



**SCOTTISH**  
**FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Working together for a safer Scotland

Service Delivery Area – North

Aberdeen City Local Fire and Rescue Plan

**Local Performance Report**  
**(April to August 2015)**

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## **Executive Summary**

The Aberdeen City Local Fire and Rescue Plan sets out the local priorities, actions and outcomes for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to deliver within Aberdeen for the period 2014-2017.

This is the local performance report for Aberdeen City and covers the first five months of the reporting year from April to August 2015 inclusively.

Our current performance has been reported via 6 high-level local performance indicators (LPI) aligned to the priorities detailed within the current Aberdeen City Local Fire and Rescue Service Plan designed to deliver a meaningful positive difference to our local communities.

These priorities have provided a clear direction for setting our local activities in order to continuously reduce fire risk within Aberdeen and concurrently maintain an effective and efficient response model.

We can report that there have been no fire related fatalities in Aberdeen during this reporting period.

We have noted a modest rise in the number of accidental dwelling fires and casualty numbers however we would wish to highlight this remains a relatively low number of incidents as a proportion of all calls for assistance we receive.

Our focus continues upon providing our free Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) service and we are becoming increasingly successful in targeting our support to those individuals who we deem to be a higher risk from having a fire in the home

Responses to, and attendance at Unwanted Fire Alarms Signals (UFAS) remain at a high level as a proportion of the incidents we attend and we have shown a slight improvement in this area.

We do however still believe that a sustainable reduction in these types of calls is a long term objective that will require continued positive engagement with our partners and the local business community.

Local firefighters continue to ensure they are effective, efficient and safe when carrying out their duties at emergency incidents. We align to national training programmes and are building enhanced knowledge capacity in key priority areas e.g. multi-agency exercise at Aberdeen Harbour.

It is encouraging to report that we continue to experience relatively low number of H&S events comparable to the wide range of emergency and non-emergency activities we undertake.

## **Section 1      Introduction**

This report provides detail on the performance of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in the Aberdeen city area. In doing so it outlines our progress in the delivery of local priorities as set out within the current Local Fire and Rescue Plan and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service framework document.

These priorities are underpinned by local risk factors as identified and defined within the Single Outcome Agreement, local community safety strategic risk assessments and the known fire risk profile within Aberdeen.

It supports the drive to deliver continuous improvement in reducing the risk from fire for the citizens of Aberdeen and aims to provide sufficient information to allow the Committee to gauge how the Service are achieving the aspirations set out within the current local Fire and Rescue Plan.

The outcomes and measures provided in this report details a blend of quantitative and qualitative information to support Committee members in their local scrutiny role.

The Service aspires to deliver very high standards to our communities and our current performance is testament to the commitment, professionalism and dedication of our staff and the positive local partnerships embedded within the Aberdeen Community Planning and Safety forums.

However, we recognise that wherever our performance falls short of expectations we will respond promptly to address the areas of concern.

The report contains a series of Local Performance Indicators (LPI) that provides an assessment of the current fire risk within Aberdeen by:

- Subdividing the various fire related incidents into meaningful categories
- Setting out our direction of travel in reducing that risk
- Contextualising the fire risk profile
- Confirming the continued proactive measures that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service are implementing.

## **Section 2      Performance Criteria**

Our focus remains on delivering long term sustainable positive outcomes by prioritising our activities to support continuous improvement.

Our current suite of performance indicators is not necessarily permanent and will be kept under continual review to reflect that risk reduction is a continual and dynamic process in a changing environment.

### **Local Performance Indicator Outcomes**

#### ***LPI 1 - Local Risk Management and Preparedness***

Our target is:

- To ensure our training, staff development and equipment continue to be fit for purpose to meet our current risk profile and is adaptable to changing circumstances
- To work locally with partner organisations and agencies to ensure effective wider consequence emergency response plans are developed for identified local risks including local business continuity plans.
- To fulfil our statutory duties in relation to the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 by way of our contribution to Grampian Local Resilience Partnership and North of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership.

