

# THE HIGHLAND AND ISLANDS FIRE BOARD

29 JANUARY 2010

## PERFORMANCE REPORT

Report by Chief Fire Officer

Agenda Item	
Report No	

### Summary

This report provides a short summary of Incidents of Note, and an update on the number of incidents attended by the Service for the year to date, under categories reported in the Single Outcome Agreements for constituent authorities.

### Incidents of Note

1. On Wednesday morning 6<sup>th</sup> January 2010 fire crews from Bixter, Lerwick and Brae were mobilised to a one vehicle RTC on the Bixter road in Shetland. The road conditions were treacherous and consisted of hard packed snow. The vehicle had left the road and ended up in a shallow river, with the water level rising. There were three occupants in the car, two were removed by fire crews and flown via Coastguard helicopter to the Gilbert Bain Hospital in Lerwick. Unfortunately one of the occupants died at the scene.
2. On the 19 December 2009 at 2225 hours the Service was called to a report of a fire in a two storey detached dwelling at 13 St Andrews Road, Tain. Two appliances from Tain and Dornoch were mobilised to the incident. On arrival, the initial incident commander was faced with a fully developed fire on the ground floor with flames and smoke issuing from the dining room and first floor windows.

The Incident Commander ascertained that all persons were accounted for and then committed crews in breathing apparatus to fight the fire. For safety purposes fire-fighters were withdrawn from the building due to the adverse conditions and internal signs of collapse. Further appliances were mobilised from Bonar Bridge and Invergordon (2). The fire was extinguished from outside the building using three main and two hose reel jets.

A joint fire investigation by the Police and Fire Service is currently being undertaken.

Following the incident, homes in the vicinity were offered a Home Fire Safety Check and 'After the Fire' leaflets were delivered.

3. At 1608 hours on 4 January 2010 a call was received by Fire Control from the police reporting a 'train derailment at Carrbridge railway station'.

Fire crews from Aviemore and Grantown with the emergency tender and a 4 wheel drive vehicle from Inverness station were mobilised to the scene together with the duty officer.

Prior to the arrival of the Fire Service, Ambulance and Police personnel had assisted in the removal of the train driver and his colleague. Both had sustained only very minor injuries which were treated on site.

On arrival, the fire service crews were confronted with a freight train consisting of, a diesel locomotive and 10 wagons carrying 16 containers. The locomotive with 5 wagons and 8 containers had derailed approximately 100 metres from the Carrbridge Station, colliding with several electrical platform lamps and an electrical supply junction box before coming to rest in a concertina effect down an embankment against trees.

It was quickly identified that no other persons were involved and that all the wagon containers were empty. A safety cordon was implemented due to the potential of electrical hazard and unstable containers in the adverse weather conditions. Three houses in close proximity were evacuated for safety purposes.

In liaison with the rail network company and the Hydro Board the scene was made safe. A stop message was returned at 1905 hours.

The incident was closed and passed to British Transport Police at 2000 hours for further investigation by the Rail Accident Investigation Bureau.

## FIRELINK Update

### Project progress

On the 4th of August 2009 the Firelink project roll-out commenced in Newtonmore. 76 stations have been completed with 34 remaining, the project is on schedule and this phase of implementation is due for completion by the end of March 2010. In addition, training has been designed and delivered to personnel in Badenoch, Inverness and Nairn, Easter Ross, Shetland, Orkney and the Western Isles and equipment installations are currently taking place throughout Sutherland and Caithness districts.

### Matters Arising

- There has been very positive feedback from operational crews with regards to the radio equipment in appliances which has been performing well
- Baltasound and Invergordon initially experienced coverage problems due to faults not detected by the Airwave Network Management centre; but these have now been resolved and both stations are working well with full network coverage
- There have been issues concerning the Mobile Data Terminals (MDT) and mobilising bearers (bearers provide the communications link between Control and the fire stations). The problems were with the Airwave software specification, and the HIFRS Firelink project manager, by working closely with Scottish Government has assisted in providing solutions to these problems.

### Summary

The project is on schedule and the initial roll-out will be completed in March 2010; however every station will be re-visited to address the MDT and Mobilising Bearer issues. As these issues were due to the Airwave specification Scottish Government will provide the necessary resources to carry out the work. The HIFRS Firelink project manager is currently in discussion with Scottish Government and will be drawing up a specific project plan for this aspect of implementation.

## Performance Report

### Incident Totals

The number of incidents which have been attended in the year to date for each council area are shown in the table below, along with end-year projections and comparisons to the previous two years.

#### **Incident Totals**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Incidents</b>	<b>Highland</b>	<b>Orkney Isles</b>	<b>Western Isles</b>	<b>Shetland Isles</b>
2009/10*	5327	4318	298	252	459
2009/10**	4273	3464	239	202	368
2008/09	5135	4161	178	264	532
2007/08	4826	3987	204	183	452

\*Projected end-year total

\*\*Incidents to date

The projected end-year total for Orkney of approx. 298 is an increase on previous years, and relates in the main to increases in the number of automated false alarm calls (currently totalling 140 after ten months compared to 69 in total in 2008/09) and secondary fires (currently 14 compared to 8 in total in 2008/09).

