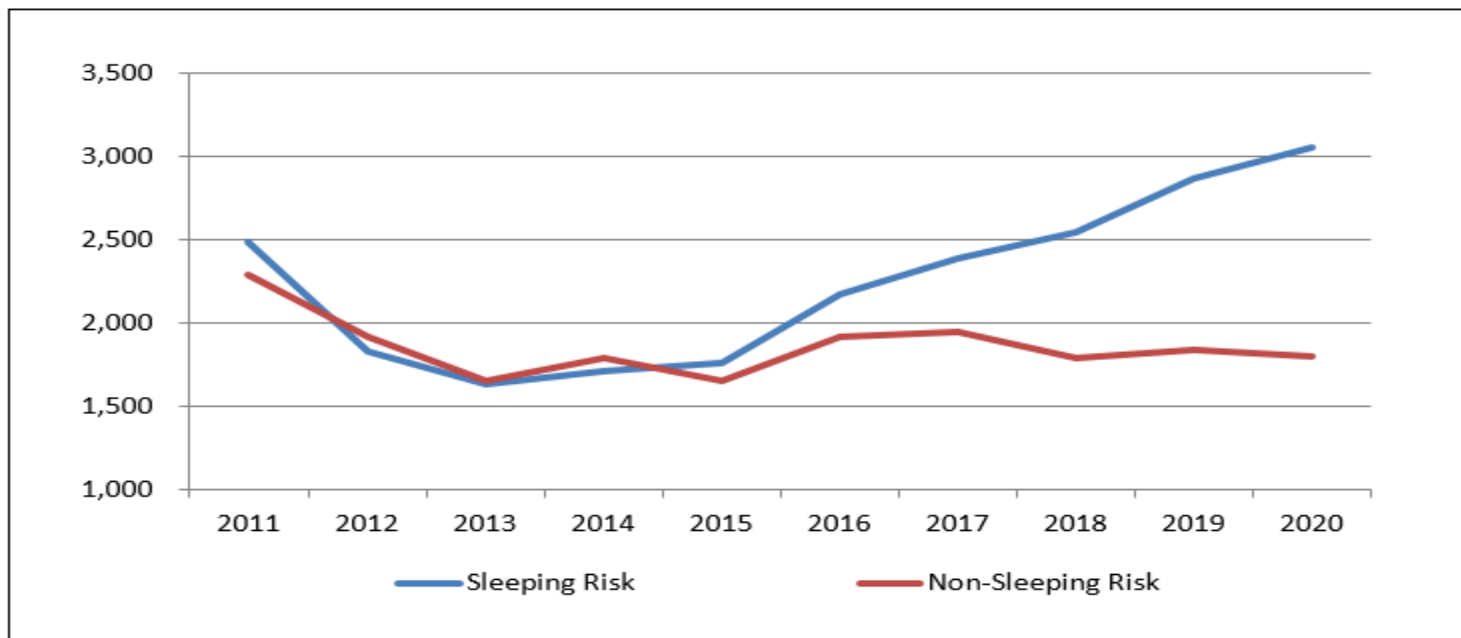


False Alarm due to apparatus (UWFS) performance nationally has remained broadly stable at circa 150k per annum



