

The Highland Council

Agenda Item	3
Report No	SCC/09/26

Committee: Sutherland County Committee

Date: 11 May 2026

Report Title: Scottish Fire and Rescue Committee Performance Report for Q 3 & Q 4
1st October 2025 to 31st March 2026

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) 3 and 4, 1st October 2025 to 31st March 2026 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 Q3 and Q4, October 2025 to March 2026 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 seven (7) Accidental Dwelling Fires attended by SFRS in Q3 and Q4. 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 Q3 and Q4 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 Q3 and Q4 of the 2025 / 2026 reporting periods, you will note that there was reference in the report to one (1) Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualty, which was a fatality. This fatality was not attributable to an ADF Fire. 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 (28) occurrences of Unwanted False Alarm Signals (UFAS) were attended by SFRS during Q3 and Q4, 2025 / 2026 in the Sutherland Area. This represents a slight increase from the previous period. 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. Throughout Q3 and Q4, the Community Action Team delivered a wide range of prevention, education, and community-focused activities across Sutherland. Secondary schools benefited from the Early Driver Intervention Scheme, delivered in partnership with Highland Council's Safer Roads department, while primary schools received Winter Water Safety sessions ahead of the colder months. Engagement with vulnerable adults continued to be a core priority, with tailored wellbeing support provided across the region. Staff also delivered Risk Recognition training to carers at the Lawson Hospital in Golspie. Partnership planning with the Anthony Nolan charity progressed to support future school-based initiatives, and multiple Home Fire Safety Visits were carried out, reinforcing the service's commitment to prevention and community safety.

Designation: Local Senior Officer for Highland

Date: 11 May 2026

Author: Station Commander David Bell

Background Papers: Sutherland County - Performance Report



**Highland
Sutherland County Committee**

**2025-26 Q3 & Q4
Scrutiny Report**



**SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Working together for a safer Scotland

**Working together
for a safer Scotland**

Highland Sutherland County Committee

2025-26 Q3 & Q4 Scrutiny Report

Contents












1	Summary
2	Trends
3	Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADFs)
4	Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties
5	Non-Fire Casualties
6	Deliberate Fires
7	Non-Domestic Fires
8	Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS)
9	Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)
10	Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs)
11	Fire Safety Enforcement
12	Station Availability and Establishment
13	Community Safety & Engagement
14	Glossary of Terms

About the statistics within this report

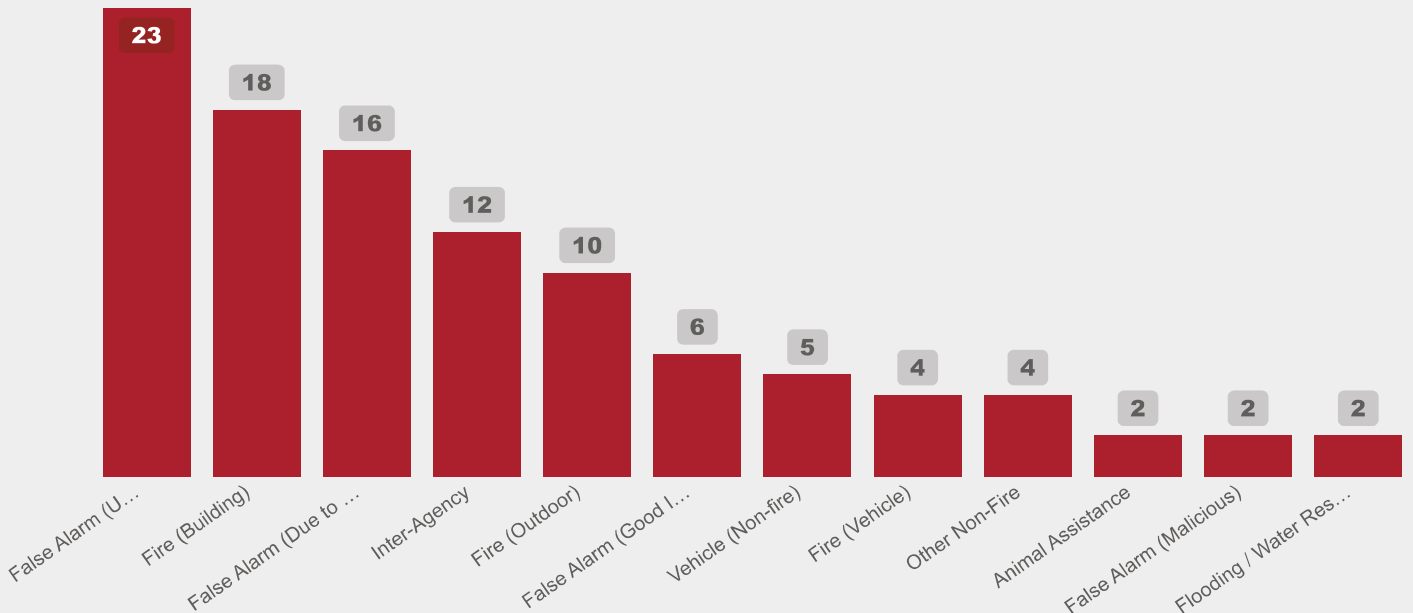
The activity totals and other statistics quoted within this report are published in the interests of transparency and openness. They are provisional in nature and subject to change as a result of ongoing quality assurance and review. Because all statistics quoted are provisional there may be a difference 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