#### ***LPI 2 – Reduction of Accidental Dwelling Fires***

- Our target is to deliver a long term continuous improvement in the outcomes from accidental dwelling fires

#### ***LPI 3 - Reduction in Fire Casualties and Fatalities***

- Our target is to deliver a long term continuous improvement in the outcomes of fire casualties and fatalities

#### ***LPI 4 – Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting***

- Our target is to deliver a long term continuous improvement in the outcomes from deliberate fires

#### ***LPI 5 - Reduction of Fires in Non Domestic Property***

- Our target is to deliver a long term continuous improvement in the outcomes from fires in non-domestic properties

#### ***LPI 6 - Reduction of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals***

- Our target is to deliver a long term continuous improvement in the responses to Unwanted Fire Alarm signals

We have employed a Red, Amber, and Green (RAG) performance status measure that is primarily based against the previous rolling average of five years' incident data.

This allows us to take into account seasonal and yearly fluctuations within each LPI by allowing for deviation from normal activity levels.

Detailed below is an explanation of the RAG rating:

- Red: The level is greater than 10% on average over the five year period
- Amber: The level is greater than 5% but less than 10% on average over the five year period
- Green: The level is less than 5% or better on average over the five year period

We would wish to highlight that a number of the LPI's already demonstrate a relatively low baseline in terms of number of incidents, e.g. a reduction from eight to four incidents within a limited timescale would show a 50% decrease and not necessarily provide a true reflection of the risk level.

We have therefore provided, in Section 3, further context within a situational assessment that provides further information for the committee to scrutinise the Service's current performance.

On some of the high level LPI's we have also provided further segmentation of the data to provide additional information to support Committee members in their scrutiny role.

### Section 3 Performance Outcomes

Determining how successful the Service is in reducing the fire risk profile within Aberdeen is a complex task.

There are many factors that may impact on our ability to reduce fire risk. External environmental factors such as deprivation, substance dependency and lifestyle to name but a few can influence the fire risk profile within Aberdeen.

In recent years, positive progress has been delivered in reducing the fire risk profile in Aberdeen and our task remains to continuously improve these risk levels further.

The Service takes a balanced approach by assessing incident activity to influence our risk reduction activities with a particular focus on neighbourhoods who statistically are at higher risk from fire and identifying vulnerable people within our communities.

Working locally with our partners is a key element in delivering improved outcomes.

The RAG assessment highlights the continual improvements that have been made during this reporting period and identifies areas where future work is required to be carried out.

The LPI summary table below provides Committee members with a visual overview of the current SFRS performance for Aberdeen.

| <b>Strategic Local Performance Summary</b> |   |                   |
|--|---|-------------------|
| <b>LPI</b>                                 | <b>Risk</b>                                 | <b>RAG status</b> |
| 01   | Local Risk Management and Preparedness      | Green             |
| 02   | Reduction of Accidental Dwelling Fires      | Red               |
| 03   | Reduction in Fire Casualties and Fatalities | Red               |
| 04   | Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting        | Green             |
| 05   | Reduction of Fires in Non Domestic Property | Green             |
| 06   | Reduction of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals    | Yellow            |

## LPI 1 - Local Risk Management and Preparedness

### LPI Assessment:

The performance of Operational Preparedness is measured by several means including;

- Staff competence
- Health and Safety
- Availability of Operational Intelligence
- Appliance and Equipment Serviceability
- Operational Assurance

**Staff Competence** – All operational staff follow a nationally defined 3 year development programme which aims to ensure that all firefighters are equipped with the necessary skills required to perform their duties.

Operational personnel continue to progress with the national development programme. The programme includes a significant amount of continuous realistic training including attending ‘real fire’ training at the SFRS College Portlethen. Additionally, crews participate in large scale exercises, the most recent of which was held on board a Northlink Ferry in Aberdeen Harbour.

