The Highland Council

Agenda Item	**3**
Report No	**SCC/26/25**

Committee: Sutherland County Committee

Date: 13 November 2025

Report Title: Scottish Fire and Rescue Committee Performance Report for Q 1 & Q 2 1st April 2025 to 30st September 2025

Report By: Local Senior Officer for Highland

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides an update to Sutherland County Committee Members on progress against the priorities outlined in the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Committee Plan for Sutherland

Priority areas are identified through a range of Intervention, Prevention and Protection activities which are delivered through partnership to reduce the risk to the communities of Sutherland.

The report also contains previously agreed information and performance data as requested by Area Committees.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to **comment on** and **scrutinise** the attached Sutherland 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 Sutherland County Committee Report

4.1 The attached performance report provides the current figures for Quarters (Q) 1 and 2, 1st April 2025 to 30st September 2025 from the central Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) performance management database against the key indicators and timelines of previous reports.

4.2 In achieving the priorities within the Local Committee Plan for the Sutherland area in 2025 & 2026, a number of activities continue to form a significant part of our prevention and protection plan with a view to reducing accidental domestic property fires and serious injuries and deaths resulting from accidental property fires. Free Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV's) remain a key part of the prevention work undertaken by personnel across Sutherland, targeting Very High- and High-risk households to prioritise those most at risk within our communities, through our Operational on Call Staff and Community Safety Advocates (CSA).

4.3 **Operational Incidents**

Analysis of the detail behind the performance report for the Sutherland area shows very positive outcomes across the performance indicators during Q1 and Q2, April 2025 to September 2025 when compared with the previous reporting periods. However, it must be emphasised that the baseline figures for some indicators are very low, and this can make meaningful statistical analysis challenging.

a. The occurrence of three (3) Accidental Dwelling Fires attended by SFRS in Q1 and Q2. The Operational on Call Staff and Community Safety Advocates (CSA's) continue to provide Post Domestic Incident Response (PDIR) in the community to provide reassurance and advice with positive results reflected in only three accidental domestic property fires.

b. During Q1 and Q2 of 2025 / 2026 SFRS attended zero (0) Fatal Accidental Dwelling Fires in the Sutherland Area. There was zero (0) Accidental Fire Casualties across Sutherland for Q1 and Q2 of the 2025 / 2026 reporting periods, which again provides pleasing reporting. The service remains committed to supporting communities through the Home Fire Safety programme and continues to work closely with partner agencies to identify those most at risk and provide early preventative support and advice.

c. A total of twenty-eight (21) occurrences of Unwanted False Alarm Signals (UFAS) were attended by SFRS during Q1 and Q2, 2025 / 2026 in the Sutherland Area. This represents an increase from the same reporting period last year. Crews are continuing to engage with premises to identify causes and reduce occurrences.

SFRS have now implement the new UFAS response policy 1st July 2023 and this is reflected in the reduction in figures year to date.

4.4 Station Crewing & Availability

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has made significant investment in RVDS Recruitment with an RVDS support team now in place and working at a national level. The team has been put together with personnel from all three service delivery areas to support key issues, including staff recruitment and retention

SFRS continues to actively deliver and refine its Retained and Volunteer Duty System (RVDS) recruitment and training processes to meet national and local needs. Key stations and communities are targeted across the Sutherland area. SFRS promotes campaigns within partner agencies, through local media and key community contacts. Continued local area support is requested for recruitment in the following communities:

Recruitment banners and advertising material have been produced for all stations across the Highlands to raise awareness of the RVDS roles within communities.

- Bettyhill
- Bonar Bridge
- Dornoch
- Durness
- Golspie
- Helmsdale
- Kinlochbervie
- Lairg
- Lochinver
- Scourie
- Tongue

4.5 Community Safety / Community Action Team

SFRS Community Action Team (CAT) continues to engage and deliver all aspects of Community Safety and education throughout Sutherland, engaging with schools, community groups and the wider Sutherland Community. A locally delivered Fire Skills Course in Dornoch, allowing 12, third, fourth- and fifth-year pupils to attend, who all successfully complete the course over the duration of five days receiving an Employability Award.

