

Agenda Item	4
Report No	LA/19/25

The Highland Council

Committee: Lochaber Area Committee

Date: 11th August 2025

Report Title: Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Area Committee Performance Report

Report By: Local Senior Officer for Highland

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This document presents a progress update to the Lochaber Area Committee regarding the implementation of the priorities specified in the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Area Committee Plans for Lochaber.
- 1.2 Priority areas are delineated based on a comprehensive framework of intervention, prevention, and protection strategies. These initiatives are implemented collaboratively to mitigate risks faced by communities in Lochaber.
- 1.3 The report also contains previously agreed information and performance as requested by Area Committees.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Committee Members are invited to comment and scrutinise the attached Area Performance Report.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** – There are no implications arising from this report
- 3.2 **Legal** – There are no implications arising from this report
- 3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island)** - There are no implications arising from this report
- 3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** - There are no implications arising from this report
- 3.5 **Risk** - There are no implications arising from this report
- 3.6 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – There are no implications arising from this report
- 3.7 **Gaelic** - There are no implications arising from this report

4 Lochaber Area Committee Performance Report

- 4.1 The enclosed performance report delineates the current metrics for Quarters 3 and 4, covering the period from October 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025. It benchmarks these figures against data from the past three reporting years retrieved from the central performance management database of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), focusing on key performance indicators and timelines previously established. It's important to note that the turnaround times and statistics are subject to delays, and any unresolved data may be carried over into the next reporting quarter.
- 4.2 In advancing the objectives outlined in the Area Plan, ongoing efforts within our current Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) framework are being enhanced as we transition to a new information-sharing system. This system aims to facilitate improved inter-agency collaboration, ensuring that resources are effectively allocated to the most vulnerable segments of our communities. Post Domestic Incident Reports (PDIR) are systematically conducted at all domestic incidents, irrespective of their nature, with a focus on mitigating the risk of accidental dwelling fires subsequent to our intervention.
- 4.3 The Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) Policy is designed to address the frequent false alarm incidents that our Service encounters at specific premises. By implementing targeted engagement strategies, we aim to mitigate the volume of these calls. This initiative has led to a revision of duty-holder responsibilities upon alarm activation, and we are actively assisting the affected premises in adapting to the new response protocols. This strategic shift in our incident response approach has resulted in a significant reduction in unnecessary deployments, thereby enhancing our operational capacity. Consequently, we are now better positioned to increase our engagement in community safety initiatives, enhance staff training, and minimise operational road risks.
- 4.4 It is important to note that the baseline values for several indicators in the report are quite low, which poses challenges for conducting robust statistical analyses. These low figures also raise concerns about the appropriateness of providing in-depth data analysis, as it may risk compromising individual confidentiality.

The performance report indicates that the number of Accidental Dwelling Fires in the region has remained consistent, with five incidents recorded in the current reporting period. Importantly, there were no reported fatalities or non-fatal injuries related to fires. Additionally, during this period, there were five Non-Domestic fire-related incidents, which is slightly higher than in previous periods.

The report highlighted eight occurrences of primary or secondary fire incidents involving deliberate fires, showing an increase compared to the three-year average. Additionally, five non-domestic fire incidents were recorded, which exceeds the area's typical level for such events.

During this reporting period, 10 Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) were recorded, which is lower compared to previous reporting periods. These incidents resulted in no fatalities and no non-fatal injuries, with one person being rescued by firefighters.

Furthermore, there were 38 incidents related to Non-Fire Emergencies within this period, which is above the average and suggests an increase over the three-year span. These incidents resulted in casualties, including six non-fatal cases, eleven people rescued by firefighters, and one fatality.

- 4.5 Effective from July 1, 2023, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) has implemented the Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) incident procedure in accordance with insights garnered from our previous public consultation. During this reporting period, we recorded attendance at 32 UFAS incidents, a figure that remains below levels observed prior to 2023. In light of this trend, our personnel will persist in collaborating strategically to eliminate all incident types through focused preventative measures and targeted engagement with the relevant premises.

