



Lancashire Fire
and Rescue Service

Annual Safety, Health and Environment Report 2021-2022



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 2021 to 31st March 2022.

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 CFA is responsible for agreeing the safety, health and environment policy and for ensuring adequate resources are available for safety, health and environment purposes. The CFA 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 2021/2022 we have continued to enjoy a positive working relationship with the Representative Bodies on health and safety issues. The Service consults formally on a quarterly basis working together to ensure safety, health and environmental concerns are resolved. 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, sometimes in challenging high hazard environments. The level of risk to both employees and service users can be identified from several of 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 under the RIDDOR regulations.
- 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 the real risks in LFRS workplaces. 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 the Health and Safety Consultation Committee chaired by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer.



External Audit of the Health and Safety and Environment Management Systems

LFRS utilises a UKAS accredited external audit process to provide assurance of the effectiveness of safety, health and environment management systems to the internationally recognised ISO standards. 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 March 2022, the auditor from British Assessment Bureau (BAB) carried out a surveillance audit against the international standards for health and safety ISO 45001:2018 and environment ISO 14001:2015.

The audit scope for both standards was '**The Provision of Fire, Rescue and Supporting Services across Lancashire**'. This broad scope encompasses all LFRS activities with audit 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 Review, Human Resources and Property. Continued certification has been granted for ISO 45001:2018 and ISO14001:2015. LFRS received no non-conformances (minor or major) for this audit. One opportunity for improvement was identified related to duplication of information between our environmental and health and safety documentation.

The report from BAB concluded:

Based on the evidence seen throughout the audit it was noted that the organisation has implemented a robust and effective management system, this being in line with the strategic direction of the organisation and the intended results of the Management System.

System effectiveness is monitored on an on-going basis by the internal and external audit process, Management review, Monitoring objectives, KPI's and through the consultation and participation process. Mechanisms for communication are in place to enable the cascade of information to interested parties.

Commitment to continual improvement in health and safety and environmental performance was evident in the discussions held with the management team and the various staff assessed through the audit. The organisation was noted to be maintaining and improving their processes effectively and this is evidenced throughout the report.

As part of the audit, additional areas for improvement were also identified by LFRS staff and these have been taken forward through the Service's Health, Safety and Environment Advisory Group meeting.

Improvement Actions during 2021/22

LFRS ensures continuous improvement is made in both the HSMS and EMS each year. During 2021/22 the Service has continued to manage the risks from COVID-19, whilst returning to all activities that had been modified or paused during the pandemic. Below are some highlights of the improvements carried out during 2021/22:

- Managed the suite of risk assessments for LFRS activities, reviewing existing assessments to the schedule in place and producing new documents to support new activities, equipment or other identified risk areas.
- Continued to maintain and develop the safety, health and environment management system by carrying out programmed reviews of policies and Service Order documents to ensure their currency and continued suitability.
- Provided our staff with workplace guidance and information to manage the risks from COVID-19, implementing the revised requirements from Government and the Health and Safety Executive.
- Continued to provide improved PPE for attending operational incidents, including the roll out of personal issue P3 half mask respirators to protect staff from particulate hazards.
- Continued to implement National Operational Guidance into the Service.
- Undertook a detailed review of the firefighter PPE contamination interim best practice report document which was published by the University of Central Lancashire in partnership with the FBU. Due to early adoption of a pool PPE system and professional laundry for firefighting PPE, LFRS is in a good place overall to mitigate this developing risk as more becomes known following scientific studies in this area. To assist continual improvement, the review of the document has highlighted action points which are being progressed through the Service HSEAG meeting.
- Opened a new facility at Service Training Centre which provides state of the art facilities to mitigate contamination risks during breathing apparatus training, together with a new Fleet and Engineering Service Workshop, fitness suite and welfare facilities for training centre instructors.
- Planned for commencing a replacement programme for Drill Towers on fire stations which are at the end of their lifespan.
- Reviewed and monitored our waste management arrangements across several sites to increase recycling.
- Reviewed and strengthened our assurance monitoring systems for operational activity to ensure continual learning within LFRS and the operational environment to ensure firefighter safety.
- Continued to develop our approach to managing psychological risks within the workplace and improving health and wellbeing support to LFRS (See section below for additional information on this aspect).