All our Incident Commanders are required to frequently refresh command skills and are formally assessed on their performance. In addition to this, our Incident Commanders frequently become involved in multi –agency exercises. Officers were recently involved in an exercise of this nature at Aberdeen Airport.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has initiated a project that will see a number of new skills and capabilities introduced in the Aberdeen area. These include the provision of a Water Rescue Unit as well as a Rope Rescue Unit.

**Health and Safety** – During the first five months of 2015/16 there were only three reported events that resulted in an injury to a member of staff. All three events were minor in nature. Additionally, there were 13 reported ‘near misses’. We view the increased reporting of near-misses as a positive trend. This allows the Service to proactively respond to an event that didn’t cause harm and consider any additional measures to prevent it reoccurring.

For the first five months of the reporting year, there have been 3 recorded incidents noted as ‘Acts of Violence’. None of the events resulted in physical harm. The service is encouraged that this low number expresses the positive relationship it has with the communities of Aberdeen.

**Availability of Operational Information** – Locally in Aberdeen, we continue to gather and use ‘operational intelligence’ to support crews attending incidents and contribute to firefighter safety when attending emergency incidents.

A recent report by Her Majesty’s Fire Service Inspectorate highlighted areas for improvement in the process used to gather and present operational intelligence. As a result of this, an action plan has been developed that will see the recommendation met.

**Appliance and Equipment Serviceability** – The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service continues to develop a national system to track the serviceability of all equipment and appliances. Until this system is ready for use, crews maintain and test equipment in line with the required standards.

**Operational Assurance** – The Service has implemented a system of measuring operational readiness and provides assurance of the quality of service delivery. The system seeks to identify and confirm good performance with the potential of sharing across the service as well as identifying areas for improvement.

During 2015, all stations in Aberdeen City will be proactively audited using this system of Quality Assurance. Additionally, operational performance is also measured during operational incidents as well as through reflection following the conclusion of an incident.

**Status**

## LPI 02 – Reduction of Accidental Dwelling Fires

### LPI Assessment:

Over the 5 month reporting period, there has been an increase in the overall number of Accidental Dwelling Fires.

However, we would wish to highlight that the longer term trend in the numbers of Accidental Dwelling House fires continues to demonstrate a positive direction of travel.

### Situational Analysis:

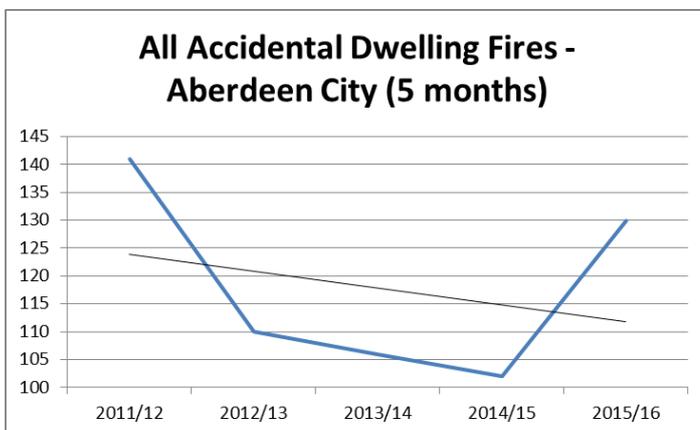
Analysis has indicated that 53% of these incidents were out on arrival and required no firefighting actions. Only 13% required firefighting action using a hose reel jet. The remainder were dealt with by other means such as removing pans from the heat and switching off the power.

We have noted the high proportion of dwelling fires that resulted in little impact in terms of severity e.g. the number of fires that which are already self-extinguished prior to the arrival of firefighters requiring no action other than reassurance for householders.

We believe this is indicative of the increasing number of households receiving Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) and the advice to call “999” when receiving early warning of a fire in the home as a result of having a working smoke alarm.