2025-26 Q3 & Q4

 104 Total Incidents (Incl. Incompletes)	 32 Fires	 25 Non-Fire Incidents	 47 False Alarms	 23 UFAS
 4 People Rescued by Firefighters	 1 People Receiving First Aid or Hospital Treatment (Fires)	 0 Fire Fatalities	 7 People Receiving First Aid or Hospital Treatment (Non-Fire)	 4 Non-Fire Fatalities
 29 Home Fire Safety Visits	 15 Fire Safety Audits			

Top 10 Incident Types

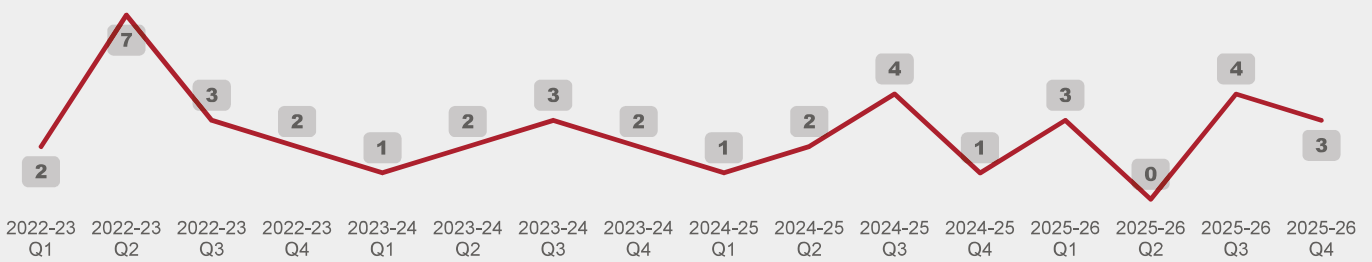


The information above provides a summary of the six-months (1 October 2025 - 31 March 2026) activity against headline indicators. It aims to provide - at a glance - our direction of travel during the current reporting period.

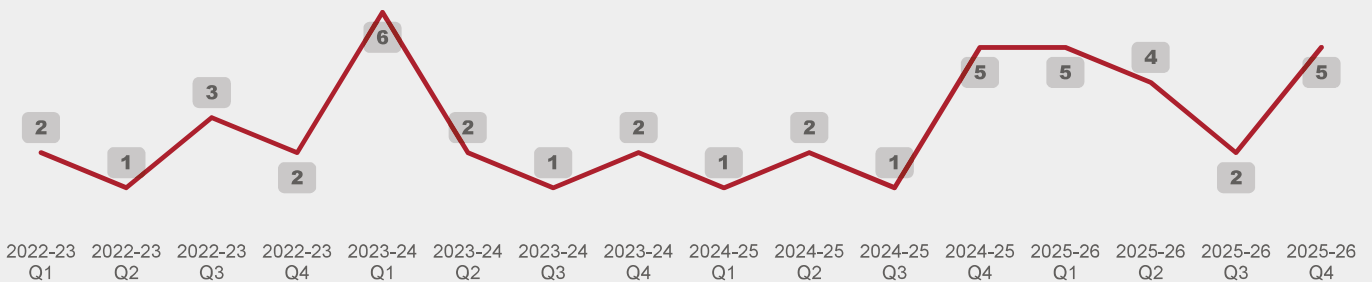
2. Trends

Previous 16 quarters (4 years)