Designation: Local Senior Officer for Highland

Date: 13 November 2025

Author: Station Commander David Bell

Background Papers: Sutherland County - Performance Report

Appendices:



Highland

Sutherland County Committee

2025-26 Q1 & Q2

Scrutiny Report

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Highland

Sutherland County Committee

2025-26 Q1 & Q2

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.

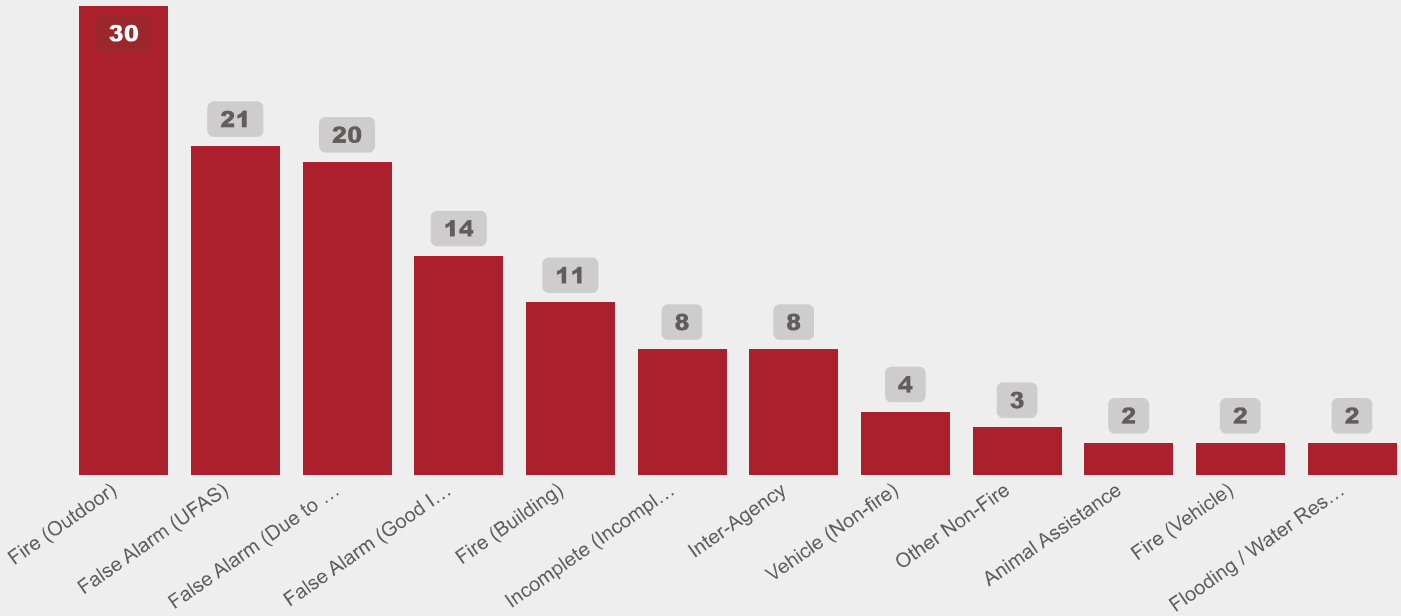
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1. Summary

2025-26 Q1 & Q2

127 Total Incidents (Incl. Incompletes)	**43** Fires	**21** Non-Fire Incidents	**55** False Alarms	**21** UFAS
3 People Rescued by Firefighters	**0** People Receiving First Aid or Hospital Treatment (Fires)	**0** Fire Fatalities	**2** People Receiving First Aid or Hospital Treatment (Non-Fire)	**1** Non-Fire Fatalities
24 Home Fire Safety Visits	**25** Fire Safety Audits			