200 additional HFSV have been carried out in this reporting period when compared to the same period in 2014/15. There has also been an increase in the number of “high risk” HFSV visits being undertaken by firefighters and being referred to us by partners.

A 12 month pilot project with Castlehill Housing Association Care and Repair Service commenced on 1st July. Care and Repair staff have been trained by us and are delivering the HFSV service to their clients, the majority of which will have been assessed as “high risk”.



Status

### LPI 03 – Reduction in Fire Casualties and Fatalities

**LPI Assessment:**

We can report that there have been no fire related fatalities in this reporting period.

However, the number of overall fire casualties has increased.

**Situational Analysis:**

Our analysis suggests that this increase was influenced by and can be attributed to 3 specific incidents (2 dwelling fires and 1 retail premise fire) in which there were multiple casualties in each (4-5 casualties) and may not therefore be due to continual increasing numbers of incidents resulting in casualties.

97% of all fire casualties suffered only slight injuries, the vast majority being due to the effects of breathing smoke.

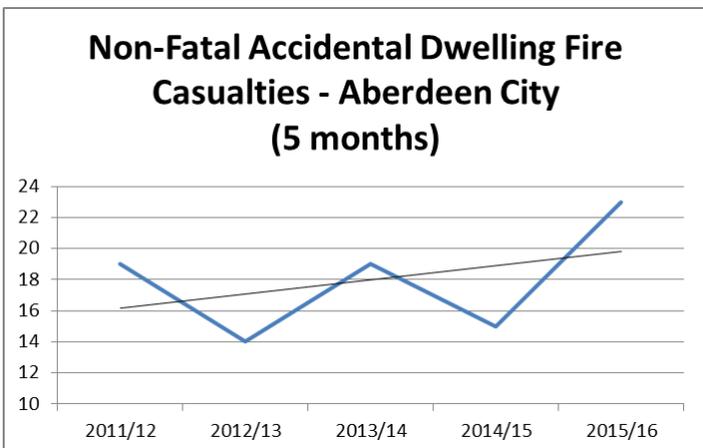
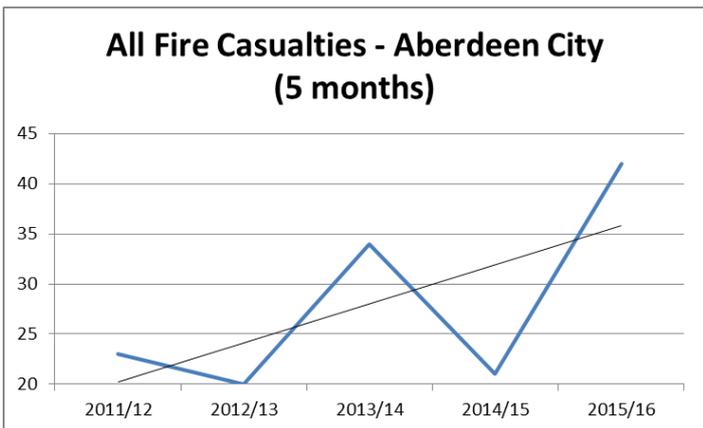
43% of the casualties received first aid at the scene and did not require hospital treatment.

The increase in fire casualties is disappointing considering the amount of proactive activities we continue to undertake.

We will be making full use of available incident data and statistical information to identify any similarities in order to identify any interventions required to assist with the reduction in all fire casualties.

The SFRS currently lead on the Home & Fire Safety Partnership Group within the Aberdeen Community Safety Partnership and this will be a key forum to further develop potential local actions.

We value the strong local partnership approach within Aberdeen and remain confident that if we need to seek any additional support from our key community safety partners to ensure this short term trend is reversed that this will forthcoming.



**Status**



## LPI 04 – Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting

### LPI Assessment:

During the first five months of the recording year, while Aberdeen City has experienced a modest increase in the number of fires started deliberately, the trend remains downwards as well as remaining significantly below the 5 year average.