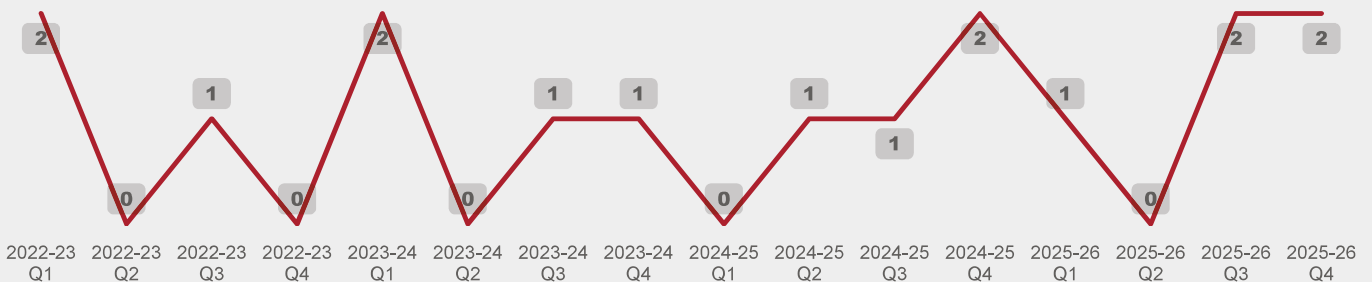
Accidental Dwelling Fires



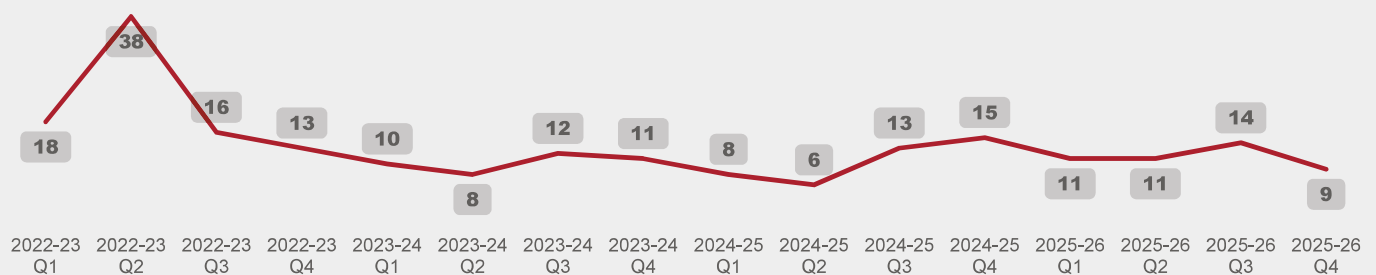
Deliberate Fires



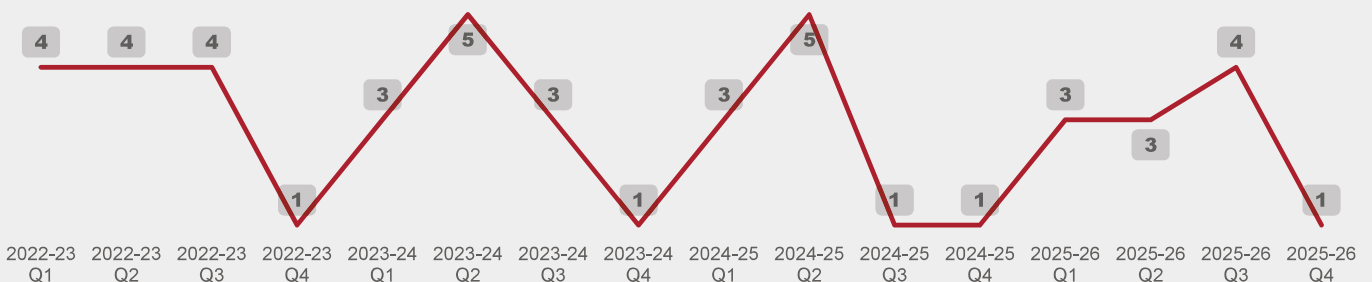
Non-Domestic Fires



Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals



