

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Authority



Safest People, Safest Places

Performance Committee

12 September 2023

Performance Report – Quarter One 2023/24

Report of Director of Community Risk Management

Purpose of report

1. This report presents a summary of organisational performance at the end of the first quarter of the 2023/24 financial year.

Background

2. Both operational and corporate performance is monitored and managed internally via the monthly Performance Board and Service Leadership Team (SLT) forums. Members of the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) consider performance on a quarterly basis at meetings of the Performance Committee and the full CFA.
3. A comprehensive suite of performance indicators (PIs) is employed to measure both operational and corporate performance. Targets are set on an annual basis against SMART criteria and take account of longer-term trends and the potential for spikes in performance.
4. This robust approach to performance management enables action to be taken at an early stage if performance is not meeting expectations and provides assurance that resources are being directed towards the areas of greatest risk.
5. In addition to setting a target level for relevant PIs, the Service also employs a system of tolerance limit triggers that allow under or over performance to be highlighted to the Performance Board when the PI goes beyond set tolerances, which vary depending on the indicator. Each PI has a total of four tolerance limit triggers, two each for both under and over performance.
6. Performance is presented from two perspectives, by comparison against the annual target levels, and by comparison with performance at the same point last year.

Overview of performance across all indicator categories

7. An overview across both operational and corporate key PIs at the end of quarter one for 2023/24 shows 43% of the strategic PIs met or exceeded their target level, while 66% of the strategic PIs either maintained or improved when compared to performance last year.

Performance reporting by exception

8. The following sections of the report present details of specific operational and corporate indicators. An explanatory narrative is provided for each PI group along with information about how performance compares to the annual target and the previous year.

Prevention

Performance Indicator	Objective	Q1 2023/24 Actual	Q1 Target	Actual vs Target	Q1 2022/23 Actual	Actual vs Previous Year
PI 01 – Deaths Arising from Accidental Fires in Dwellings	Down	2	0	-100%	0	-100%
PI 03 – Number of Accidental Dwelling Fires	Down	57	50	-14%	54	-5.6%
PI 04 – Injuries Arising from Accidental Dwelling Fires	Down	4	5	20%	4	0%
PI 05 – Total Secondary Fires	Down	903	1043	13.4%	1324	31.7%
PI 07 – Number of Home Fire Safety Visits	Up	4929	4500	9.5%	4755	3.7%
PI 42 – Proportion of Home Fire Safety Visits to High-Risk People/Properties	Up	97.7%	80%	22.1%	86.2%	13.3%

PI01 – There were two fire deaths in quarter one at a house fire in Darlington. A presentation of the circumstances of the fire was delivered to June’s CFA.

PI03 – There have been 57 accidental dwelling fires (ADFs) this quarter compared to a target of 50 and a previous year’s performance of 54. Kitchen fires continue to be an area of focus for our targeted Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) as 45% of incidents are recorded as starting in this room. Lone occupiers and lone parent account for 51% of all incidents and the ‘Eyes Wide Open’ programme is engaging with agencies who interact with these occupier groups to try and increase referrals for HFSVs.

See Appendix A, chart 1 for number of ADFs by room of origin and chart 2 for number of ADFs by occupier type.

PI04 – There were four injuries arising from ADFs in this quarter, which is ahead of the target and in line with the previous year’s performance. All of the injuries occurred in April and resulted from only two incidents. The injuries were to three adults and one child and positively all the injuries were slight. Encouragingly, despite this spike in April, there has been no injuries in May or June.

PI05 – The positive performance seen in quarter three and four of 2022/23 has continued into quarter one of 2023/24. There have been 903 incidents which is 13.4% better than the target and improved performance by 31.7% compared to the previous year. The wet weather has undoubtedly assisted the Service and partners to reduce this incident type. Loose refuse is still the top fuel source, with 89% of all secondary fires deliberately set.