For more information : [Scottish Fire & Rescue Service: Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals \(UFAS\) \(firescotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/unwanted-fire-alarm-signals-ufas/)

Designation: Local Senior Officer for Highland

Date: 26/07/2025

Author: Station Commander Che Scott

Background Papers: Highland - Lochaber Area Committee Performance Report



**Highland
Lochaber Committee**

**2024-25 Q3 & Q4
Scrutiny Report**



**SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**
Working together for a safer Scotland

**Working together
for a safer Scotland**

Highland Lochaber Committee

2024-25 Q3 & Q4 Scrutiny Report

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About the statistics within this report

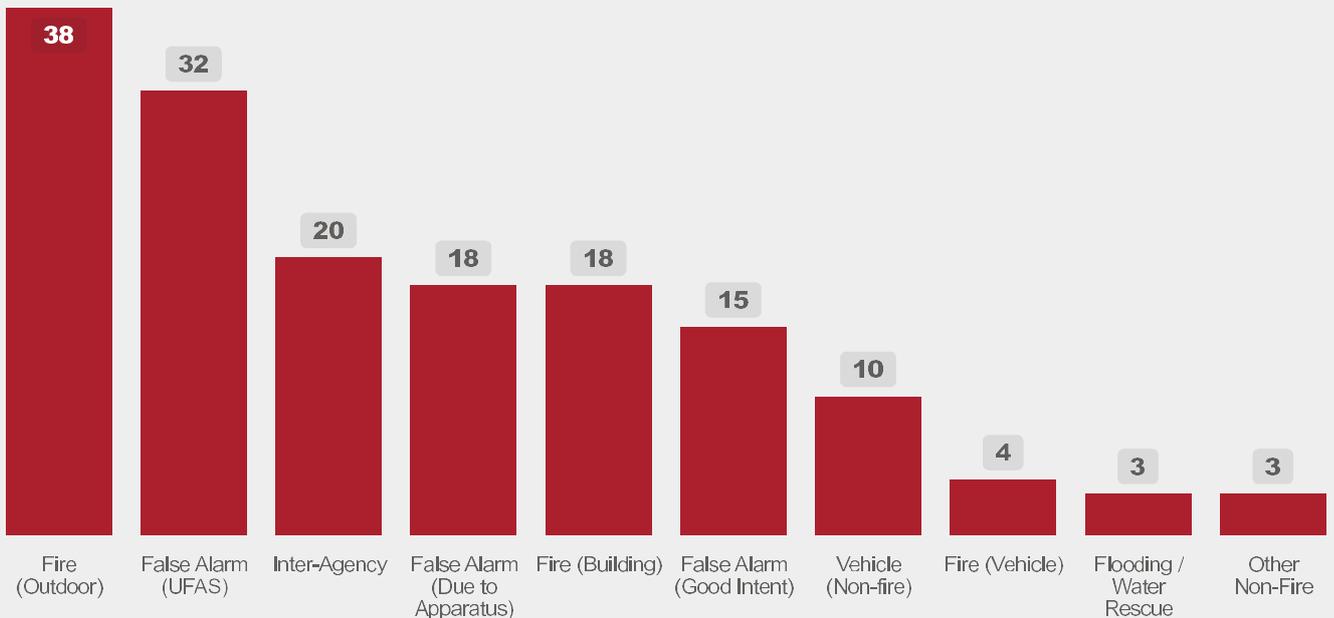
The activity totals and other statistics quoted within this report are published in the interests of transparency and openness. They are provisional in nature and subject to change as a result of ongoing quality assurance and review. Because all statistics quoted are provisional there may be a difference in the period totals quoted in our reports after local publication which result from revisions or additions to the data in our systems. The Scottish Government publishes official statistics each year which allow for comparisons to be made over longer periods of time.

1. Summary

2024-25 Q3 & Q4

 164 Total Incidents (Incl. Incompletes)	 60 Fires	 38 Non-Fire Incidents	 66 False Alarms	 32 UFAS
 11 People Rescued by Firefighters	 0 People Receiving First Aid or Hospital Treatment (Fires)	 0 Fire Fatalities	 6 People Receiving First Aid or Hospital Treatment (Non-Fire)	 1 Non-Fire Fatalities
 Home Fire Safety Visits	 Fire Safety Audits			

Top 10 Incident Types



The information above provides a summary of the six-months (1 October 2024 – 31 March 2025) activity against headlines indicators. It aims to provide – at a glance – our direction of travel during the current reporting year.