Health and Safety Performance

Active Monitoring of our health and safety performance is integrated into day-to-day work within the Service. This includes a Service wide 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 2021/2022 there were:

- **85 accidents** (75 to LFRS staff and 10 to non LFRS staff) each event being investigated and recorded in line with Service Policy.
- **94 near misses** (80 near misses and 14 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 **14 RIDDOR** events that were reported to the Health and Safety Executive; 4 major specified injury; 10 resulting from over 7 day's absence.

Performance during 2021/2022 has been a challenging year for LFRS staff accident performance, whilst to some degree this is reflective of our return to full activities and conventional ways of working following the pandemic which resulted in a particularly low number of accidents in 20/21, we have had challenges with an increase in musculoskeletal strain/sprain injuries being reported by staff.

A summary of the total accident and ill-health statistics for 2021/22 are detailed below in Figure 1.

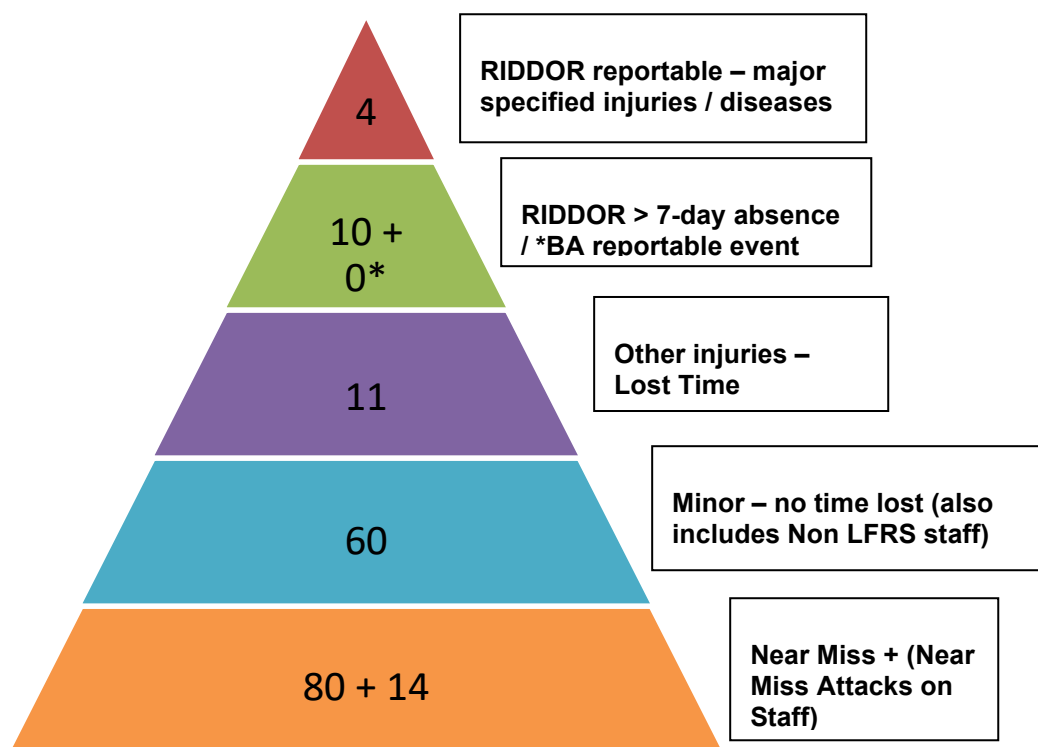


Figure 1 - Hierarchy of safety events

The figures in 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, however the figures reported in 2018/19, 2020/21 and 2021/22 have seen a small number of staff away from work for long term absences related to safety events which has impacted the overall performance.