Lancashire Performance by premises type

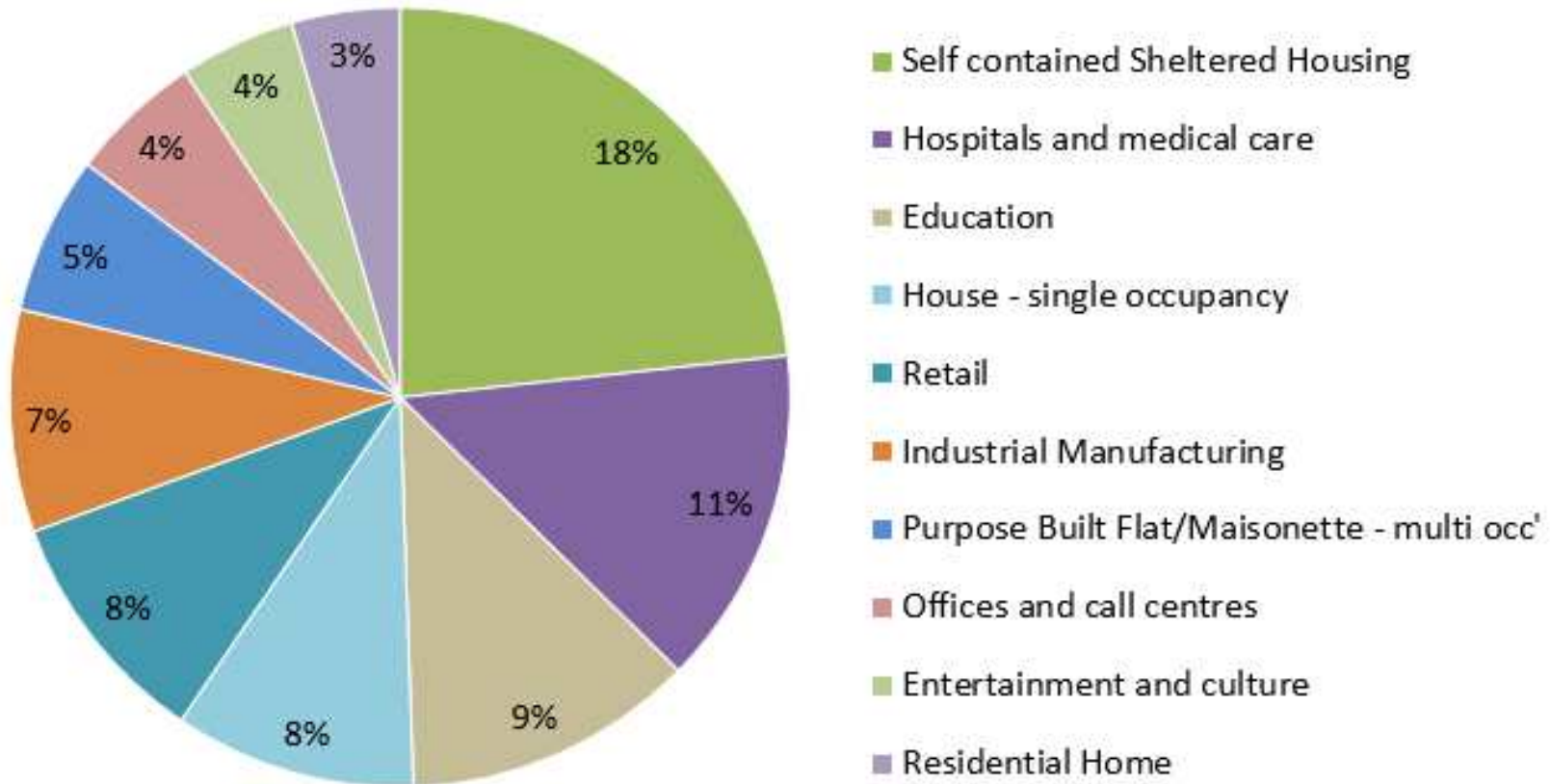
Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Sleeping Risk	2,483	1,833	1,635	1,708	1,766	2,170	2,388	2,548	2,870	3,053	22,454
	52%	49%	50%	49%	52%	53%	55%	59%	61%	63%	55%
Non-Sleeping Risk	2,285	1,917	1,652	1,790	1,654	1,916	1,946	1,786	1,841	1,798	18,585
	48%	51%	50%	51%	48%	47%	45%	41%	39%	37%	45%
Total AFA	4,768	3,750	3,287	3,498	3,420	4,086	4,334	4,334	4,711	4,851	41,039



Breakdown by occupancy type (10 yrs)