Top 10 Incident Types



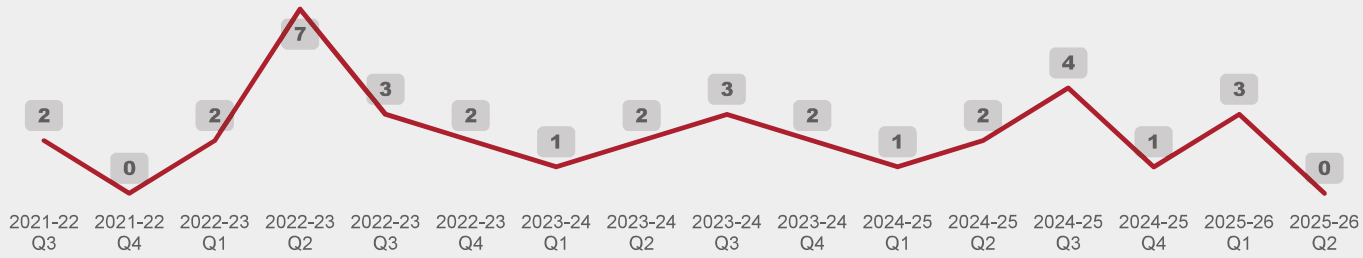
The table above provides a summary of the six months (1 April - 30 September 2025) activity against headline indicators. It aims to provide - at a glance - our direction of travel during the reporting year.

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2. Trends

Previous 16 quarters (4 years)

