



Human Resources Committee

20 February 2024

Health and Safety Performance Quarter Three

1 October 2023 – 31 December 2023

Report of Health and Safety Manager

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present a summary of the Service's health and safety performance to the end of the third quarter of the 2023/24 reporting period.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Health and Safety Team are positioned and work in Emergency Response and are responsible for coordinating health and safety within County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS). The Health and Safety Team's performance is measured through four performance indicators (PI) which are outlined below:

- PI69 number of accidents to personnel
- PI71 number of vehicle accidents classified as CDDFRS driver's fault
- PI73 number of local health and safety investigations incomplete after 28 days
- PI74 number of health and safety investigation actions overdue their specified completion date.

- 2.2 A summary of performance for indicators PI69 and PI71 for quarter three for the previous five years is outlined below. PI73 and PI74 are monthly indicators introduced in 20/21 and are not designed to be comparable year by year.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
PI69 Number of Accidents to Personnel	14	6	11	8	3

PI71 Number of Vehicle Accidents (CDDFRS Fault)	16	11	11	20	16
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Table. 1 Health and safety performance for the previous 5 years

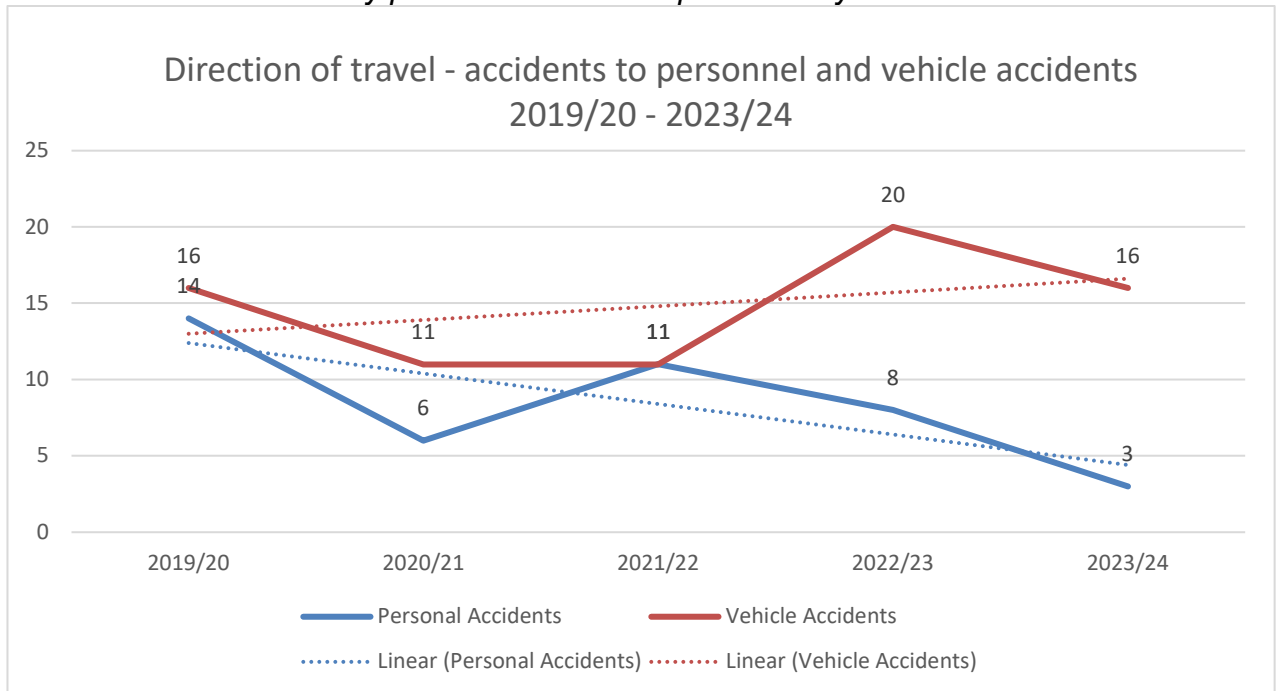


Figure. 1 Direction of travel for accidents to personnel and vehicle accidents 3rd quarter totals 2019/20 – 2023/24.