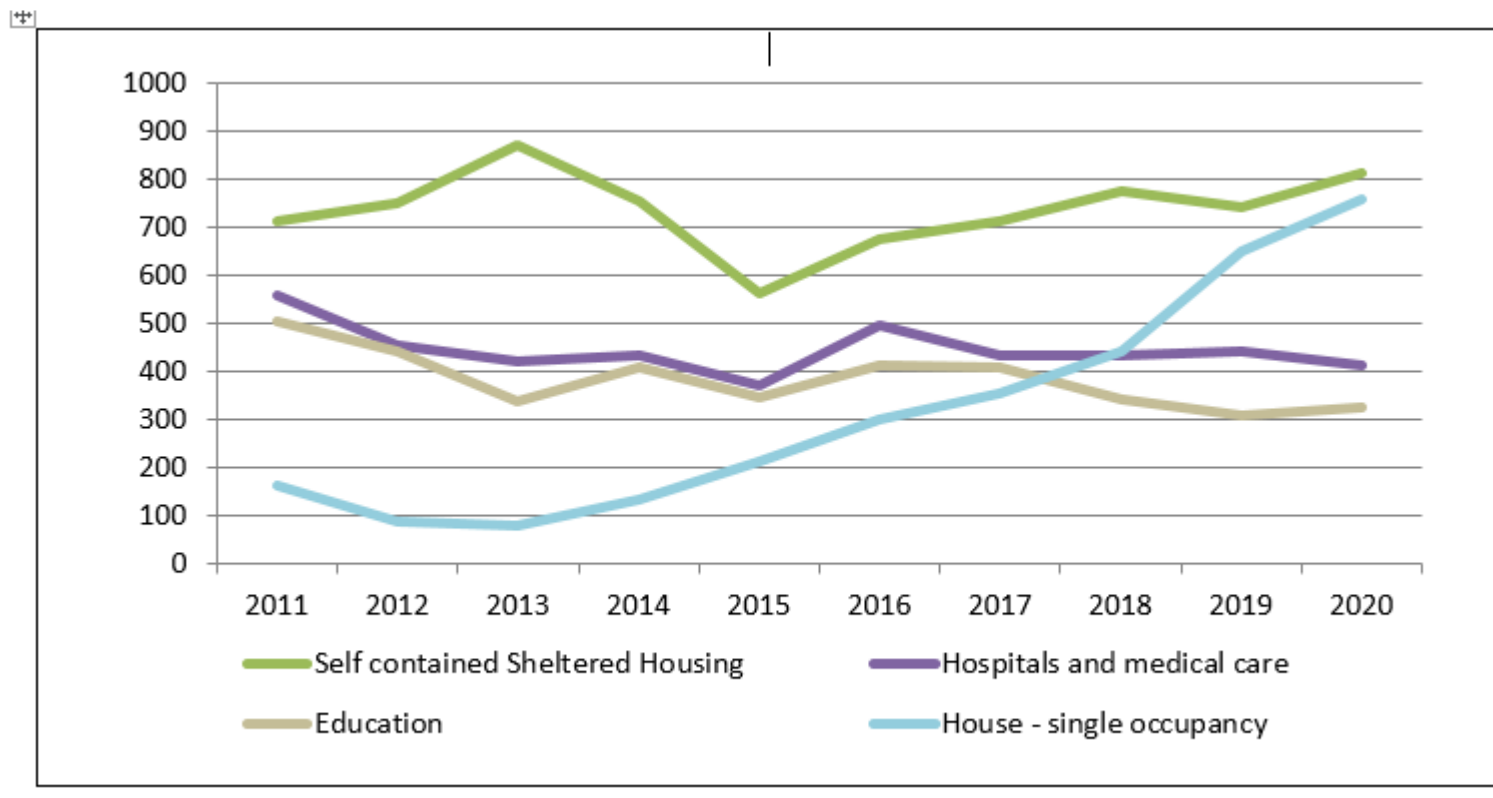
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Top 10 Property Types Sleeping and Non-Sleeping



Impact of Domestic Alarms (Telecare)

Top 4 property types (which account for 46% of all UWFS)
over a 10 year period.





HMICFRS observations

In their first full inspection HMICFRS observed:

“We found that Lancashire FRS may be attending more false alarm calls than it needs to.

It shares the North West Fire Control Centre with other services but does not use the call challenging protocols they use”.