Year	Days Lost
2015/16	331
2016/17	205
2017/18	245
2018/19	377
2019/20	264
2020/21	352
2021/22	511

Table 1 – working days lost to accidents

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

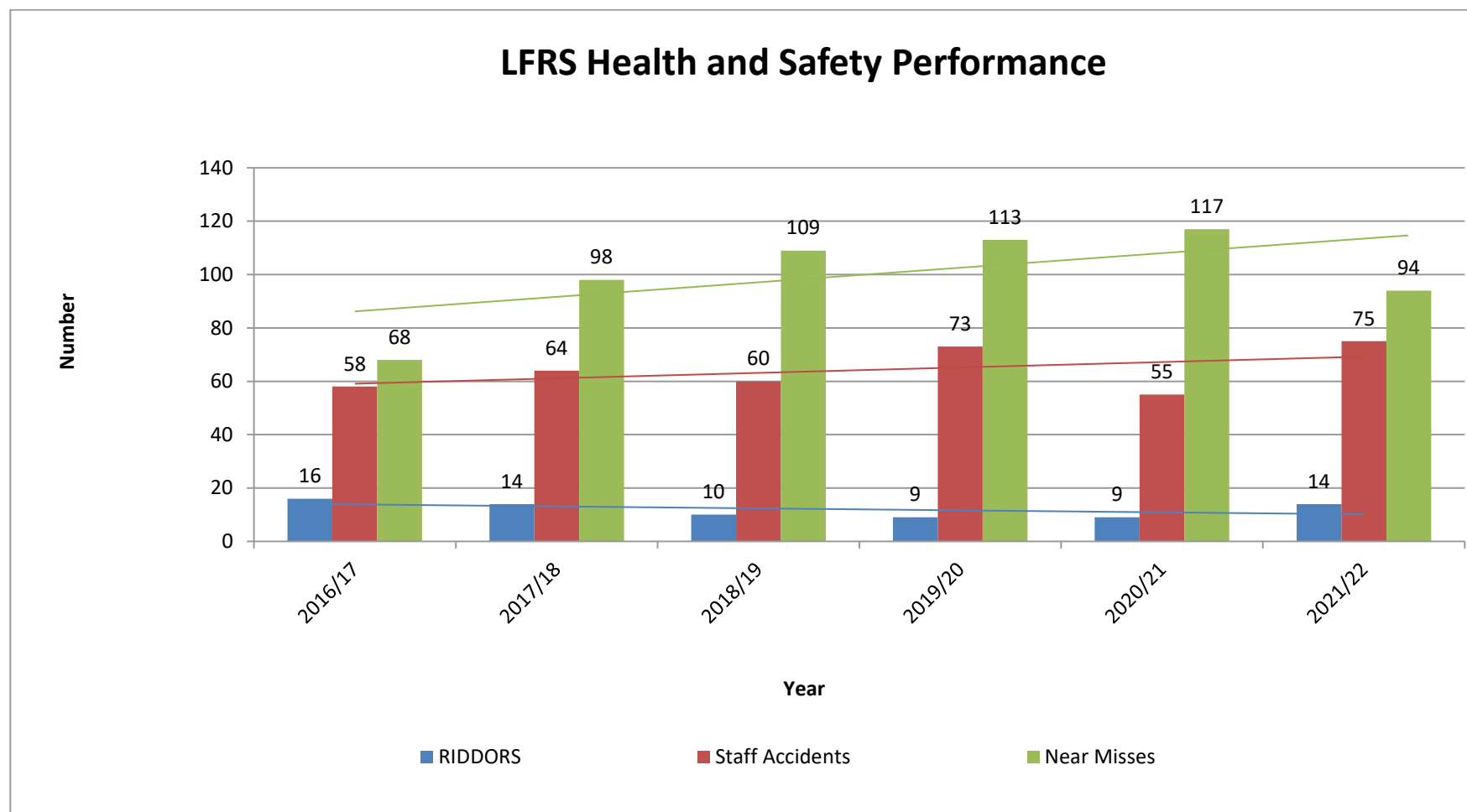


Figure 2 – LFRS Safety Performance 2016/17 to 2021/2022

Table 2 shows the types of accidents that were reported during 2021/22 comparing the last five year's performance with the numbers for each category.