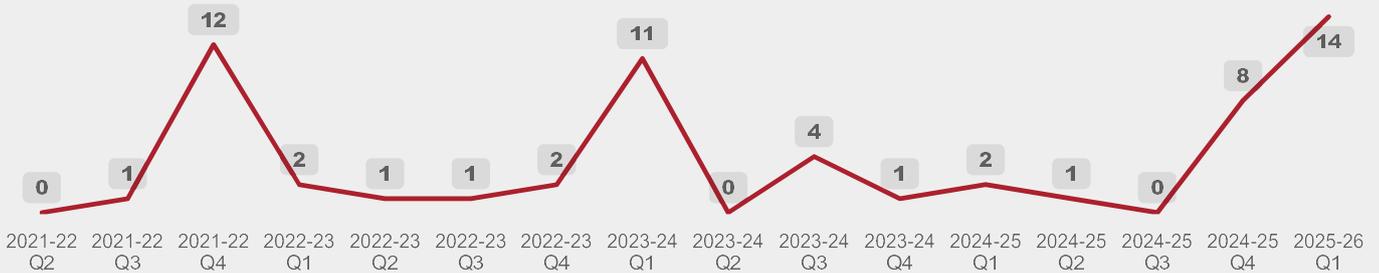
2. Trends

Previous 16 quarters (4 years)

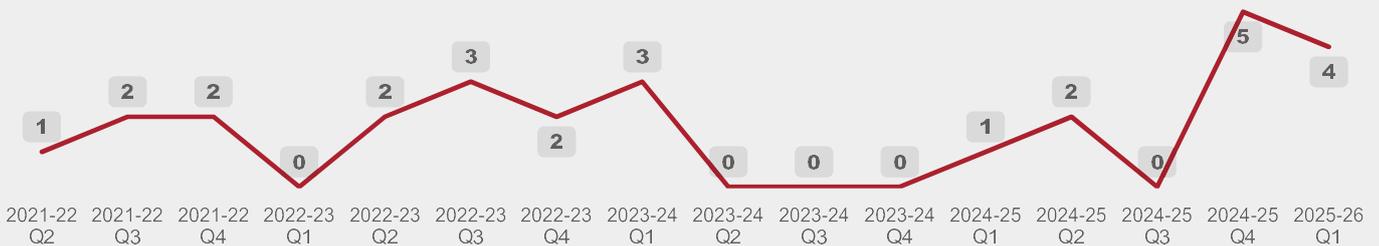
Accidental Dwelling Fires



Deliberate Fires



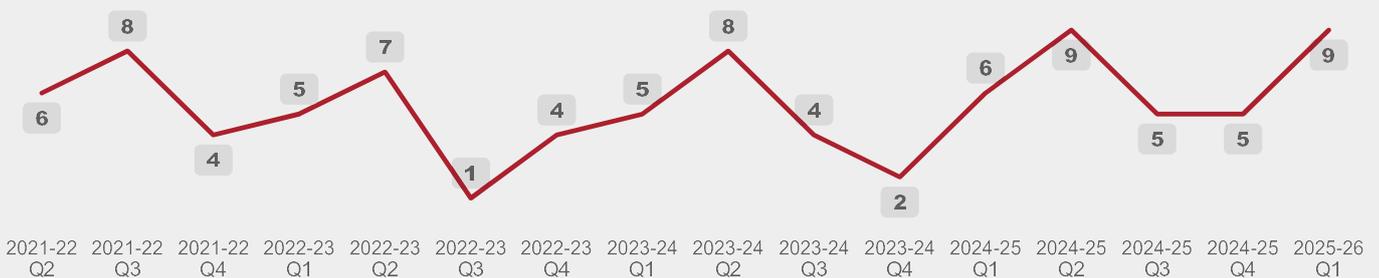
Non-Domestic Fires



Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals



Road Traffic Collisions



3. Accidental Dwelling Fires

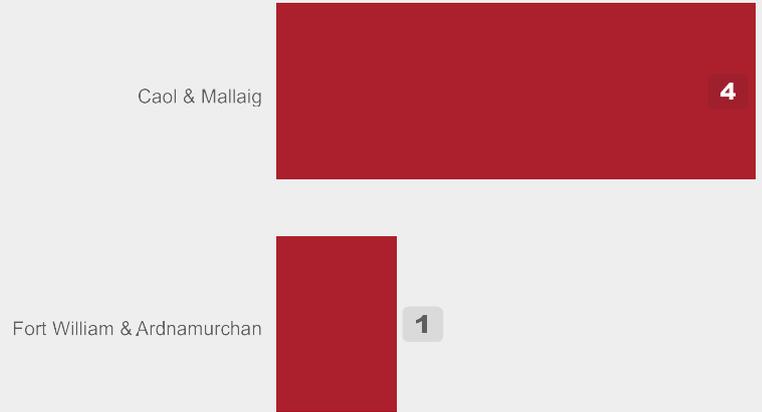
2024-25 Q3 & Q4

Trend by Quarter (4 years)