Investigation of the source of the increase in false alarm calls for Orkney shows that the calls in the main relate to the cumulative effects of individual alarm calls from care homes and other premises not previously known to the service. These are possibly recently-established businesses, or refurbished premises with new alarm systems, as opposed to existing premises with increasing numbers of false alarm calls. District staff are keeping the figures under review to see if any trends can be identified for these premises with no previous false alarm history.

### Dwelling fires and fire casualties

The current projected totals for the number of dwelling fire incidents this year show that the overall total is likely to be of the same order as in 2008/09.

This year to date there has been one dwelling fire fatality, in Orkney. There are 15 casualties recorded to date, 12 in Highland and 3 in the Western Isles.

The number of fatalities and casualties to date is lower than in 2008/09. The total number of fatalities and casualties last year was 7 fatalities and 25 casualties in Highland, no fatalities and 1 casualty in Orkney, 1 fatality and 4 casualties in Shetland, and 1 fatality and 6 casualties in the Western Isles.

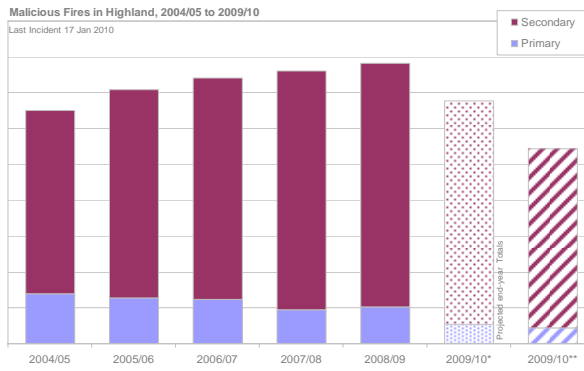
The total number of dwelling fires for the year to date, projected end-year totals, and previous-year totals are shown in the table below.

#### **Dwelling Fires**

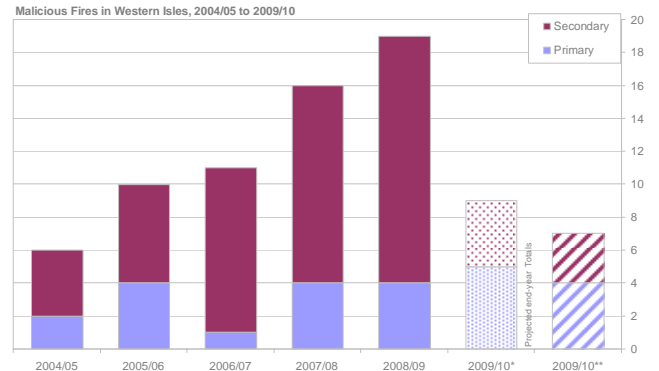
<b>Council Area</b>	<b>Dwelling Fire Incidents</b>	<b>End-Year Projection</b>	<b>2008/09 Totals</b>
Highland	102	127	125
Orkney Isles	8	10	7
Shetland Isles	7	9	11
Western Isles	20	25	30

## Malicious Fires

The number of malicious fires (mainly non-property related secondary fires) has been increasing for some years in Highland and Western Isles. Current projections show a slight decrease in the trend for Highland. The current totals and end-year projection for Western Isles shown on the rightmost chart are understated as a result of lack of classification of incidents as malicious or non-malicious.

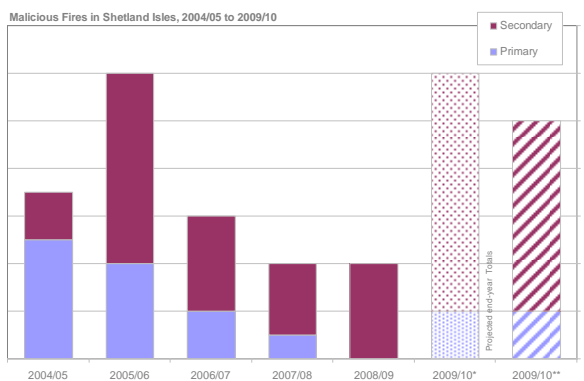


### Highland

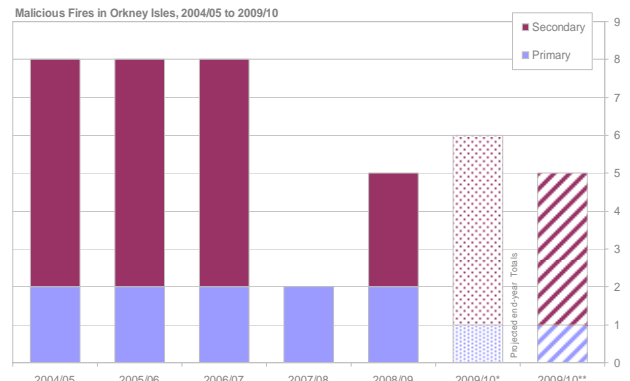


### Western Isles

The number of malicious secondary fires in Shetland has increased when compared to previous years. The figures for Orkney are in line with norms from previous years.



### Shetland



### Orkney

## Recommendation

Members are asked to note the content of this report.

**DAVID WYNNE**  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**  
**18 JANUARY 2009**