From April to August (inclusive), there have been a total of 176 fires started deliberately, representing a 37% reduction over the last 5 years.

The number of deliberate secondary fires recorded this year has risen slightly from last year although is still significantly below the 5 year average.

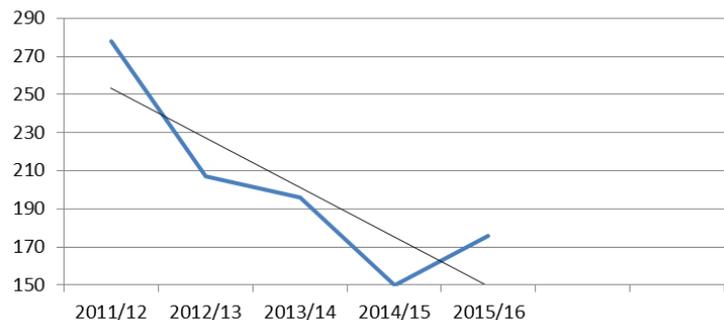
### Situational Analysis:

It is encouraging to note the reduction in the number of deliberately started dwelling house fires. This category includes bin room fires within multi-storey blocks of flats.

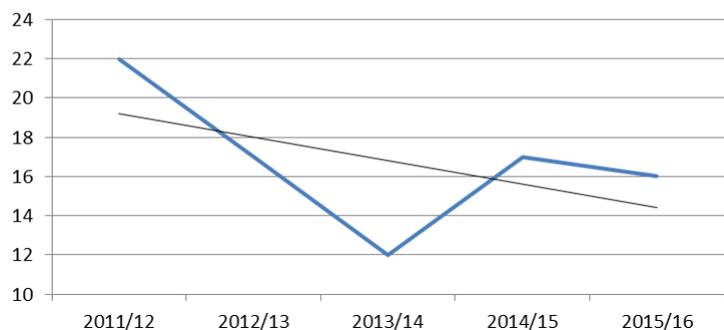
We consider that the inspections carried out by crews along with the multi-agency approach with Aberdeen City Council and Police Scotland has contributed to this reduction.

The Service regularly prioritises the reduction of deliberately started fires within our national and local Thematic Plans that support the overall reduction of fire risk in Aberdeen City.

**All Deliberate Fires - Aberdeen City (5 months)**



**All Deliberate Dwelling Fires - Aberdeen City (5 months)**



## LPI 04 – Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting

### Situational Analysis:

We are able to report another reduction, and continued downward trend in the number of deliberately started vehicle fires.

The vast majority of incidents of this nature are as a result of vehicles that have been stolen and then deliberately set alight.

We consider the reduction of this type of incident is again down to the partnership approach with Police Scotland.

Looking forward, it is hoped the delivery and implementation of a locally produced learning DVD called 'IMPACT' will help further reduce vehicle crime and Anti-Social Behaviour.

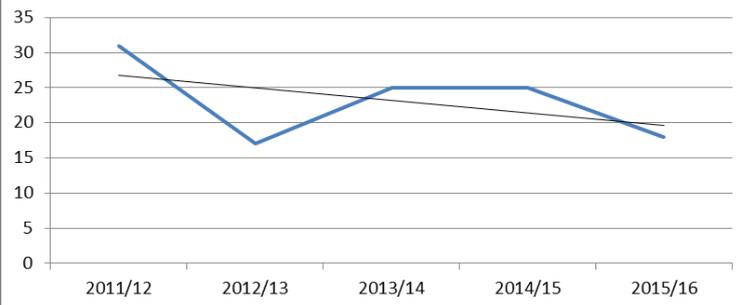
To date this year, Aberdeen City has seen a modest rise in the number of deliberately set secondary fires such as refuse bins, skips etc.

In particular, we have noted an increase in the Dyce, Bucksburn and Danestone area as well as the Ferryhill/ Torry area, and Midstocket/ Rosemount area.