3. Current Performance

3.1. The current performance year to date (YTD) is as follows:

2023/24	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
PI69 Number of Accidents to Personnel	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	-	-	-	-
PI71 Number of Vehicle Accidents (CDDFRS Driver's Fault)	0	4	2	0	3	3	1	1	2	-	-	-	-
PI73 Number of local Health and Safety Investigations Incomplete after 28 days	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	2	-	-	-	-
PI74 Number of Health and Safety Actions	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	-	-	-	-

Overdue Their Specified Date																				
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Table. 2. Year to date performance (*note PI73 and PI74 are not cumulative indicators)

PI69 Number of accidents to personnel

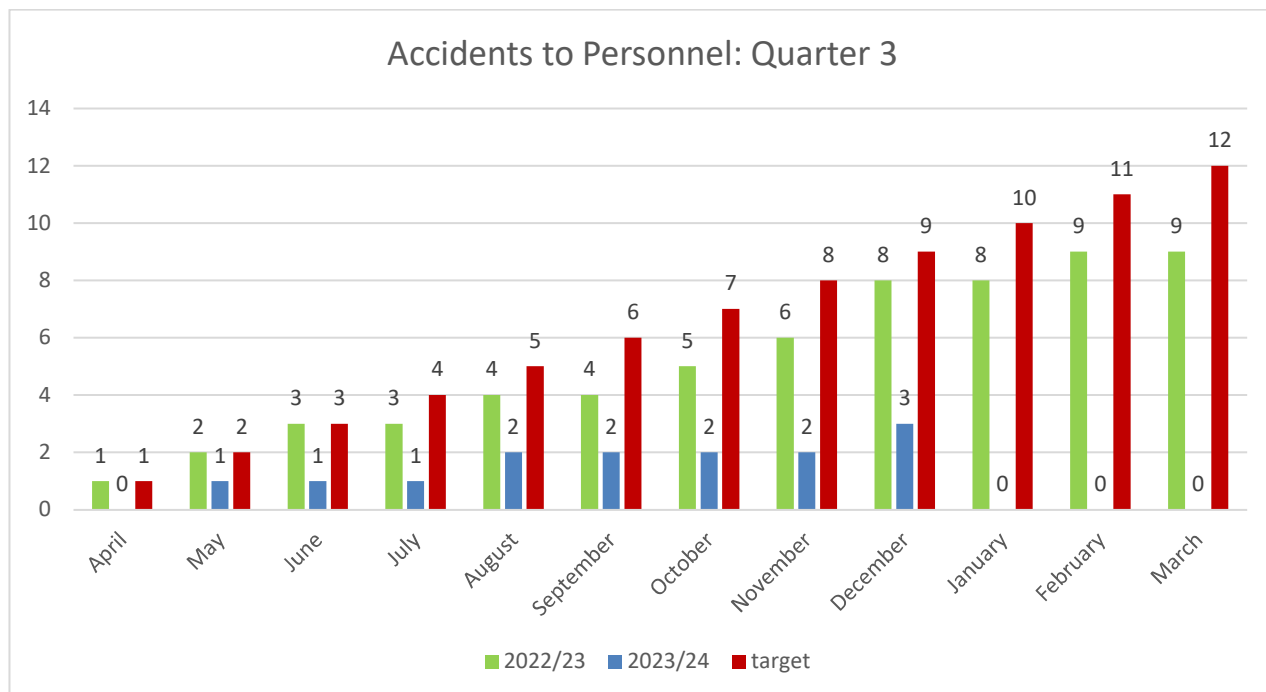


Figure. 2 Number of accidents to personnel (running total) for the current year (blue) and the target (red) previous year (green)

3.2. One accident to personnel has been reported during the quarter three reporting period. This is aligned to the set Service target for accidents to personnel and at this stage of reporting performance is below last year’s figures.

3.3. This incident was recorded as:

- a) On leaving Consett Fire Station with kit for detachment a firefighter struck their head on a magnetic lock recently fitted to the door recess, causing a minor cut – no time off work.

The door in question was immediately taken out of use until the contractor can return to relocate the magnet to a safe location (ongoing, awaiting modification to door header). Temporary measures to cover the offending item with protective foam and hazard warning tape also implemented.