Durham and Darlington are part of the Government Anti-Social Behaviour Trailblazer and funding has been received to increase high visibility patrols in hotspot areas. The Service is using this funding for the Targeted Response Vehicle (TRV) to patrol hotspot areas for deliberate secondary fires. Tri-Service Community Safety Responders are also being recruited through this funding and they will receive training from the Police, Local Authorities and the Service so they are able to use the full range of powers and engagement of all three organisations.

See Appendix A, chart 3 for secondary fires by motive and chart 4 for secondary fires by property type.

PI07 – During quarter one 4,929 HFSVs were delivered which is above the target and above the previous year’s performance. This high number of visits is above the fire sector average and should continue to make the residents of County Durham and Darlington safer from fire.

PI42 – This indicator is currently performing at 97.7% which is well above the Community Risk Management Plan target of 80% and above the previous year’s performance. The ‘Eyes Wide Open’ programme and national risk methodology will support us to continue targeting the most vulnerable in our communities.

Protection

Performance Indicator	Objective	Q1 2023/24 Actual	Q1 Target	Actual vs Target	Q1 2022/23 Actual	Actual vs Previous Year
PI 10a – Primary Fires in Non-Domestic Premises	Down	21	24	12.5%	36	41.7%
PI 14 – False Alarms Caused by Automatic Fire Detection Equipment	Down	172	146	-17.8%	217	20.7%
PI 17 – Number of Fire Safety Audits	Up	541	507	6.7%	473	14.4%

PI10a – Quarter one sees positive performance for this indicator with 21 incidents against a target of 24. This performance is substantially better, 41.7%, than performance in the previous year. Although there were three fires in prisons this is a positive reduction from the ten incidents in the previous year. Work continues with prisons to reduce the number of incidents.

The Business Fire Safety Team conduct post fire reviews of these incidents and combined with our high levels of fire safety audits aims to continue the improvement in the performance of this indicator.

PI14 – Performance of this indicator has continued to improve during quarter one, showing a 20.7% improvement compared to the previous year’s performance, however it is still over the target by 17.8%. There has been 172 incidents this quarter. The three main premises types are education (23.8%), residential homes (14.0%) and industrial manufacturing (12.8%).

Of all the incidents 37.2% were caused by system faults and 35.5% caused by human intervention.

The new approach to mobilisations from automatic fire alarms commencing on 2 October 2023 should have a significant effect on these high numbers.

PI17 – Performance of this indicator is 6.7% above the target and an improvement of 14.4% on the previous year’s performance. This improved performance is supported by increased capacity in the central team following completion of qualifications, alongside continued high performance by the Emergency Response crews. Positively 33.5% of audits have been unsatisfactory showing that the Service is targeting the correct premises.

Response

Performance Indicator	Objective	Q1 2023/24 Actual	Q1 Target	Actual vs Target	Q1 2022/23 Actual	Actual vs Previous Year
Total Emergency Calls Received	N/A	4785	N/A	N/A	5315	10.0%
Total Incidents	N/A	2158	N/A	N/A	2654	18.7%
Total Road Traffic Collisions	N/A	76	N/A	N/A	71	-7.0%
PI 02 – Total Primary Fires	Down	274	236	-16.1%	266	-3.0%
PI 06a – Dwelling Fires Attended within 8 Minutes	Up	65.5%	70%	-6.4%	70%	-6.4%
PI 06b – Non Domestic Fires Attended within 9 Minutes	Up	64.1%	70%	-8.4%	75%	-13.2%
PI 06c – Road Traffic Collisions Attended within 10 Minutes	Up	72.2%	70%	3.1%	72%	0.3%

See Appendix A, chart 5 for total incidents.

PI02 – There has been 274 primary fires in quarter one which is 16.1% over the target of 236, although only 3% worse than the previous year’s performance. 50% of primary fires are vehicle fires with the majority being set deliberately. Peterlee station area is still the highest across the Service area for vehicle fires, although there has been a developing trend of attacking vans and minibuses in the High Handenhold station area. This type of incident is difficult to prevent, though the Community Safety and Arson Reduction Team continue to work with Police colleagues to target offenders.