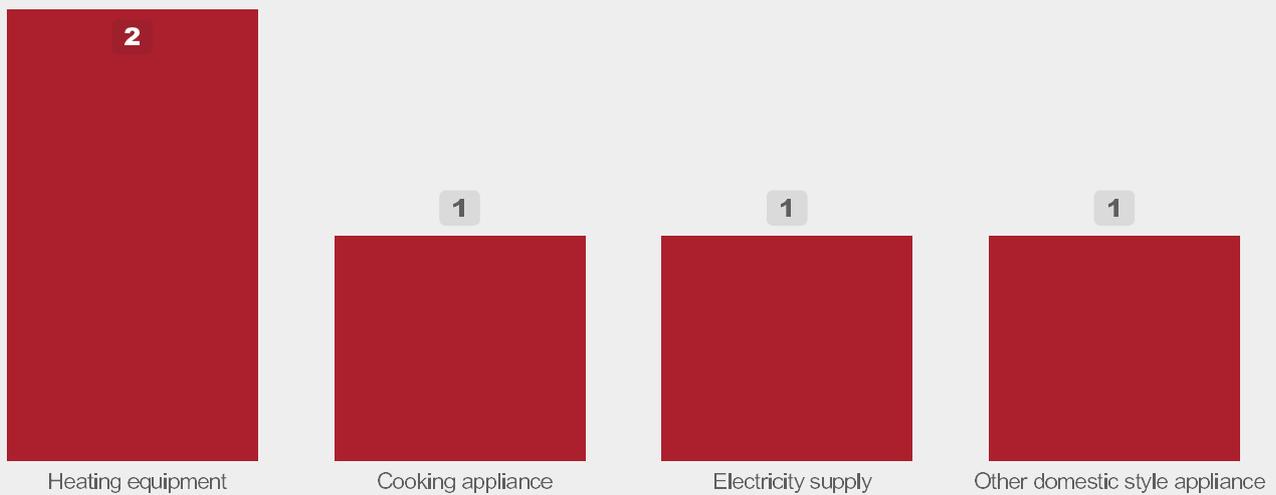


Extent of Damage	Incidents
Limited to item 1st ignited	4
Not applicable	1

Incidents by Ward



Source of Ignition (Top 10)



5

Accidental Dwelling Fires in this period

There were **5 Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADF)**, whilst the majority are classed as low severity, requiring little or no intervention from the Service and minimal fire damage.

All ADF's are followed up with a HFSV and agency referrals where required.

4. Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties

2024-25 Q3 & Q4

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Casualties by Ward

Nature of Injury/Cause of Death	Casualties
---------------------------------	------------

0
Non-Fatal
Casualties

0
Fatal
Casualties

0
People
Rescued by
Firefighters

Extent of Harm (Non-Fatal)

 **0**

First Aid Given
at Scene

 **0**

Hospital Slight
Injuries

 **0**

Hospital Serious
Injuries

There were **0 ADF Fatalities** and **0 ADF Casualty**. It should be noted that these figures do not include those who have been recommended to have a precautionary check up.

5. Non-Fire Casualties

2024-25 Q3 & Q4

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Nature of Injury/Cause of Death	Casualties
Back / Neck injury (spinal)	2
Other	2
Drowning	1
Fracture	1
Not known	1

Casualties by Ward

Fort William & Ardnamurchan

5

Caol & Mallaig

2

6

Non-Fatal
Casualties

1

Fatal
Casualties

11

People
Rescued by
Firefighters

Extent of Harm (Non-Fatal)



0

First Aid Given
at Scene



6

Hospital Slight
Injuries



0

Hospital Serious
Injuries

The 1 Non-Fire Fatality was as a result of a Flooding/Water Rescue incident, the 6 Non-Fatal were all injuries that required attendance at hospital but appeared to be slight.