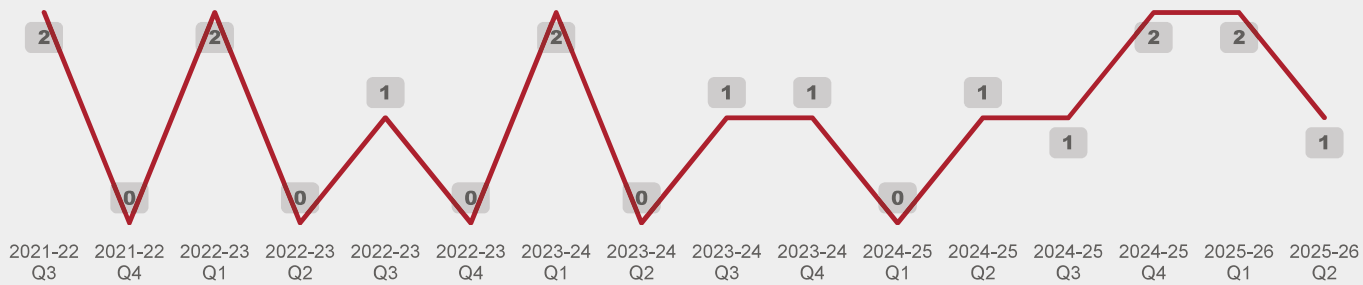
Accidental Dwelling Fires



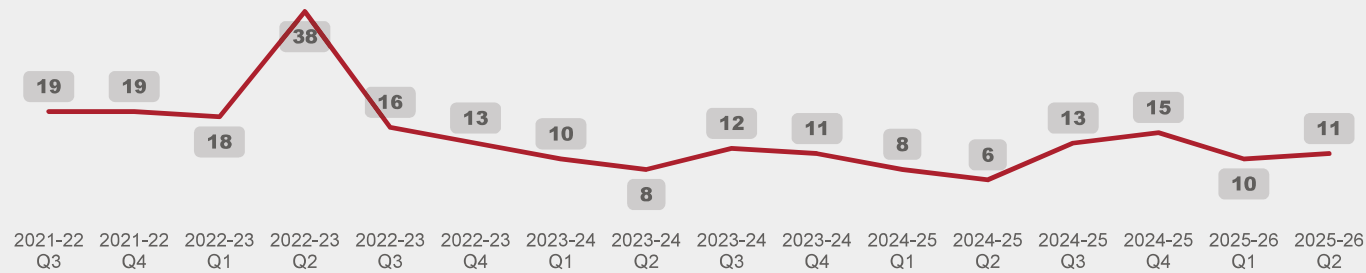
Deliberate Fires



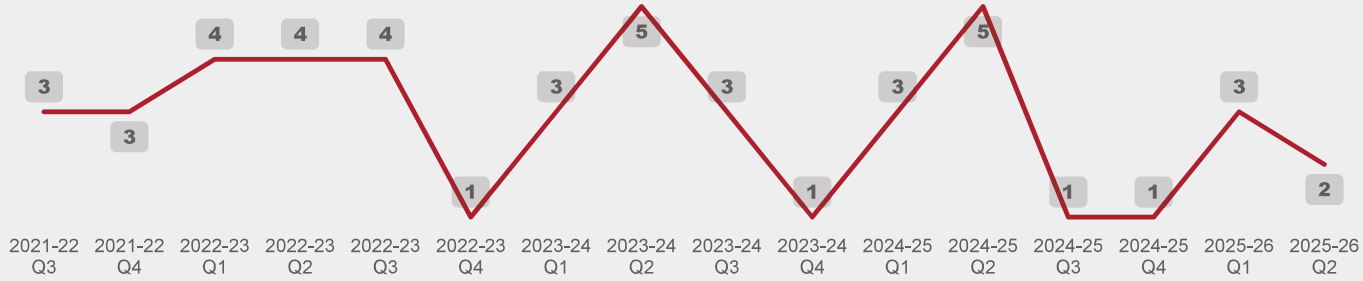
Non-Domestic Fires



Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals



Road Traffic Collisions

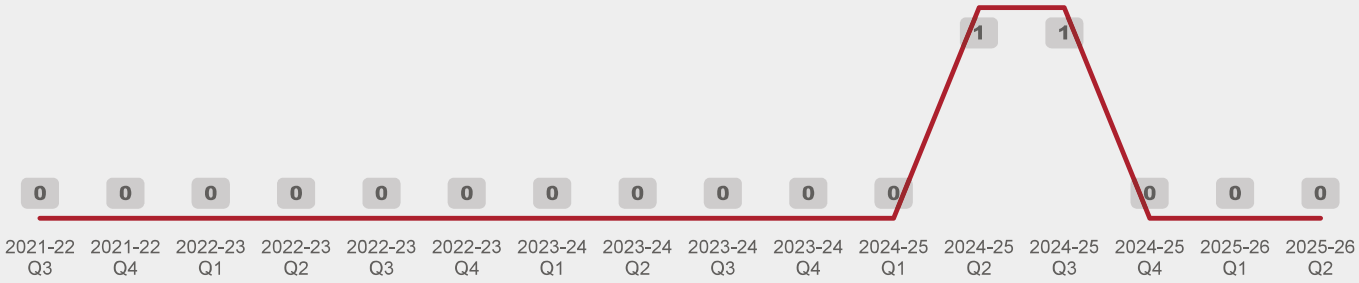


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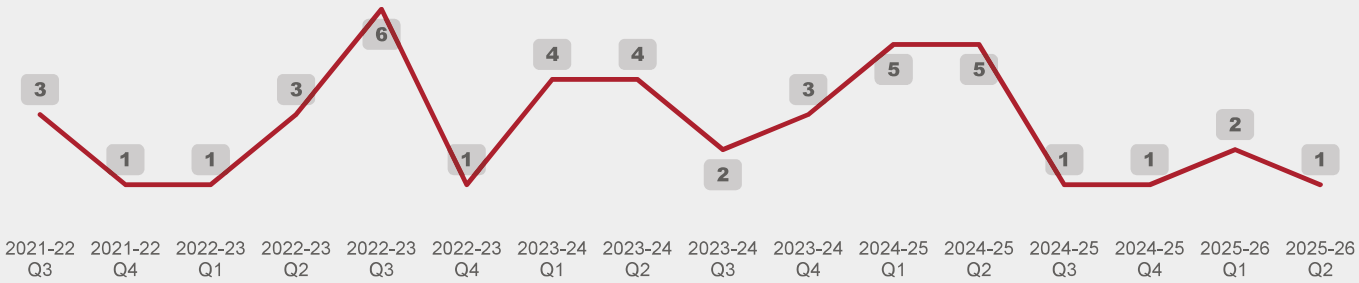
2. Trends