52% of all primary fires are set deliberately and the Service continue to work with Firestoppers to raise awareness and try and gather intelligence on the perpetrators. As many of these incidents are linked to crime, work continues through the multi-agency Arson Suppression Group to identify ways to reduce deliberate fire incidents.

See Appendix A, chart 6 for primary fires by motive and chart 7 for primary fires by type.

PI06a – Response time performance when attending ADF's in 8 minutes on 70% of occasions is 65.5%. Divisional Managers are working with Watch Managers through the monthly performance reporting process to scrutinise and improve performance. Analysis shows that extended travel distances are the main reasons for failing response times.

PI06b – Response time performance when attending non-domestic fires in 9 minutes on 70% of occasions is 64.1%. This indicator’s performance has improved from the 2022/23 end of year figure assisted by a reduction of incidents at HM Prison Deerbolt, although is still performing under target and is below performance in the same quarter in the previous year. Scrutiny of any incident that fails

the response time is completed by the Divisional teams and reported to the Performance Board with the aim to identify opportunities to improve performance.

PI06c – Response time performance when attending road traffic collisions attended within 10 minutes on 70% of occasions is achieving its target with the standard met on 72.2% of occasions. This is improved performance compared to the same quarter in the previous year.

Workforce

Performance Indicator	Objective	Q1 2023/24 Actual	Q1 Target	Actual vs Target	Q1 2022/23 Actual	Actual vs Previous Year
PI 40 – All Staff Sickness	Down	2.51	1.75	-43.4%	2.13	-17.8%
PI 69 – Number of Accidents to Personnel	Down	1	3	66.7%	2	50%

PI40 – This indicator continues to perform over target, heavily influenced by long term sickness.

The Human Resources (HR) Team continues to work with managers to ensure correct processes are followed. This indicator is scrutinised in detail by the HR Committee.

PI69 – This indicator continues its strong performance and there has only been one accident in this quarter, which occurred in May when a firefighter sustained an ankle injury while responding to a secondary fire.