TYPE OF ACCIDENT	LFRS Staff 2021/22	LFRS Staff 2020/21	LFRS Staff 2019/20	LFRS Staff 2018/19	LFRS Staff 2017/18	Non LFRS staff 2021/22	Non LFRS staff 2020/21	Non LFRS staff 2019/20	Non LFRS staff 2018/19	Non LFRS staff 2017/18
Handling lifting or carrying	24	11	18	7	15	1	-	1	2	1
Hit by moving, flying or falling object	5	4	12	4	7	-	-	2	2	4
Slip trip fall	12	5	12	11	9	1	-	2	2	1
Hit something fixed or stationary	9	3	4	10	8	2	-	5	3	6
Other	15	10	15	12	7	2	-	2	-	1
Injured by an animal	1	-	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-
Fall from Height	2	1	1	3	4	-	-	2	-	1
Exposed to fire	2	5	1	6	3	-	-	-	-	1
Exposed to harmful substance	-	11	4	4	7	-	1	-	2	-
Exposed to an explosion	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Contact with Electricity	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Hit by a moving vehicle	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contact with Moving Machinery	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Drowned or Asphyxiated	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Physically assaulted by a person	3	2	2	1	-	4	-	-	2	-
Trapped by Something Collapsing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	75	55	73	60	64	10	2	15	13	15

Table 2 – Types of accidents in 2021/22 compared to 2017/18 – 2020/21.

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. The near miss reporting category also includes events which have resulted in attacks on staff, but not resulted in injury, for example operational staff being subjected to verbal abuse or a fireworks attack.

Table 3 shows sustained number of near misses being reported each year assisting 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
2021/22	94

Table 3 - Near Miss Reporting 2016/17 to 2021/22

Vehicle Accidents

Year	Number of Vehicle Accidents
2016/17	67
2017/18	58
2018/19	74
2019/20	69
2020/21	67
2021/22	90

Table 4 shows the number of accidents involving fleet vehicles from 2016/17 to 2021/22.

Analysis of the type of accidents LFRS vehicles have been involved in during 2021/22 has shown that most accidents occur during vehicle manoeuvring at slow speeds and there is an increasing trend.

To look at ways of help reduce vehicle accidents a Road Risk Review Panel been established to examine the trends and outcomes from fleet vehicle accidents, current working practices and to further develop the Management of Occupational Road Risk framework for the Service.

Table 4 Number of Vehicle Accidents

Health and Wellbeing

Health Promotion & Wellbeing Framework

During 2021/22 the focus has been on continuing to support staff, colleagues, families and friends in response to the COVID19 pandemic. We have continued to refine the health and wellbeing support resources to develop in-house leaflets, share appropriate external support resources, promote the Employee Assistance Programme services etc. and introduce a new support resource – Wellbeing Support Dogs. For this capability six colleagues and their dogs received training to be able to assist in improving wellbeing, de-stress after demanding incidents or provide peer support and signposting.



Following the success of the introduction of the Workplace Wellbeing Toolbox Talks (WWTBT) LFRS were awarded Runner Up in the Oscar Kilo Award for Personal Resilience. To achieve this award LFRS demonstrated ways in which the personal resilience of colleagues, families, friends and partner agencies has been maintained and improved throughout the COVID pandemic and beyond to create a sustainable support resource.

The WWTBT library continues to be expanded to facilitate a range of wellbeing conversations to meet the needs of those attending the sessions to focus on identifying signs and symptoms/someone struggling, normalising mental health conversations etc.

This work has also enabled LFRS to be part of the consultation and development group for the Mind Mental Health at Work Commitment, which the Service signed up to in January 2022.



Collaboration with the Fire Fighters Charity continues to expand the range of workshops available with a focus on personal resilience and the importance of maintaining good physical health to support good mental health and wellbeing.



Implementing the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Plan, developed in September 2021, is underway and the SHE Department continues to embed the plan and bring the priorities to life in collaboration with relevant departments such as:

- *Human Resources* – Disabilities Employee Consultation Group (Disability & Neurodiversity)
- *Occupational Health Unit* - Mini 'health checks' as part of Wellness Calendar events
- *Training & Operational Review Dept. Fitness* - Started a monthly nutritional post/article to support a need identified as part of the Ageing Workforce Task & Finish Group findings.