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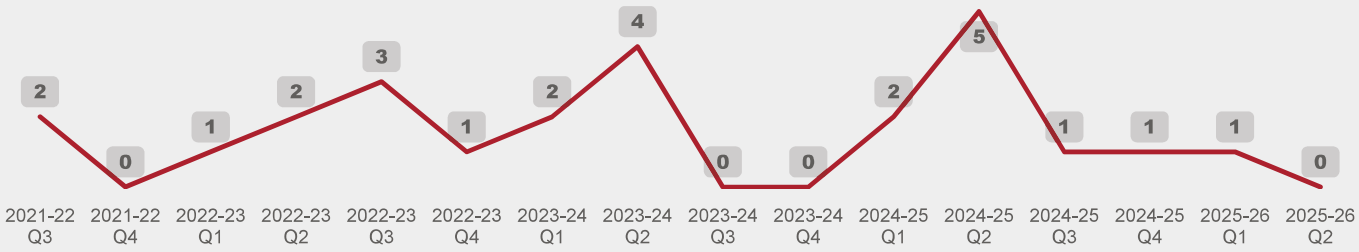
Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties



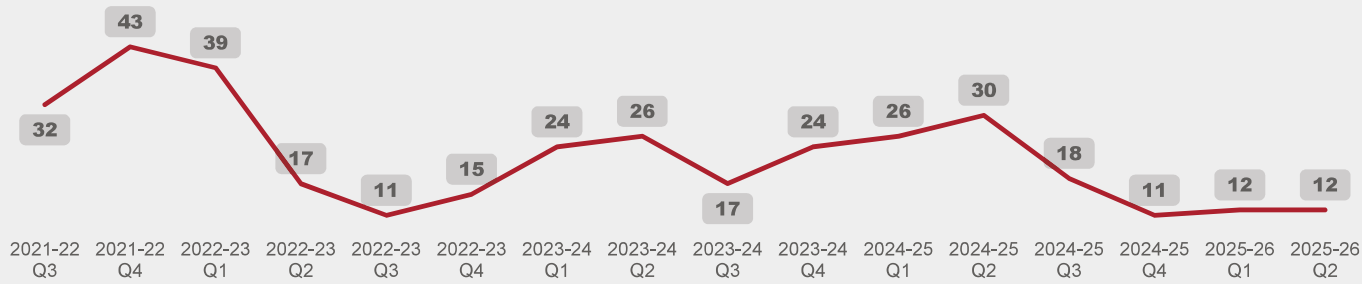
Non-Fire Casualties



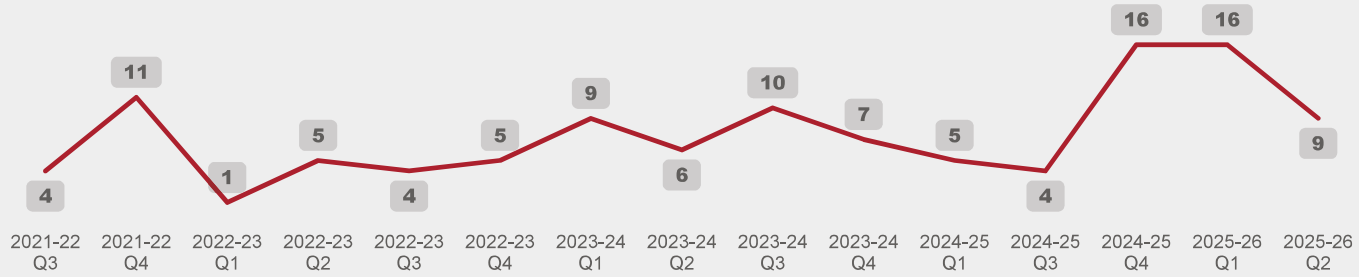
Road Traffic Collision Casualties



Home Fire Safety Visits



Fire Safety Audits



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3. Accidental Dwelling Fires

2025-26 Q1 & Q2

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Extent of Damage	Incidents
Limited to floor of origin (not whole building)	1
Limited to item 1st ignited	1
Not applicable	1

Incidents by Ward



3

Accidental Dwelling Fires in this period

Source of Ignition (Top 10)



There were **3 Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADFs)** in this reporting period, which is a reduction compared to the previous report. The majority are classed as low severity, requiring little or no intervention from the Service and minimal fire damage.