Recommendations

9. Members are requested to:
 - a. **Note** the content of the report;
 - b. **Comment** on the reported performance.

Keith Carruthers, Director Community Risk Management, Ext. 5564

Appendix A

Chart 1 - Number of Accidental Dwelling Fires by Room of Origin

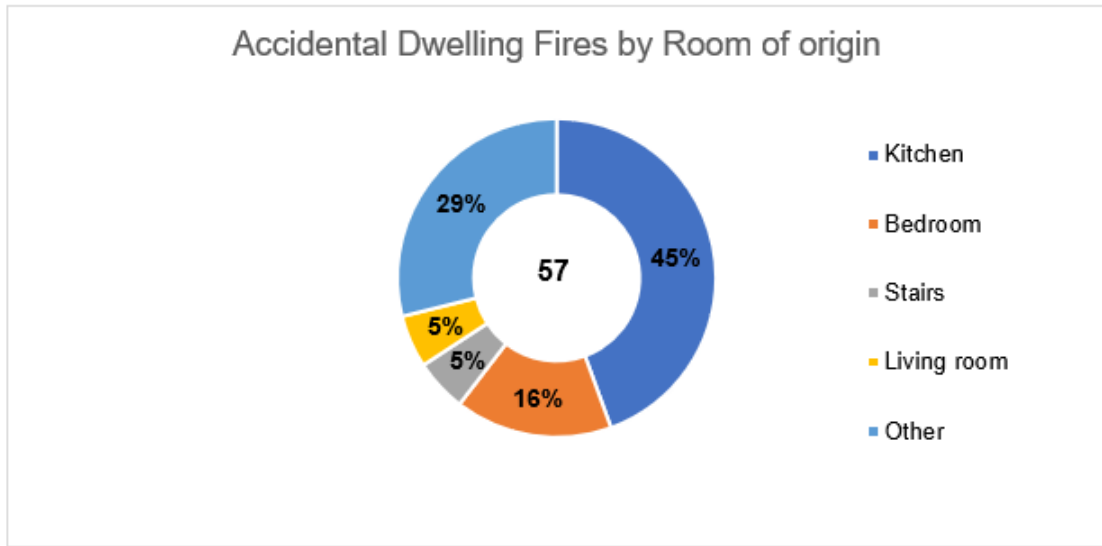


Chart 2 - Number of Accidental Dwelling Fires by Occupier Type

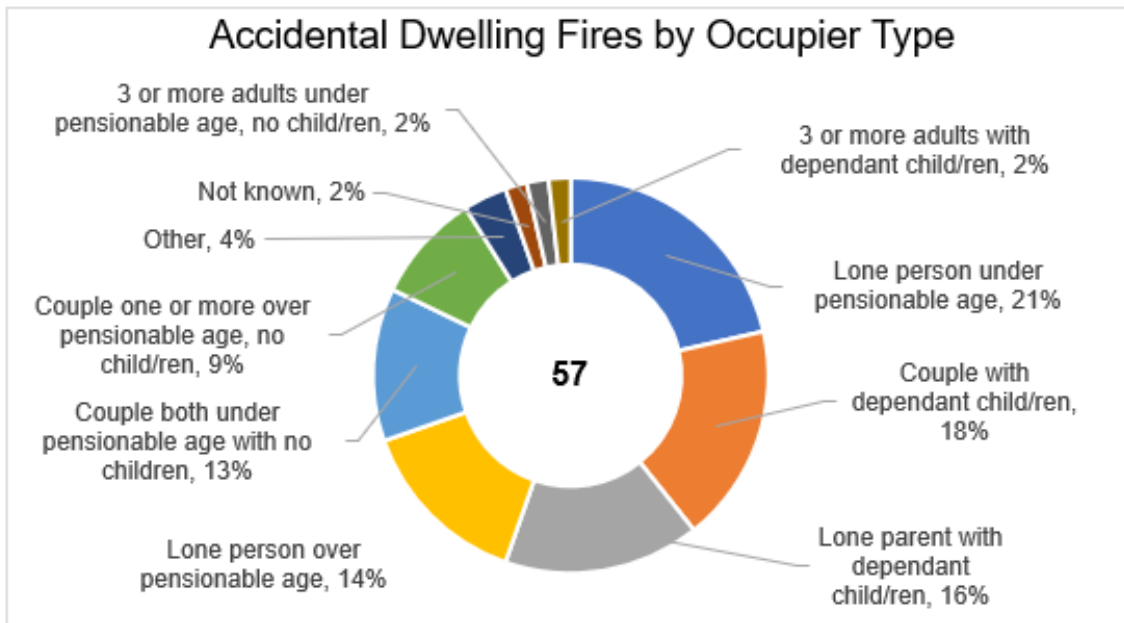


Chart 3 – Secondary Fires by Motive

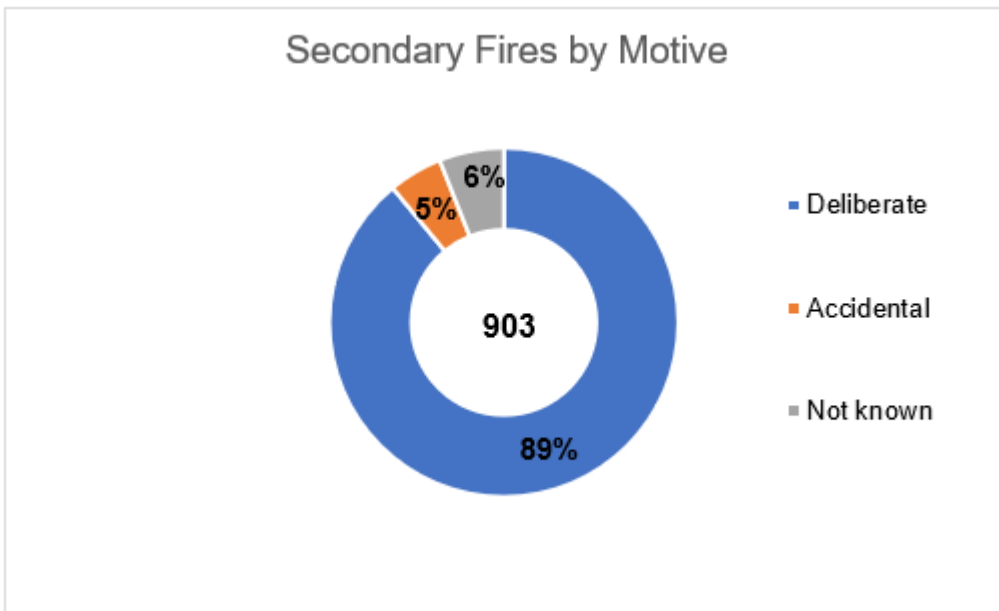