IMPROVEMENT OPTION 1: Remove attendance to AFA at non-sleeping premises

Performance Benefits

- Would immediately realise circa 40% reduction in attendances
- Aligns LFRS to other FRS in NW Fire Control
- Improves NWFC call handling process and associated KPI
- Improves availability & speed of response to real emergencies
- Introduction could be staged i.e. During Day in Y1, Night in Y2

Resource Implications

- Public Consultation (could be part of IRMP) & Media campaign



IMPROVEMENT OPTION 1: Remove attendance to AFA at non-sleeping premises

Risks

Non attendance at a fire in a non-sleeping risk premises

Given the high number of AFAs received the frequency of fires is very low

AFA incidents in non-sleeping risk premises classified as a fire on arrival by year

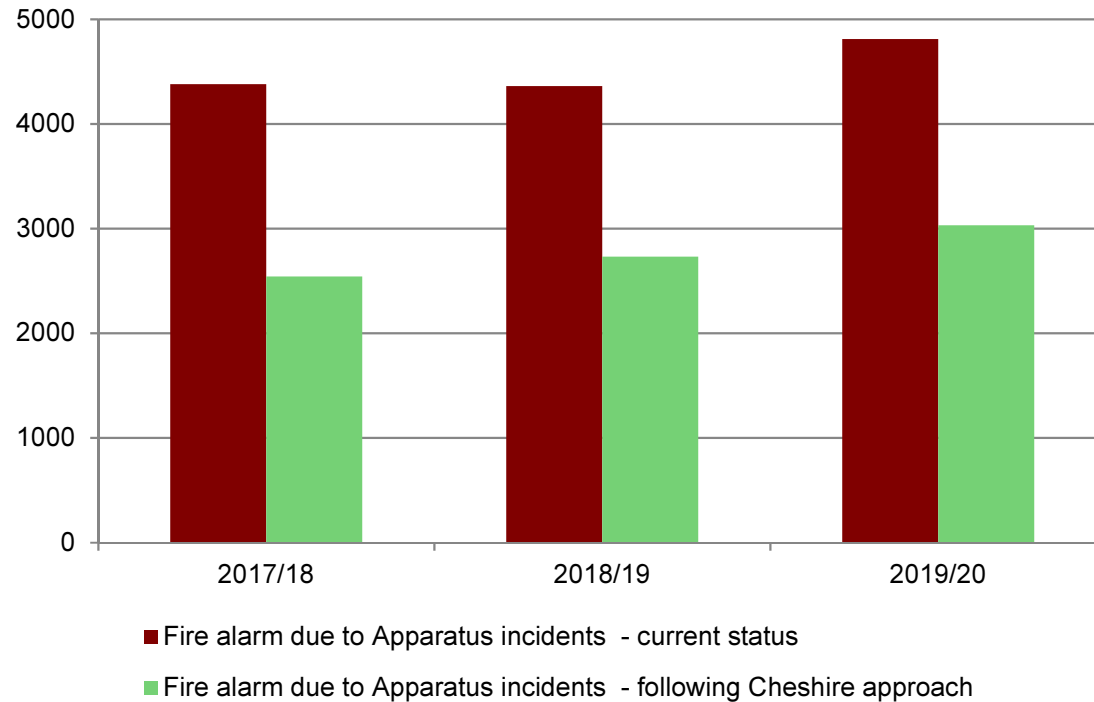
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Automatic Fire Alarms actuations	4599	4815	4608	4700	4086	22808
Number of Primary Fires	17	14	8	6	3	48
% of Primary Fires	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2

Mitigation comes in the form of effective business engagement emphasising the importance of back-up 999 calls from occupied premises and 'double knock' systems in unoccupied ones.

Double knock systems are those which are agreed to fire alarm systems which will autodial only on actuation of two fire detection devices



Benefit of Alignment to other NWFRS (Cheshire FRS used as the example)



Year	Fire alarm due to Apparatus incidents	AFA incidents following Cheshire approach	Difference	% Difference
2017/18	4,379	2,543	-1,836	-41.9%
2018/19	4,362	2,731	-1,631	-37.4%
2019/20	4,810	3,032	-1,778	-37.0%
Total	13,551	8,306	-5,245	-38.7%

IMPROVEMENT OPTION 2: Introduce a Domestic False Alarm Policy



This would be a very different type of policy to other UWFS:

- AFAs from Single Domestic Dwellings & those within Sheltered Housing Schemes are generated from Telecare systems (new installations will increase year on year)
- The Policy would focus on close collaboration with Lancashire's Social Care Commissioners and Providers
- The Objective would be to: Reduce UWFS to LFRS and Risk to vulnerable persons who rely on Telecare for their safety
- Focus on poor installations and improvements that reduce UWFS but don't increase risk to the occupier/s



Questions?