PI71 Number of vehicle accidents (CDDFRS Driver Fault)

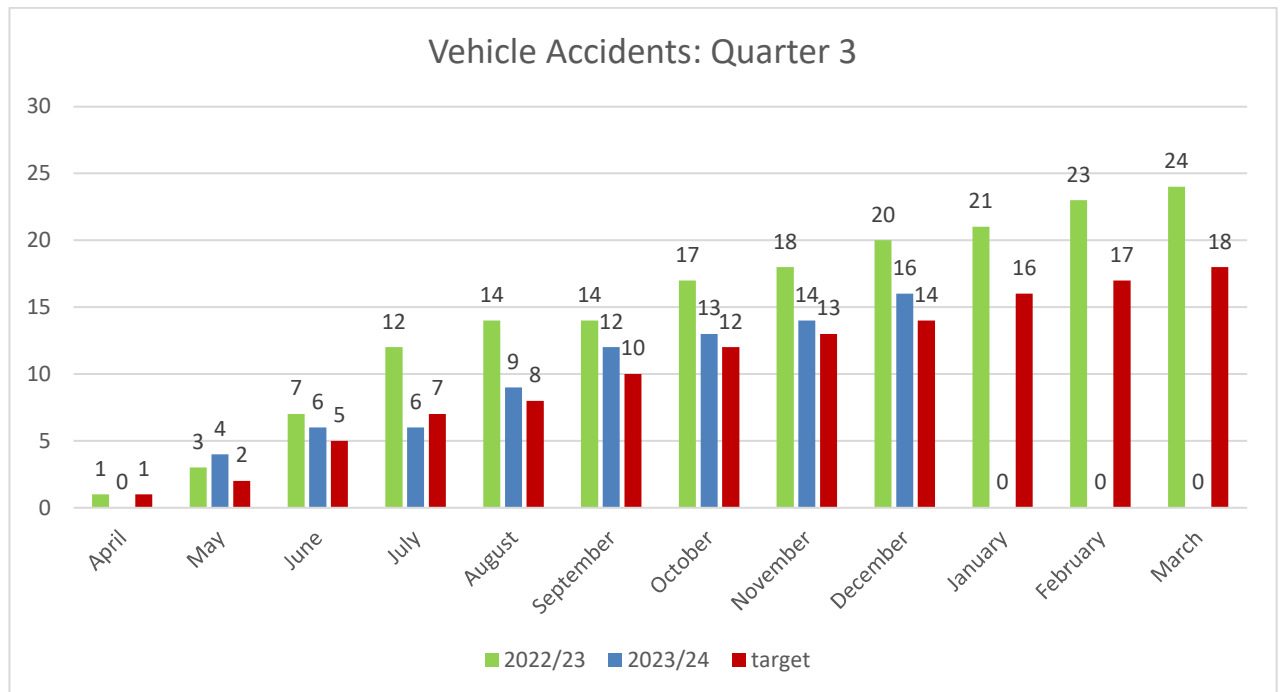


Figure. 3 Number of vehicle accidents (running total) for the current year (blue) and the target (red) previous year (green).

3.4. Four potentially at fault vehicle accidents have been reported during the quarter three reporting period. This is below the set target of five and below last year's total for quarter three. There continues to be ongoing proactive joint working between Health and Safety and Driver Training sections to review and learn from any such occurrences.

3.5. These incidents were recorded as:

- a) On returning from a school visit the wing mirror of an appliance made contact with an approaching / passing LGV whilst slowing down on a narrow road, causing minor damage to both vehicle mirrors.
- b) Having completed home fire safety visits an appliance made unknown contact with a member of the public's vehicle that was following on a roundabout. Currently being investigated to determine if any fault of the service driver or the following vehicle was too close.
- c) Whilst stationary at the scene of a reported vehicle fire in a layby off the A19 a passing HGV struck the wing mirror of an appliance, causing damage to such. On investigation due to the position of the incident vehicle the appliance had struggled to fit entirely into the layby and even though blue lights were illuminated poor light and weather conditions likely contributed to the incident.
- d) On pulling up at a fire within an industrial compound one of the two open steel gates blew closed due to high winds, causing minor damage to the plastic wing mirror cover of an appliance.

3.6. The Health and Safety Team take vehicle accidents seriously and together with the Driver Training Team and FBU Health and Safety Representative continue to assess and identify any solutions to the evidenced trend that the majority of vehicle incidents are slow speed manoeuvring. Current working streams include:

- a) Reintroduction of Driving Standard Panels.
- b) Incident management groups.
- c) Learn Pro reminders for vehicle manoeuvring.