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4. Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties

2025-26 Q1 & Q2

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Casualties by Ward

Nature of Injury/Cause of Death	Casualties

0	0	0
Non-Fatal Casualties	Fatal Casualties	People Rescued by Firefighters

Extent of Harm (Non-Fatal)

0	0	0
First Aid Given at Scene	Hospital Slight Injuries	Hospital Serious Injuries

We are pleased to report that there **0 ADF Casualties** in this reporting period. However it should be noted that these figures do not include those who have been recommended to have a precautionary check up.

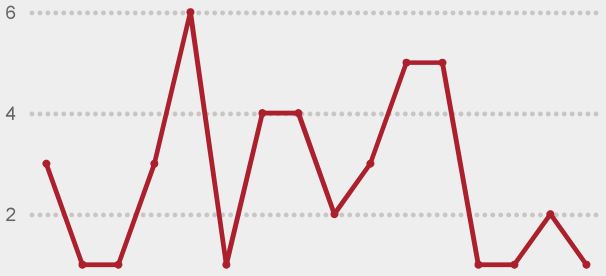
All ADFs are offered Home Fire Safety Visits and agency referrals where required.

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5. Non-Fire Casualties

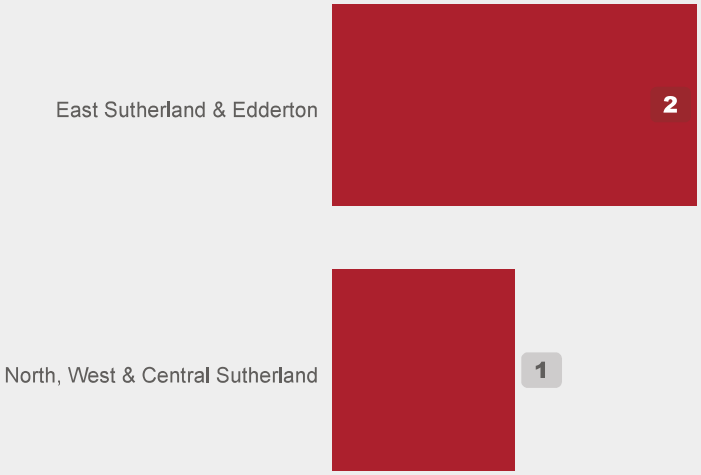
2025-26 Q1 & Q2

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Nature of Injury/Cause of Death	Casualties
Head injury	1
Impalement	1
Other	1

Casualties by Ward



2
Non-Fatal Casualties

1
Fatal Casualties

3
People Rescued by Firefighters

Extent of Harm (Non-Fatal)

0
First Aid Given at Scene

2
Hospital Slight Injuries

0
Hospital Serious Injuries

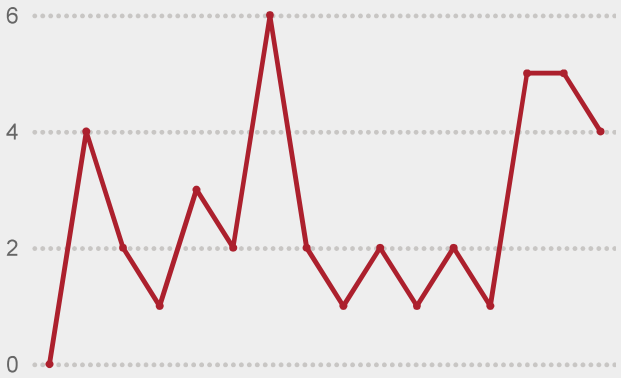
During this reporting period, there were **1 Fatal Non-Fire Casualty** and **2 Non-Fatal Non-Fire Casualties**.