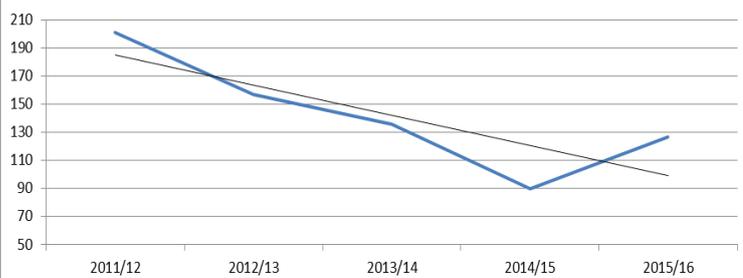
It should be noted that the actions of one or two individuals can often disproportionately affect the outcomes. Evidence suggests that following the intervention of the Community Safety Hub and Police Scotland incidents in some of these areas have reduced.

We continue to maintain our engagement with partners, notably with the Community Safety Hub, Park Rangers and Police Scotland colleagues, to limit the number of fires within areas of Aberdeen known to have a higher number of secondary fires.

**All Deliberate Vehicle Fires - Aberdeen City (5 months)**



**All Deliberate Secondary Fires - Aberdeen City (5 months)**



Status

## LPI 05 – Reduction of Fires in Non Domestic Property

### LPI Assessment:

From April and August 2015, Aberdeen City has seen a small increase in the number of Non-Domestic Fires.

In addition to this, the number of deliberately set fires in 'other buildings' has reduced to the lowest level in the past 5 years.

The Service also pro-actively sets a risk based annual programme of Fire Safety (FS) audit visits and we are currently on target for the number of audits carried out by our Enforcement Officers.

### Situational Analysis:

The 'Non-Domestic' category of fire includes all occupied buildings not classed as a dwelling house. In particular, it includes 'void' (unoccupied) properties, as well as businesses duty-bound to adhere to specific fire safety measures required by legislation.

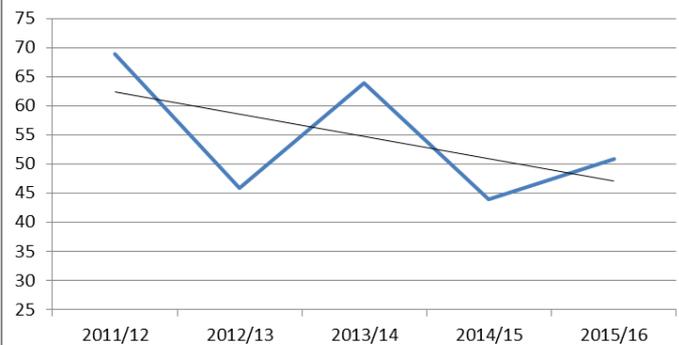
Whilst there is a small increase, the trend continues in a downward direction and is also below the 5 year average. The vast majority of non-domestic fires can be described as very minor in nature, frequently never spreading beyond the item that was first ignited by fire.

One particular type of fire within this category was identified as involving laundry machinery. As a result, the service delivered a 'week of action' reminding businesses of the potential risks associated with this type of process.

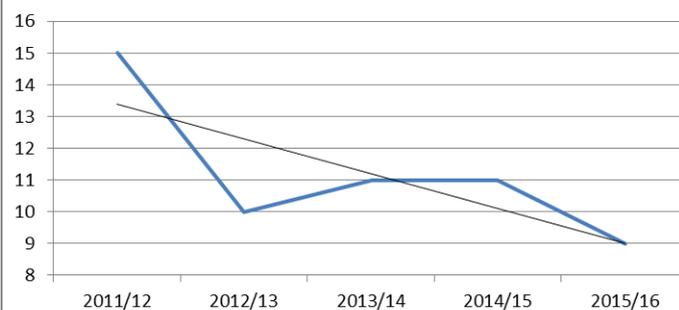
In addition, we continue to engage with local businesses by offering goodwill re-assurance visits to neighbouring buildings adjoining or nearby to the building affected by the fire

'Other buildings' can be described as a subset of non-domestic buildings and include 'void' properties. This type of fire is at the lowest in the past 5 years. We consider this is due to responsible building owners taking precautions to prevent access and therefore reducing the risk of fireraising.