6. Deliberate Fires

2024-25 Q3 & Q4

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Incidents by Ward

Fort William & Ardnamurchan

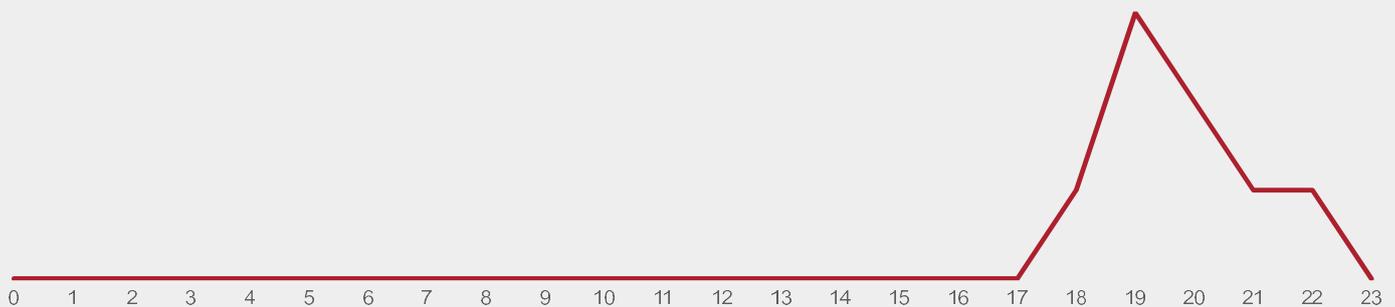


Property Type	Incident
Non Residential	3
Grassland, woodland and crops	2
Other outdoors (including land)	2
Refuse	1

8

**Deliberate Fires
in this period**

Hour of Day



There were **8 Deliberate Fires**, which is higher when compared to the previous reporting period. Referrals are made to other agencies for those at work within our communities.

7. Non-Domestic Fires

2024-25 Q3 & Q4

Trend by Quarter (4 years)

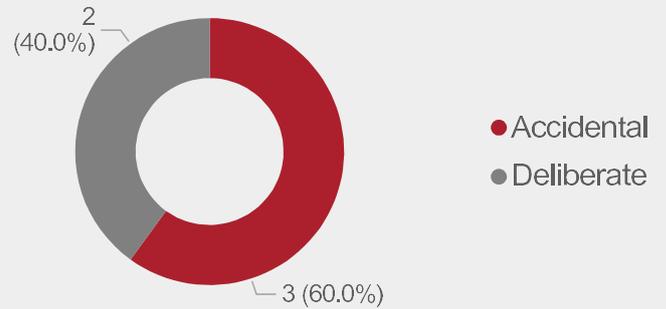


Top 15 Property Types

Property Type	Incidents
Boarding House/B&B for homeless/asylum seekers	1
Food and Drink	1
Hotel/motel	1
Offices and call centres	1
Public Utilities	1

Incidents by Ward

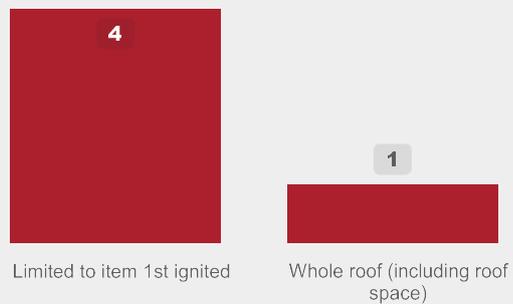
Fort William & Ardnamurchan



5

**Non-Domestic
Fires in this
period**

Extent of Damage



There were 5 Non-Domestic Building Fires which is slightly higher than in previous periods.

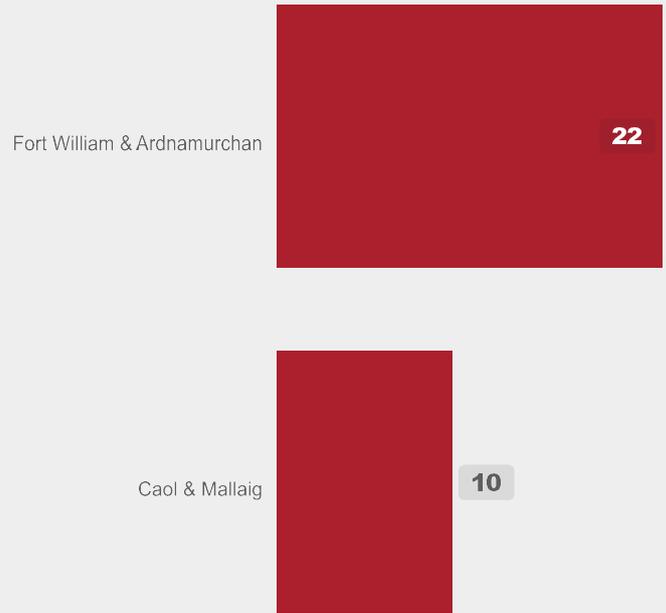
8. Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