LFRS Wellness Events Calendar 2021/22

1 st - 29 th April	On Your Feet Britain
10 th - 16 th May	Mental Health Awareness Week
14 th - 20 th June	Diabetes Awareness Week
1 st - 31 st July	National Picnic Month
5 th August	Cycle to Work Day
24 th September	Macmillan World's Biggest Coffee Morning
1 st - 31 st October	Grief Awareness
15 th - 19 th and 14 th November	Anti-bullying Awareness International Men's Day
1 st - 31 st December	Financial wellbeing
1 st - 31 st January	Winter Wellbeing
1 st - 28 th February	National Healthy Heart Month
8 th and 11 th - 15 th March	International Women's Day Social Media and Mental Health

Details of each event will be posted on the Health & Wellbeing pages of the Engine House and in the Routine Bulletin, nearer the dates stated above.

The Wellness Events calendar promotes awareness and provides support information in a number of health and wellbeing areas including providing a morale boost during the second lockdown and to celebrate National Picnic Month, picnic boxes were delivered to every Watch/Team across the Service with the support of the CFA Health and Wellbeing Member Champion.

We continue to provide a bespoke Health and Wellbeing module for new Apprentice firefighters, focusing on resilience.

In 2021/22 a new contract for the Employee Assistance Programme was established in collaboration with other blue light services in the North West. Provider Health Assured was awarded the contract for 3 years with option to extend a further 2 years if appropriate.

LFRS HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING PLAN
2021-2024

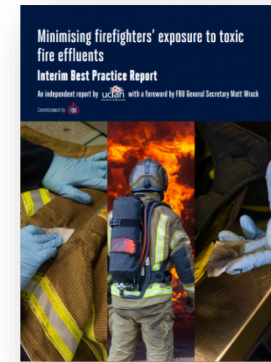


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Firefighter PPE Contamination

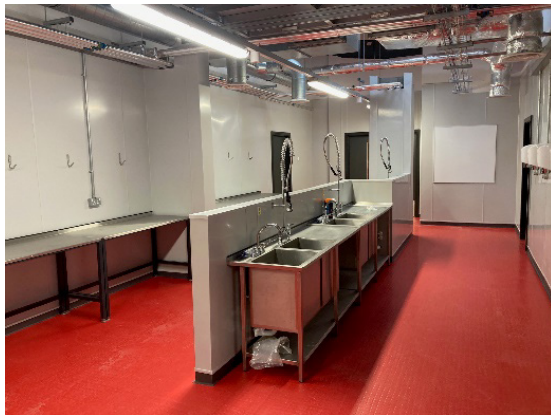
Internationally within the FRS, there is a growing view that firefighters are at a higher risk of carcinogens and other contaminants than the rest of the population. Links are being made to the issue of residual contamination on Fire Kit and other PPE following fire incidents.

A variety of studies have been undertaken, but the majority focus on the USA. Limited work on the topic has been carried out focussing on the issue in a UK context, and the Fire Brigades Union commissioned the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) to undertake UK specific research in this area. LFRS supported UCLAN by allowing access to our locations for the study. Following publication of the Minimising firefighters' exposure to toxic fire effluents – Interim Best Practice Report, during 2021 we have undertaken a full gap analysis looking at the recommendations made in the report to identify any areas which would be improved within LFRS and an action plan has been established through the Service HSEAG meeting.



Service Training Centre - New BA School & BA Workshop Facilities

LFRS has identified that a key risk area for PPE Contaminants is the BA school facilities at Service Training Centre. Whilst the need to train in realistic conditions is essential and live carbonaceous burns can't be eliminated without compromising training to staff, Training and Operational Review Department and the project team considered contaminants at the outset of the project to build the Fleet Garage Extension and design the new BA school with control measures which have been incorporated into the design.



LFRS has invested in a Draeger/Hastra cleaning solution for the new BA workshop facility. The new equipment allows automatic cleaning of BA set backplates, masks and other BA equipment. This equipment now gives LFRS the ability to undertake deep cleaning of BA sets as part of the maintenance and repair process which will help prolong the life of BA equipment but also improve safety for BA Support Service staff who are undertaking repair or servicing on BA equipment.