**Non-Domestic Fires - Aberdeen City**



**All Deliberate Other Building Fires - Aberdeen City (5 months)**



Status

## LPI 06 – Reduction of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

### LPI Assessment:

3 out of 4 of our measured false alarms have reduced in the reporting period.

However, an increase in the number of false alarm malicious calls has occurred.

UFAS calls have decreased, using our rating system, and although we have shown a slight rise in other types of Fire Alarm calls we are able to report our overall performance status as Amber.

### Situational Analysis:

We believe it is important to reaffirm to Committee Members that not all of these types of calls are necessarily unwanted.

For example, increasing ownership of domestic smoke alarms does potentially occasionally correlate in a subsequent increase in incidents being deemed as 'false alarm - good intent'.

Analysis of false alarm malicious UFAS has indicated that this increase was due to break glass call points being broken by persons located in one specific premise.

Although for statistical recording and reporting purposes these actions are required to be classed as malicious this may not accurately reflect the motive e.g. potential mental health issues, etc.

In the above example, positive discussions with the duty holder of the premises resulted in the organisation taking immediate action which prevented these types of UFAS calls re-occurring.

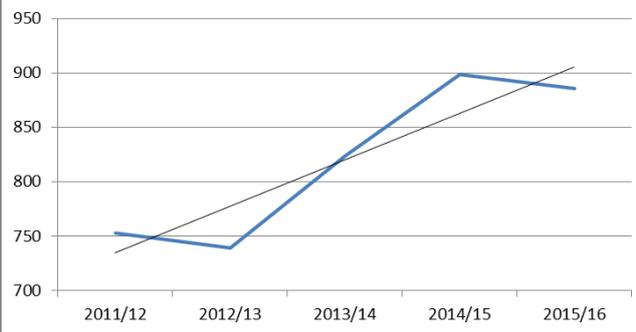
The Services Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) Policy and Procedure was implemented on 1st December 2014.

Although this policy is in its infancy it is currently assessed that it is contributing to a welcomed overall reduction in UFAS during the 5 month reporting period.

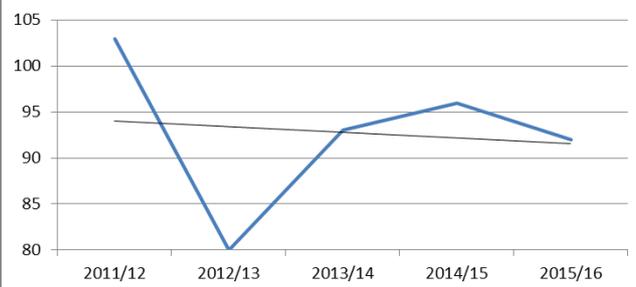
As we have reported previously, we anticipate there may be fluctuations in this activity as the new approach 'beds in' before expecting to record a longer term reduction.

The UFAS policy does not apply to single private dwelling houses.