2024-25 Q3 & Q4

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Incidents by Ward



Top 15 Property Types

Property Type	Incidents
Hotel/motel	15
Other Residential Home	5
Sheltered Housing - not self contained	3
Education	2
Residential Home	2
Retail	2
Boarding House/B&B other	1
Hospitals and medical care	1
Student Hall of Residence	1

32

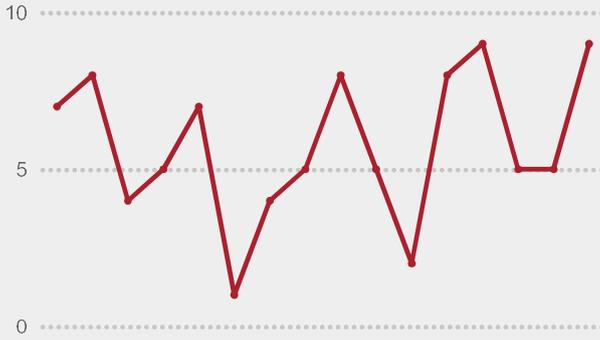
Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals in this period

We attended **32 Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS)** during this period, which is a reduction when compared to the previous reporting periods. The figure continues to remain low following the Service's change to attendance at commercial businesses and workplace premises.

9. Road Traffic Collisions

2024-25 Q3 & Q4

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



10

Road Traffic Collisions in this period

Property Type	Incidents
Car	9
Van	1

Incident Type	Incidents
Vehicle (Non-fire)	10

Incidents by Ward

Fort William & Ardnamurchan

6

Caol & Mallaig

4

0

Non-Fatal Casualties

0

Fatal Casualties

1

People Rescued by Firefighters

Extent of Harm (Non-Fatal)



0

First Aid Given at Scene



0

Hospital Slight Injuries



0

Hospital Serious Injuries

We attended **10 Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)** which is lower when compared to the previous reporting period.

Our Prevention teams continue to work with partner agencies through the Highland Road Safety group, old driver Virtual Reality Scheme and Road Safety Scheme of new drivers.

Update as of 2024-25 Q4:

Statistics for Home Fire Safety Visits are not available due to a system change. The Business Intelligence Team is actively working in collaboration with Digital and Technology Services and the Community Safety Team to ensure suitable quality for future reporting. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

11. Fire Safety Enforcement

Update as of 2024-25 Q4:

Enforcement data is currently not available due to data quality issues. The Business Intelligence Team is actively working to ensure suitable quality for future reporting. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

Unfortunately the figures for the number of Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) and Fire Safety Enforcement Audits are currently not available as referred to above.

It should be noted that with the introduction of a new, modernised Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) system that enhances how we identify, assess and support the most at risk from fire, we may see an initial decline in referrals and HFSVs whilst the new systems and referral pathways are embedded.

12. Station Availability and Establishment

2024-25 Q3 & Q4

- 9 x On-Call Retained Duty System appliances across 7 Stations

These Stations serve the Lochaber population

***Please note the availability figures do not include Joint Mobilising availability.**

Station	Oct 24 – Mar 25 Availability* %	Male	Female	Staff
Acharacle	45.09%	4	0	4
Fort William – 1 st Appliance	100%	18	2	20
Fort William – 2 nd Appliance	83.08%			
Kilchoan	8.77%	2	1	3
Kinlochleven – 1 st Appliance	83.45%	9	1	10
Kinlochleven – 2 nd Appliance	6.65%			
Lochaline	69.76%	4	2	6
Mallaig	25.32%	4	0	4
Strontian	87.12%	5	3	8

Wildfire prevention campaign launches



You may have already noticed that we issued our first [Wildfire Danger Assessment on Saturday 1 March](#).

Figures show that 80% of large outdoor fires since 2010 were recorded during March and May.

We will promote key prevention messages across our social media channels which will signpost to relevant website pages where people can learn what causes wildfires, how to prevent them and how to keep themselves safe.

Affiliate social media accounts can support the campaign by sharing safety messages on our corporate channels using the hashtag **#WildfirePrevention**.

A [Wildfire Prevention Campaign communications toolkit](#) has been shared all partner organisations.

Christmas 2024 – Fort William Station

Another great kids Christmas party was held at Fort William Station with Santa the special guest!