Environmental Performance

Fire-fighters' Charity Recycling Banks

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

In 2021/22, the banks had collected over 54 tonnes of textiles. This has raised £10,014 for the charity.



Waste Management

LFRS created 102.2 tonnes of waste in 2021/22, a decrease from 113.4 tonnes in 2020/21. General waste reduced by 16.5% and dry mixed recyclable waste by 8.3%. 26 sites within LFRS saw a decrease in general waste. Only 2 stations had a recycling rate below 20%.



Engagement with those identified last year as needing further focus was excellent with some very promising results. The SHE Department continue to work with Station Managers, Environmental Champions, and other staff to better understand the reasons behind these results to assist in improving waste management across LFRS

Carbon Emissions

LFRS updated the Carbon Management Plan, which 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 **24.9%** by March 2021.

The Carbon Management Team continues to meet and make progress against the new plan and revised carbon emission reduction target. The team continue to deliver projects accepting these are fewer and more targeted than under the previous plan. 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 2021/22 against the 2007/08 baseline and previous years performance with the carbon emissions for 2016/17 to 2020/21.

	Baseline 2007/08	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	% change on previous year	% change since baseline 2007/08
Buildings	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)		
Electricity	1600	1581	1592	1495	1478	1484	1457	-1.8%	-8.9%
Gas	1594	934	1025	901	988	1032	939	-9.0%	-41.1%
Total	3194	2515	2617	2396	2466	2516	2396	-4.8%	-25.0%

Transport	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)		
Fuel	1158	796	858	968	882	816	872	6.9%	-24.7%

Service Total	4352	3311	3475	3364	3347	3332	3268	-1.9%	-24.9%
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Shown separately in Carbon Management Plan

Water	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)		
	9.1	5.8	5.4	4.9	6.4	5.7	5.3	-7.0%	-41.8%

Table 5 Carbon Emissions Reductions 2020/21

A Look Ahead to 2022/23

Looking to 2022/23, the key safety, health and environment priorities are to:

- Reduce the number of accidents and related sickness absence, particularly focussing on musculoskeletal injuries arising from manual handling activities, and injuries which occur during local training.
- Improve 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.
- 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 risk aware 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 and promoting ways to enhance personal resilience.
- 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 any further released guidance and best practice arrangements to manage the developing risk.
- Develop the next generation of fire appliances for the Service to incorporate design features which minimise the risks from fire contaminants.
- Carry out a compliance assessment for LFRS against the ISO 45003:2021 Occupational health and safety management — Psychological health and safety at work — Guidelines for managing psychosocial risks, document to identify areas to improve in this area.

Overall Summary

The 2021/22 year has been challenging for LFRS with an overall increase in the number of accidents to LFRS staff, increasing from 55 to 75. Whilst the majority of reported events are minor, we have had an increase in the number of safety events which have resulted in staff taking time off, with 25 events resulting in lost time during 2021/22. The HSE were notified under RIDDOR regarding 14 events: 4 major specified injuries and 10 over 7-day absences following accidents.

Analysis of our safety performance through the Service HSEAG meeting has shown that musculoskeletal strain and sprain type injuries have been most prevalent for staff, resulting in improvement actions being identified with regards to manual handling and our arrangements for managing risk during local operational training events on fire stations.

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 one opportunity for improvement.

Actions 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.

Staff wellbeing continues to be developed and improved with the Service having a range of interventions and support mechanisms in place to mitigate risks to psychological health.

The good relationship with the Fire Brigades Union and UNISON continues working together to maintain a positive safety culture within LFRS and during 2021/22 we have been pleased to welcome the Fire Officers Association (FOA) and the Fire and Rescue Services Association (FRSA) to the Health and Safety Consultation Meeting who we now look forward to working with on health and safety matters.

During 2022/23, LFRS will consider its approach to Climate Change impacts and review options to develop our approach to decarbonisation of our buildings and fleet vehicles together with the current targets and objectives set within the Carbon Management Plan to ensure that they remain appropriate in the context of an increasing climate change threat.