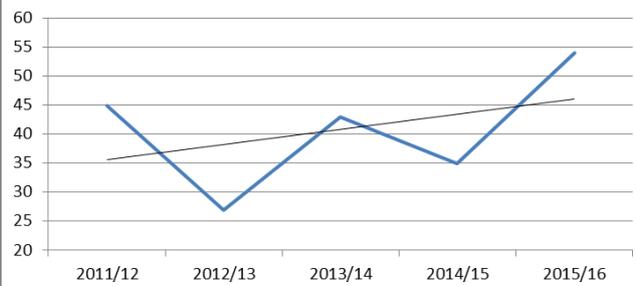
**All False Alarms - Aberdeen City**



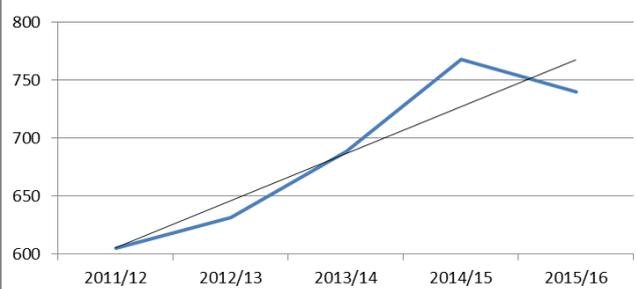
**False Alarm Good Intent - Aberdeen City**



**False Alarm Malicious - Aberdeen City**



**False Alarm Equipment Failure - Aberdeen City**



**Status**

## Glossary of Terms

| Risk                      | Definition  |
|---------------------------|---|
| Accidental Dwelling Fires | <p><b>Accidental:</b> includes fires where the cause was not known or unspecified.</p> <p><b>Dwellings:</b> buildings occupied by households, excluding hotels, hostels and residential institutions. Mobile homes are specifically included in the dwelling count.</p>   |
| Deliberate Dwelling Fires | Includes fires where deliberate ignition is merely suspected, and recorded by the SFRS as "doubtful".   |
| Fatalities Dwelling Fires | <p>Fire fatalities include any fatal casualty which is the direct or indirect result of injuries caused by a fire incident. Even if the fatal casualty dies subsequently, any fatality whose cause is attributed to a fire is included.</p> <p>There are also occasional cases where it transpires subsequently that fire was not the cause of death. For all of these reasons, fatalities data may therefore be subject to revision.</p> |
| Fire Casualties           | <p>Within a dwelling house people requiring medical treatment beyond first aid given at the scene of the fire, and those sent to hospital or advised to see a doctor for a check-up or observation (whether or not they actually do).</p> <p>People sent to hospital or advised to see a doctor as a precaution, having no obvious injury, is recorded as "precautionary check-ups".</p>  |
| Other Building Fires      | Non Domestic property including unoccupied, commercial and retail premises.   |
| Vehicle Fires             | Uncontrolled burning involving a motor vehicle.   |

## Glossary of Terms

| Risk                              | Definition   |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Secondary Fires                   | Outdoor fires including grassland and refuse fires unless they involve casualties or rescues, property loss or if five or more appliances attend. They include fires in derelict buildings but not chimney fires.  |
| Home Fire Safety Visits           | The SFRS must have entered the householder premises to make a full home fire safety visit where during this visit or a follow up visit to the premises a smoke or heat alarm was installed or home fire safety advice was provided.  |
| Automatic Fire Alarms             | A fire call was initiated by fire alarm, this includes any accidental alert.   |
| Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS) | <p>A UFAS incident may be defined as “an event which has required an operational attendance by the fire and rescue service due to the unwanted actuation of a fire alarm system”.</p> <p>A UFAS incident will not have arisen from the occurrence of a genuine fire and as a result they can generally be divided into four categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UFAS, in which a system has responded to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ A fire like phenomenon or environmental influence</li> <li>➢ Accidental damage</li> <li>➢ Inappropriate human action</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Equipment false alarms</li> <li>• Malicious false alarms</li> <li>• False alarms with good intent</li> </ul> |
| Accidents and Near Misses         | <p><b>Accident:</b> An unplanned uncontrolled occurrence that resulted in personal injury or property damage.</p> <p><b>Near Miss:</b> Any accident or incident that did not result in property and or equipment damage but had the <b>potential</b> to do so.</p>   |
| Acts of Violence on Firefighters  | <p>An incident where there was an attack on SFRS personnel travelling to/from or at the incident.</p> <p>Any incident, in which an employee is abused, threatened or assaulted by a member of the public in circumstances arising out of the course of his/her employment.</p>   |