PI73 investigations incomplete after 28 days

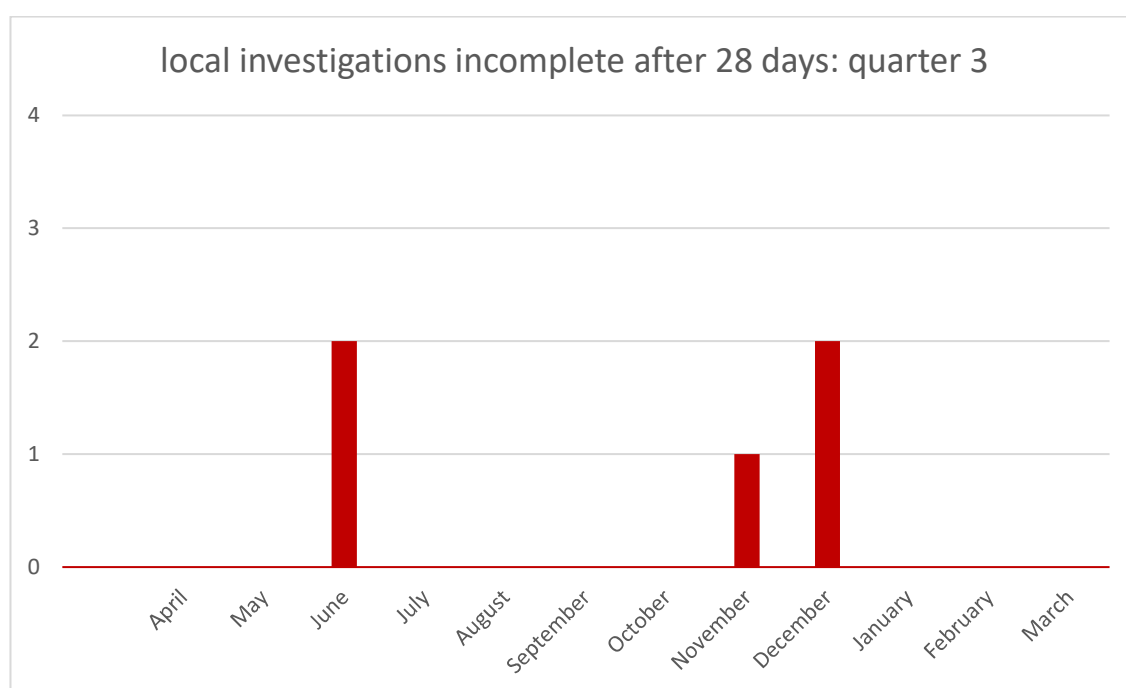


Figure. 4 Number of investigations incomplete after 28 days.

3.7. A total of 38 investigations have been carried out during this reporting year to date. 13 investigations have been conducted in this quarter.

- Q1 - 10
- Q2 - 15
- Q3 - 13

3.8. The Health and Safety Team support officers in completion of local investigations within the 28 days and continued to do so for the three investigations that failed to be completed within the target timescale for the quarter three period. Two of these related to investigations into reported Breathing Apparatus (BA) set failures, the investigation of which was delayed due to awaiting inspection reports from the manufacturers Draeger, that can take up to 72 days. The third related to an extended vehicle accident investigation, due to delays in availability of appliance CCTV and other workload of the investigator involved.