FireSkills Operator Course

The FireSkills operator course was held on the 30th and 31st of October 2024 at Fort William. Staff members from various divisions of the North Service Delivery Area participated in this event. The turnout was commendable, with a total of 24 candidates successfully completing the two-day training program. Following this achievement, we intend to offer additional courses at Fort William, Strontian, Mallaig, and potentially Kinlochleven.

Exercise Njord – Fort William

A successful Water Rescue Exercise was conducted at Corpach Marina. The primary objective of this exercise was to evaluate the response capabilities of various partner agencies alongside Marina staff in managing a live casualty scenario within the marina environment.



Participants included members of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service from Fort William and Oban, Police Scotland, the Scottish Ambulance Service, and personnel from Corpach Marina. The exercise proved to be a resounding success.



Scottish Canals Exercise

Scottish Canals conducted a comprehensive exercise to assess the procedures and protocols related to emergency situations that may occur at various sites throughout Scotland. This particular exercise was held at Corpach and encompassed both practical and theoretical components. The incident presented a complex scenario that required collaborative efforts from partner agencies, including the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), SFRS, Police Scotland, the SAS, as well as the Harbour Master and personnel from Scottish Canals. The event proved to be highly informative, yielding significant insights and learning opportunities for all participants involved.

Fort William International Group



The Fort William International Group meeting was held on 10 February 2025, and the organisation was comprised of individuals from Lithuania, Estonia, and Ukraine. The group seeks to achieve greater integration within the Lochaber Community in Lochaber. Thanks to Voluntary Action Lochaber for organising this and to the crew from Fort William for hosting them and letting them use the lecture room for the meeting.

Station Visit – Glencoe House

Fort William Fire Station recently welcomed a group of eager students from Glencoe House, an affiliated school of Lochaber High School that caters to individuals with complex needs. This special visit enabled the students to participate in a comprehensive fire safety learning experience, a vital component of their educational curriculum. During the session, participants learned about various fire safety measures and the importance of emergency preparedness and participated in hands-on demonstrations of firefighting equipment. The experience not only provided valuable knowledge but also aimed to build confidence and awareness in potential emergency situations. The dedicated firefighters ensured a supportive and engaging environment, allowing the students to ask questions and actively engage in discussions about fire safety practices.

HOME FIRE SAFETY VISIT (HFSV)

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has introduced a new, modernised Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) system that enhances how we identify, assess, and support those most at risk from fire. 2025 is a transitional year as we embed these new systems and referral pathways, and as a result, we may initially see a decline in referrals and HFSVs.

However, we are working hard at a local level to ensure we continue reaching the most vulnerable in our communities. We are actively encouraging new and existing partner organisations to sign up to our Data Sharing Framework (DSF), which enables secure, GDPR-compliant referrals and supports timely, person-centred interventions.

Please share this information with your networks, and if interested in establishing a referral pathway, we encourage you to contact the Highland Community Action Team to arrange a local, face-to-face discussion and begin the sign-up process. [Home fire safety visits | Scottish Fire and Rescue Service](#)

WILDFIRE STRATEGY

We are advancing our Wildfire Strategy, aimed at enhancing our capability to manage and mitigate wildfires across Scotland. We are committed to improving wildfire prevention, response, and partnership efforts, ensuring both local communities and natural landscapes are better protected.

Area Commander Michael Humphreys has taken over as the Wildfire Capability Lead and Chair of the Scottish Wildfire Forum (SWF), following the groundwork laid by DACO Bruce Farquharson. Michael Humphreys said:

"I am honoured to step into this role, especially as someone who lives and works in the Highlands. I have witnessed first-hand the devastation wildfires can cause to both nature and communities. I'm committed to building on the excellent work started by Bruce Farquharson and continuing to innovate as we implement our Wildfire Strategy. This includes educating communities and visitors to Scotland on wildfire prevention and improving our response capabilities."

Our Wildfire Strategy focuses on four key pillars: **Partnership Working, Provision of Information, Prevention, and Response.**

Partnership Working and Information Sharing: We work closely with the land management sector and other agencies to ensure a unified approach to wildfire prevention. This includes fostering a shared understanding of **Muirburn** and **prescribed burning** practices, alongside utilising the collective expertise of our partners for prevention education and intervention when needed.