Chart 4 – Secondary Fires by Property Type

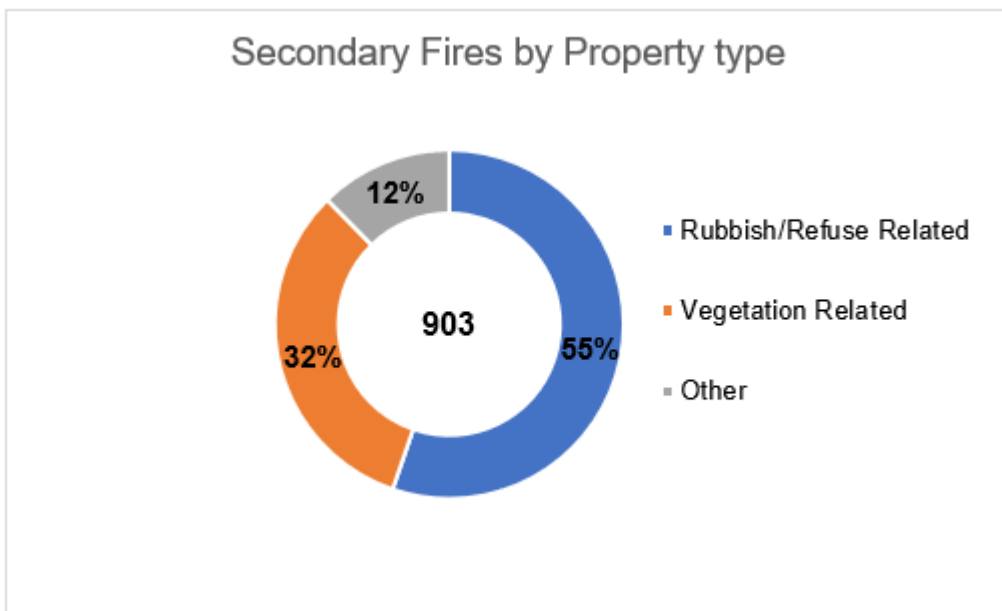


Chart 5 - Total Incidents

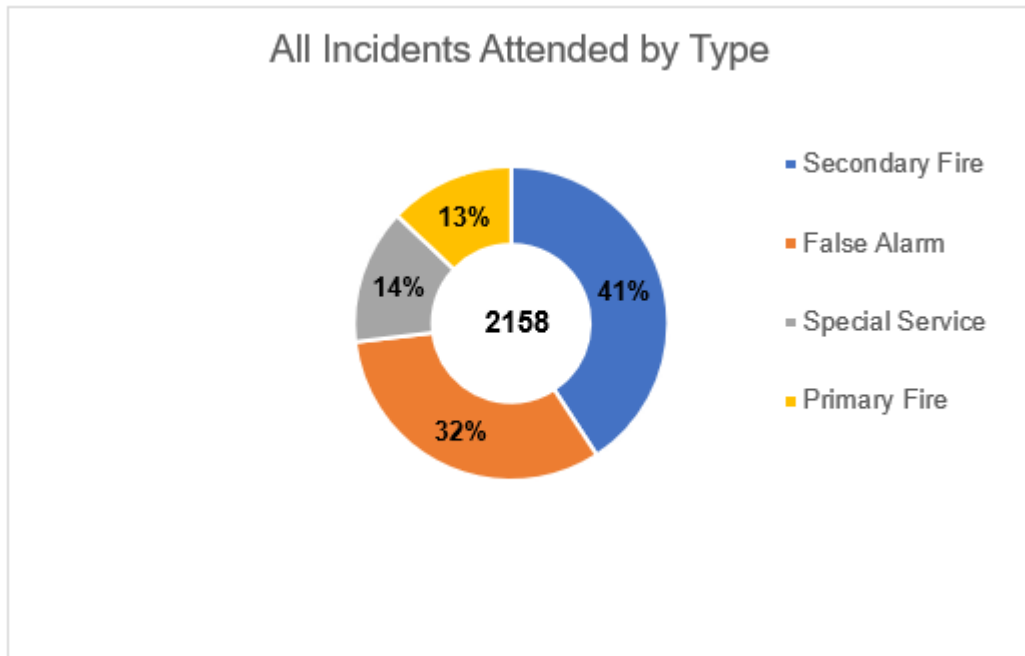


Chart 6 - Primary Fires by Motive

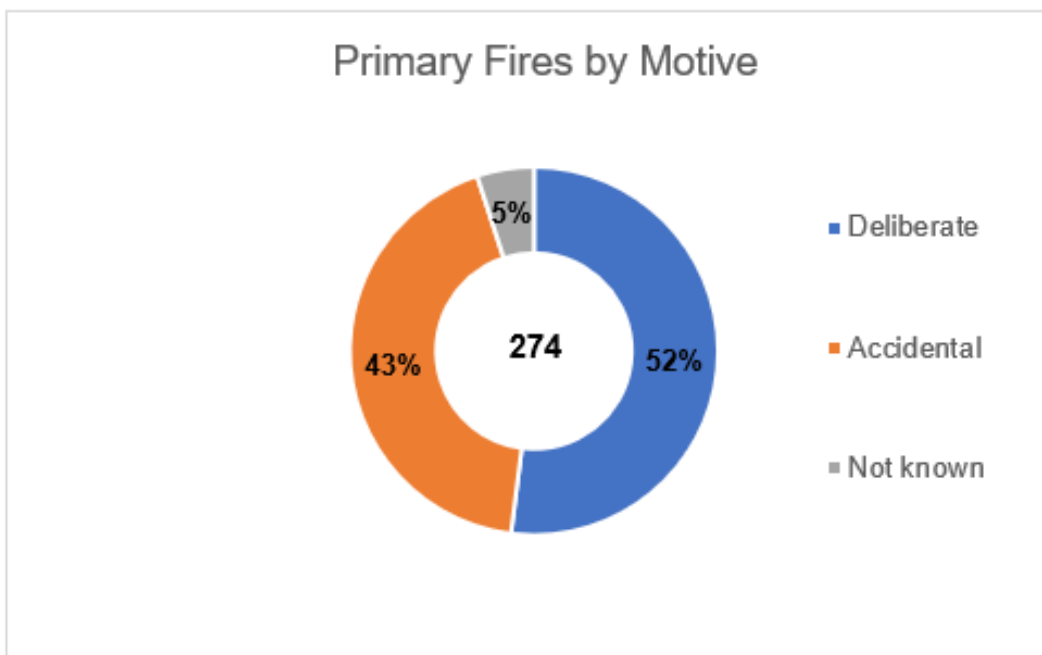


Chart 7 – Primary Fires by Type