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6. Deliberate Fires

2025-26 Q1 & Q2

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



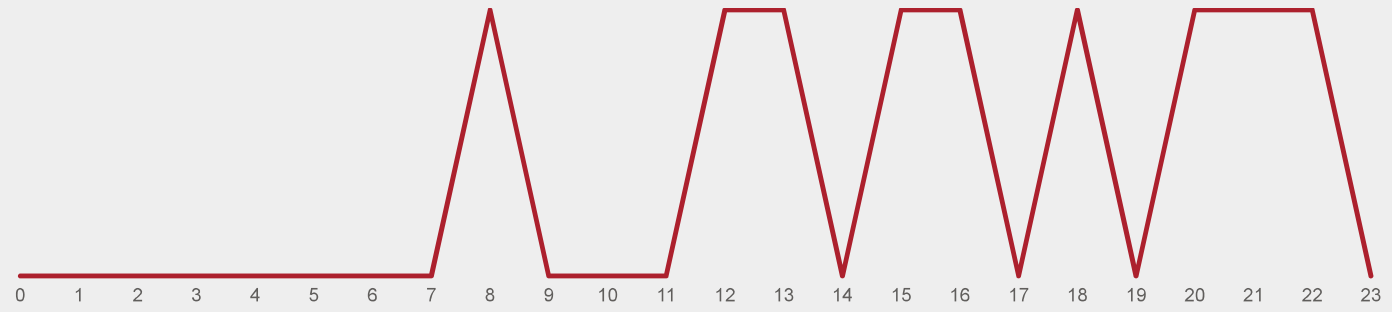
Property Type	Incident
Grassland, woodland and crops	5
Refuse	2
Dwelling	1
Other outdoors (including land)	1

Incidents by Ward



9 **Deliberate Fires in this period**

Hour of Day



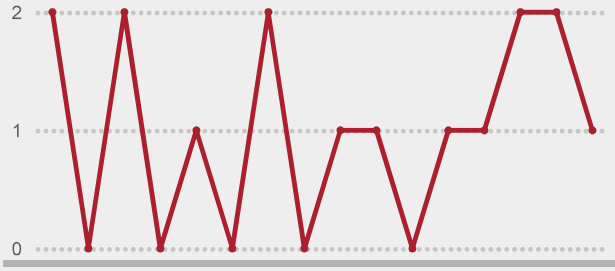
In this reporting period there were **9 Deliberate Fires**, which is a slight increase when compared to the previous reporting period. Eight of the incidents were classed as Outdoor Fires.

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7. Non-Domestic Fires

2025-26 Q1 & Q2

Trend by Quarter (4 years)

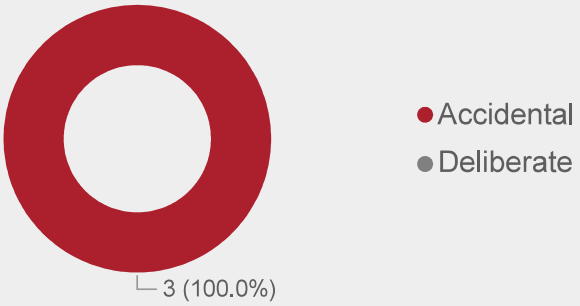


Incidents by Ward



Top 15 Property Types

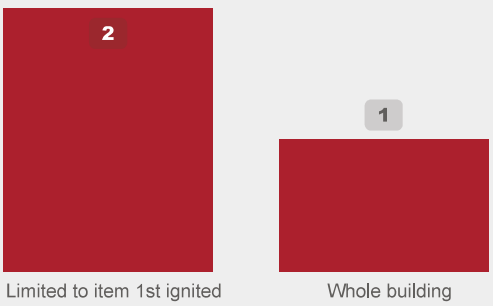
Property Type	Incidents
Hotel/motel	2
Hospitals and medical care	1



3

Non-Domestic Fires in this period

Extent of Damage



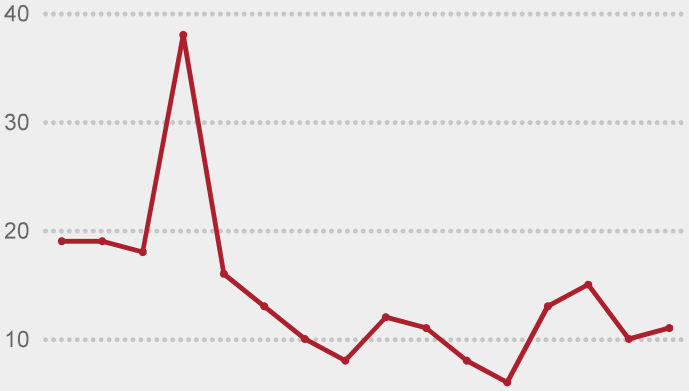
There were **3 Non-Domestic Fires** during this reporting period, this is comparable to the previous reporting period.