The Scottish Wildfire Forum plays a key role in raising awareness and sharing knowledge. Through the **Wildfire Danger Assessments** provided by the SWF, we inform **Tactical Advisors** and the public about wildfire risks using social media and traditional outlets. More information can be found on the [Scottish Wildfire Forum website](#).

Prevention: In early 2024, we revamped our wildfire prevention materials and expanded the wildfire section on our website from a single page to seven detailed theme pages. This coincided with a **22-week prevention campaign**, which successfully drove significant traffic and interaction with our online wildfire content. Visit our updated website pages at [Wildfires | Scottish Fire and Rescue Service](#).

Response: Our Wildfire Strategy, launched in 2023, is backed by a £1.6 million investment over three years. This includes acquiring all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), trailers, specialist equipment, and four 4x4 support vans, which will be deployed as part of a comprehensive response package.

Despite global challenges impacting supply chains, we continue to progress. Four of the **Tier 2** wildfire stations are set to receive the 4x4 support vans, and **Tier 3** stations will be equipped with ATVs and additional wildfire-specific PPE.

Tiered Approach: All SFRS operational personnel are trained to at least **Tier 1** in wildfire response.

Tier 2 Stations: 24 stations (13 of which within Highland) have received additional training and specialist PPE, with four stations also set to receive the new 4x4 support vans.

Tier 3 Stations: 10 stations (2 of which within Highland) will be equipped with Ford Rangers, trailers, and ATVs.

Flexi Duty Officers: These officers have undergone Wildfire Tactical Advisor training and will support wildfire incidents across the country.

BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEMS

We can advise, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) continuously engage with the Scottish Government and Building Standards regarding a range of fire safety issues that may impact on the built environment, of which BESS is one of many priorities.

SFRS do not regulate building standards but can, and do, get involved with consultations for new and emerging premises types with regard to fire risk and fire safety. Specifically, for BESS construction, SFRS continue to engage with building standards and local planning teams on this issue to ensure any additional and exceptional risks from these premise types are identified and managed accordingly. Ultimately, it is the remit for building standards to ensure that appropriate legislation and regulation is in place, and the responsibility of Local Authority Building Control to verify construction projects against the requirements.

SFRS are working closely with the Scottish Government to ensure that the processes in place are appropriate review and comment on these types of premises during the planning stages.

Please be assured that the safety of our firefighters and communities is a priority. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will respond to all reports of fire which are received and have the ability to deploy a range of standard and specialist resources as determined by the needs of the incident. At these incidents, personnel will employ a range of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in order to effectively and safely resolve the incident, alongside working with partner agencies to mitigate the risk and impact to the public and the environment. The SOPs in use by SFRS are informed by the National Operational Guidance (NOG) produced by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and this guidance includes incidents involving rechargeable batteries.

We would advise you to contact the Local Authority Building Control Team with any questions/concerns.

BESS sites do not fall within the building warrant consultation process and we are not made aware of these in the same format as other consultations. That said, we have processes in place to respond to such proposals and make comment where necessary around any concerns or issues we foresee when responding to such incidents and for making effective preparations to deal with any incidents should the need arise.

When considering these proposals, we look at appliance access and water supplies amongst several other things and follow national guidance produced by the National Fire Chief's Council for BESS systems.

15. Glossary of Terms

Term - What it means

ADF

Accidental Dwelling Fire.

HFSV

Home Fire Safety Visit.

PDIR

Post Domestic Incident Response, a term used to indicate actions taken following attendance at a fire or other incident in the home. PDIRs include amongst things the offer of a free follow up home fire safety visit.

RTC

Road Traffic Collision.

Special Service

Calls to incidents which are not fires or false alarms such as RTCs, rescues, flooding, incidents involving hazardous materials or the provision of assistance to other agencies.

UFAS

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals. When an automatic fire detection and alarm system is activated as a result of anything other than an actual fire the activation is classed as a false alarm. If an attendance is made to such an event by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, then the event is recorded as an UFAS incident.

UFAS Policy Change

In response to COVID, on the 6th May 2020, the SFRS decided to send 1 pump to UFAS premises that did not have their own Predetermined attendance (PDA).

As of 1st July 2023, the COVID interim 1 pump response was ended and a new UFAS policy was implemented.

The new policy is to call challenge all UFAS incidents with the intention of non-attendance. Hospitals, care homes, and sleeping risk premises are all exempt and receive either 2 pumps or their premise specific PDA.



SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland



BUSINESS
INTELLIGENCE

Design, figures and charts by the Business Intelligence team.