PI74 Number of health and safety actions overdue their specific date

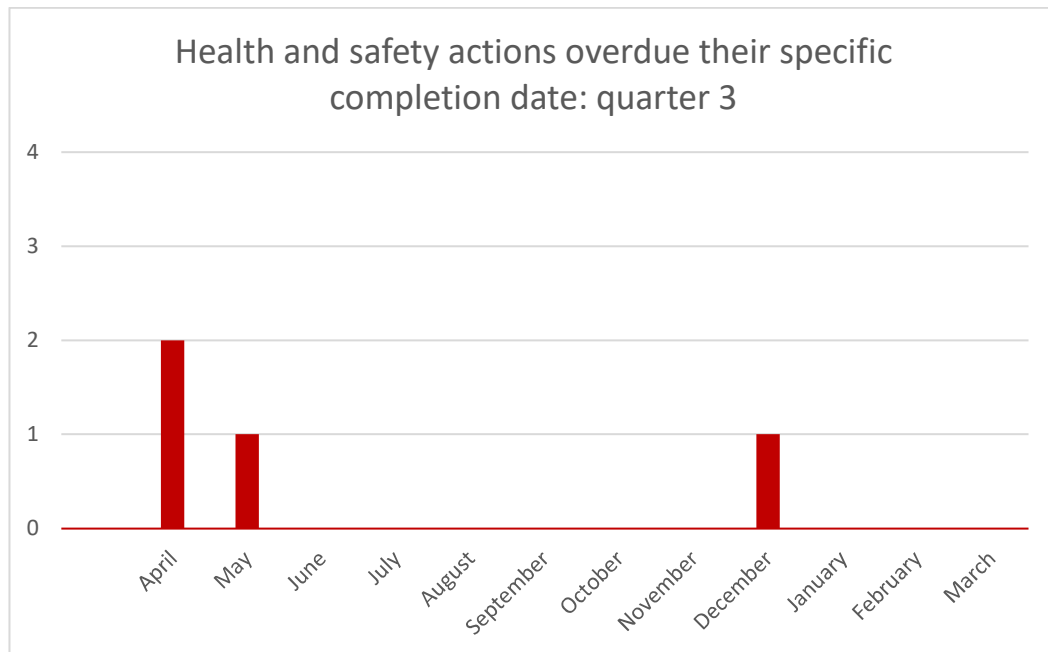


Figure. 5 Health and Safety actions overdue their specific completion date.

- 3.9. The outstanding action at the end of the quarter three reporting period is related to a cause for concern raised regarding poor lighting of the drill yard and tower at Sedgefield Fire Station, highlighted during dark night RDS evening training sessions. The Estates Section are awaiting a reply from the Council Planning Dept over the possibility of installing additional lighting without causing nuisance to neighbouring properties. Temporary measures using portable lighting are in place to improve the situation in the short term.

Near Misses

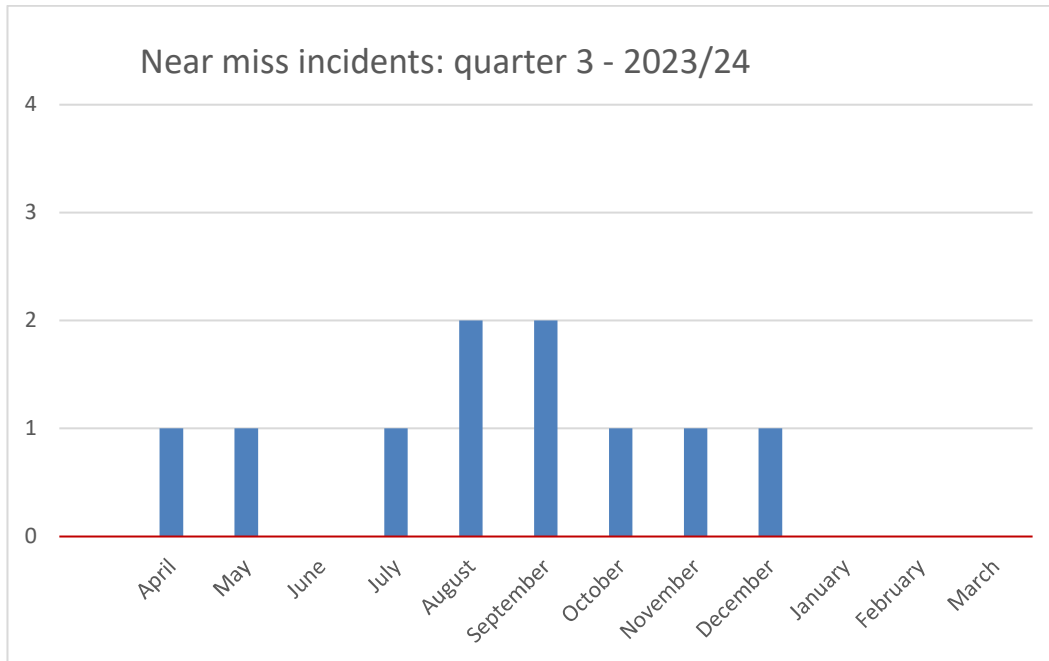


Figure. 6 Reported near misses in each month.

3.10. A total of ten near miss incidents have been reported in this period to date. We had three near miss incidents in quarter three.

- Q1 - 2
 - Q2 - 5
 - Q3 - 3
- a) Two near miss incidents related to Breathing Apparatus (BA) set failures in live training exercises. Investigations of the sets in question by the manufacturer Draeger were inconclusive and could not replicate the reported faults, but they have suggested that our set washing and drying procedures be reviewed. A site meeting with a specialist from Draeger to investigate this further is planned.
- b) On returning from an incident having felt steering vibration the driver pulled over to find that some wheel nuts on the appliance had become loose. This type of incident was previously reported and fully investigated earlier in the year; the appliance in question had not had the planned improvements carried out but was scheduled for such in the very near future. These have now been completed for all appliances.