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8. Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

2025-26 Q1 & Q2

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Incidents by Ward



Top 15 Property Types

Property Type	Incidents
Residential Home	13
Hospitals and medical care	3
Student Hall of Residence	2
Hotel/motel	1
Public admin, security and safety	1
Sheltered Housing - not self contained	1

21

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals in this period

We attended **21 Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS)** in this period, this is a reduction compared to the previous reporting period. The figures continue to remain low following the Service's change to attendance at commercial business and workplace premises.

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9. Road Traffic Collisions

2025-26 Q1 & Q2

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Incidents by Ward



5 **Road Traffic Collisions in this period**

Property Type	Incidents
Car	3
Motorcycle	1
Van	1

Incident Type	Incidents
Vehicle (Non-fire)	4
Flooding / Water Rescue	1

1 Non-Fatal Casualties

0 Fatal Casualties

1 People Rescued by Firefighters

Extent of Harm (Non-Fatal)

0 First Aid Given at Scene

1 Hospital Slight Injuries

0 Hospital Serious Injuries

During the reporting period we attended **5 Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)** which shows an increase in these types of incidents in comparison to the previous period. However there has been a reduction of casualties, with **1 Non-Fatal RTC Casualty**, whose injuries appeared to be slight.

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

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10. Home Fire Safety Visits

2025-26 Q1 & Q2

24

Home Fire Safety Visits

HFSVs by Ward



11. Fire Safety Enforcement

Job Type	Count
Audit	25
Consultation	1
Short Post Fire Audit	1
Specific Visit	1

Audits by Ward



Our Community Safety Advocates and Station personnel undertook **24 Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs)** during this period. With the introduction of the 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.

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- 11 x On-Call Retained Duty System appliances across 11 Stations

These Stations serve the Sutherland County population

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

Station	Apr – Sept 25 Availability* %	Male	Female	Staff
Bettyhill	28.31%	6	0	6
Bonar Bridge	21.58%	5	0	5
Dornoch	94.67%	11	0	1
Durness	71.96%	5	0	5
Golspie	60.12%	8	0	8
Helmsdale	59.08%	6	0	6
Kinlochbervie	74.72%	5	1	6
Lairg	85.15%	8	2	10
Lochinver	0%	2	1	3
Scourie	0%	0	0	0
Tongue	0%	2	0	2

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Community Safety & Engagement

SFRS Community Action Team (CAT) continues to engage and deliver all aspects of Community Safety and education throughout Sutherland during Q1 & Q2 2025/2026, engaging with Sutherland Primary Schols to deliver Water Safety talks to P1 - P7 pupils. Visits to local Lochs and Beaches, engaging with members of the public highlighting the dangers of wildfires, camping and tent safety, leaflets being provided, resulting in around two hundred people receiving advice, information and guidance.

Through out this reporting period the Community Action Team have engaged with, and education a number of local organisations and community groups, including Students attending the UHI Freshers Fayre in Dornoch, where Fire Safety Guidance was delivered, Forestry Land Scotland, in Golspie, receiving a Wildfire Talk and a Telecare Road Show Event, promoting the available Tele Care Equipment and the SFRS, Home Fire Safety Referral process, all of these events and engagement sessions attend are delivered to educate and promote all aspects of Community Safety within Sutherland.



A highly successful five-day Fire Skills Course has been delivered in Dornoch Community Fire Station, attended by twelve S3 to S5 pupils from Dornoch Academy, resulting in an employability award being awarded.



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13. 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.

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INTELLIGENCE

Design, figures and charts by the Business Intelligence team.