Cause for Concern Incidents

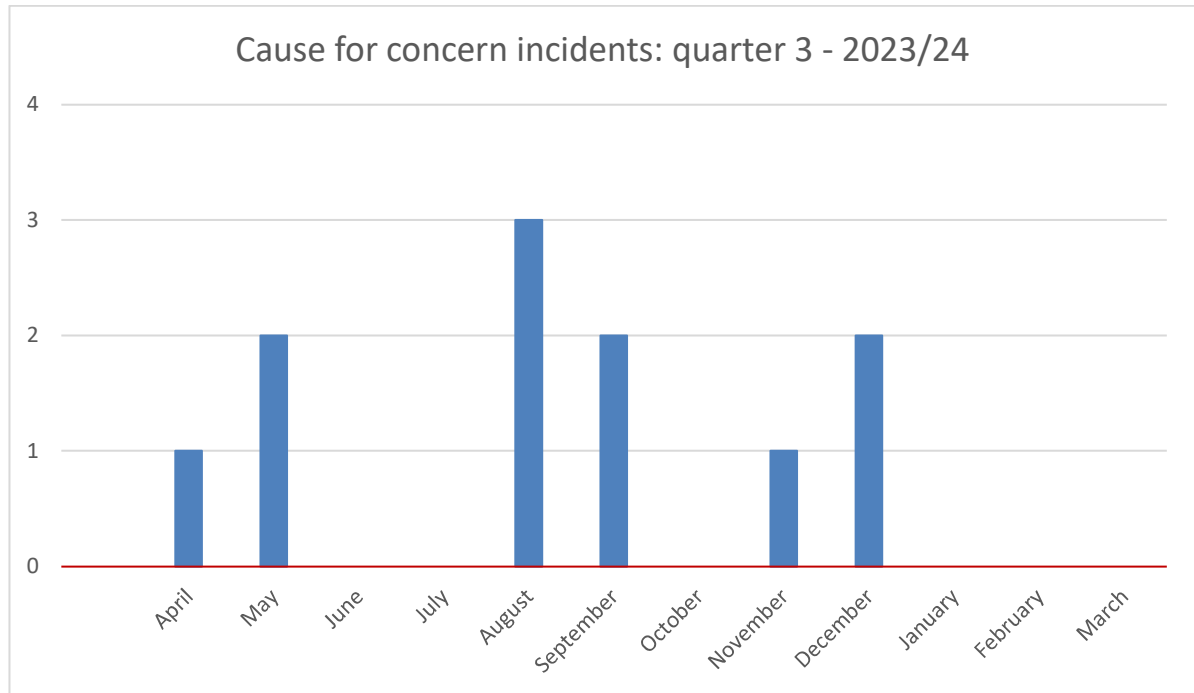


Figure. 7 Reported cause for concerns in each month

3.11 A total of eleven cause for concern incidents have been reported in this year to date. There have been three cause for concerns reported in quarter three:

- Q1 - 3
 - Q2 - 5
 - Q3 - 3
- a) Submission regarding poor lighting of the drill yard and tower at Sedgefield Fire Station, highlighted during dark night RDS evening training sessions. Temporary measures using portable lighting are in place to improve the situation in the short term, whilst Estates Section await a reply from the Council Planning Dept over the possibility of installing additional lighting without causing nuisance to neighbouring properties.
 - b) Submission by an officer in Control Room regarding a reduced number of competent operators being on shift over a particular nightshift. Ongoing actions in place to train additional staff and provide resilience in control.
 - c) Submission regarding damage sustained to a service van operated from the Training Centre, in relation to the collection and transportation of pallets used as combustible material during live fire training. Investigation ongoing to determine the cause of the damage and why not reported in a timely manner.

4. Summary

- 4.1. The culture within the Service and overall performance comparable to the sector is of a good standard and following completion of our ongoing annual proactive visits the general health and safety within CDDFRS will continue to evolve and continuously improve.
- 4.2. Performance in some areas is still not where we would like it to be, however new ways of internal team working should assist with monitoring and identifying performance and areas where support is required earlier, to prevent underperformance in areas of the team's influence.
- 4.3. The annual health and safety visits are key to employee engagement and raising health and safety awareness. The reporting process for adverse events including near misses and cause for concerns demonstrate the proactive attitude our staff have.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1. Members are asked to **note** and **comment** on the contents of this report.