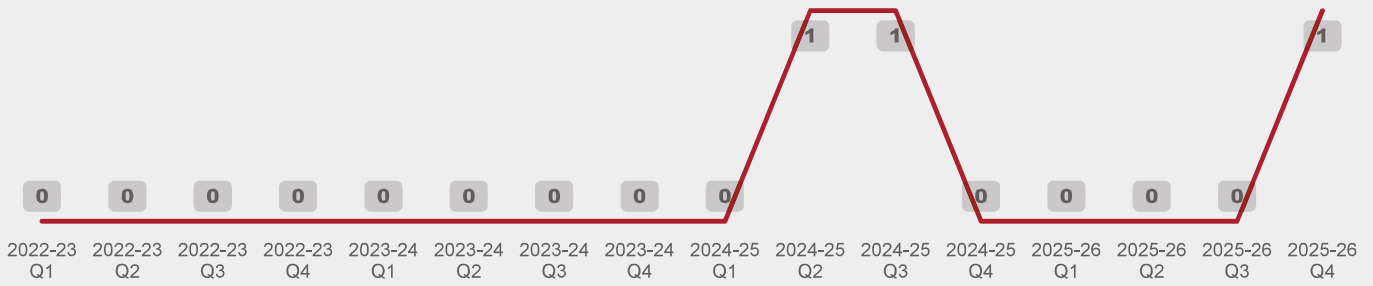
Road Traffic Collisions



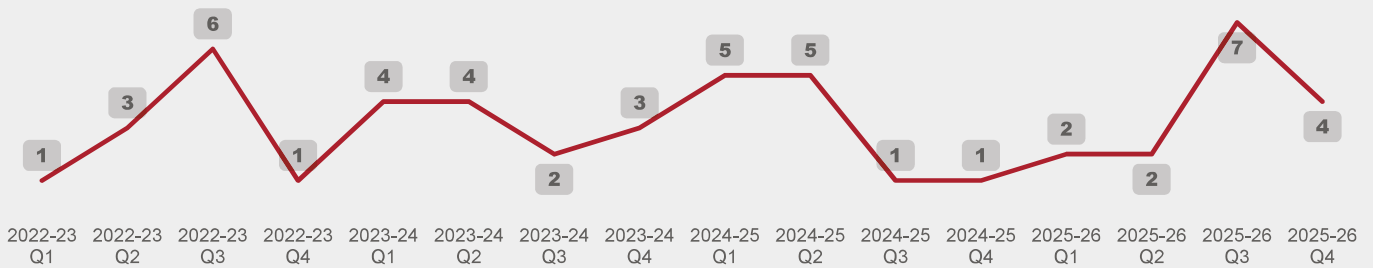
2. Trends

Previous 16 quarters (4 years)

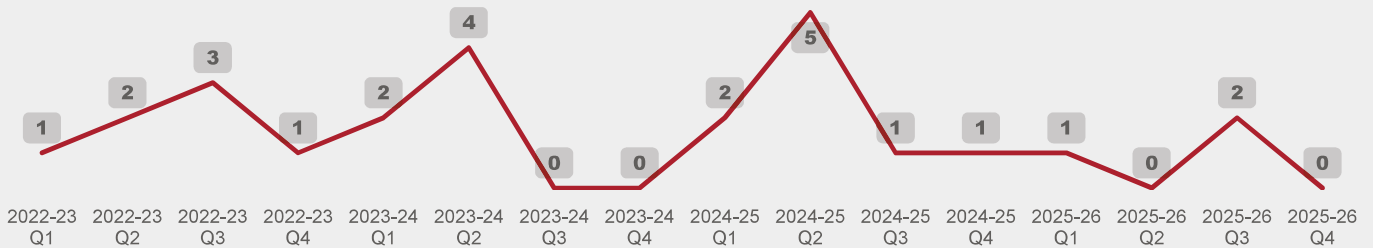
Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties



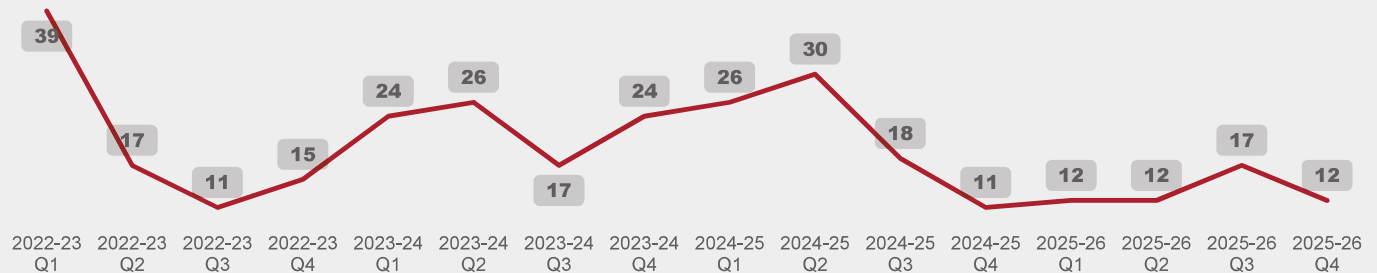
Non-Fire Casualties



Road Traffic Collision Casualties



Home Fire Safety Visits



Fire Safety Audits



3. Accidental Dwelling Fires

2025-26 Q3 & Q4

Trend by Quarter (4 years)

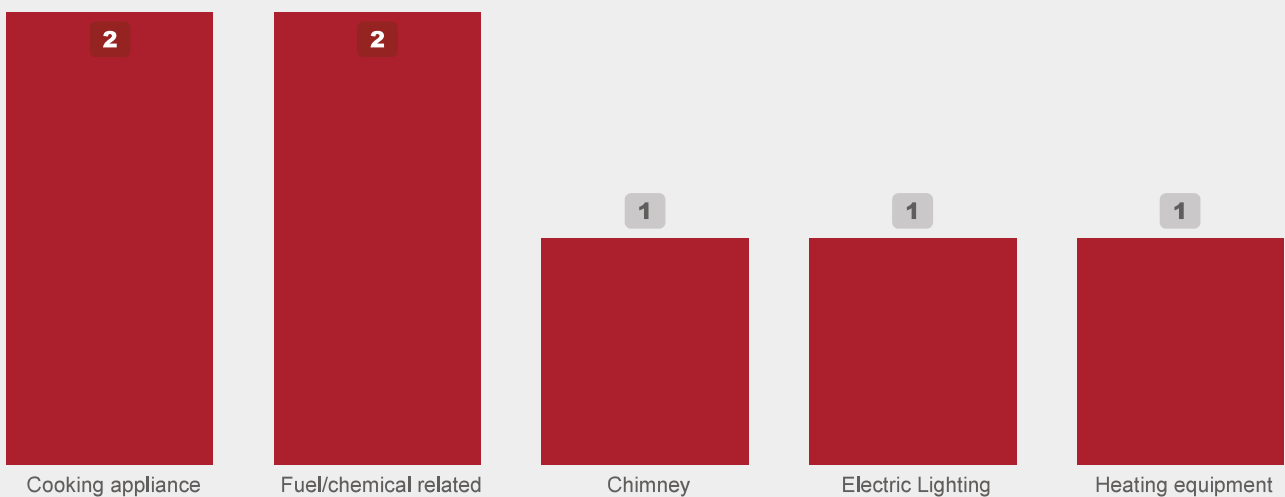


Extent of Damage	Incidents
Limited to item 1st ignited	4
Limited to floor of origin (not whole building)	1
Limited to room of origin	1
Not applicable	1

Incidents by Ward



Source of Ignition (Top 10)



7
Accidental Dwelling Fires
in this period

There were **7 Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADFs)** within this reporting period, which is an increase when compared with the previous reporting period. The majority are classed as low severity, requiring little or no intervention from the Service and minimal fire damage.

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

4. Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties

2025-26 Q3 & Q4

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Nature of Injury/Cause of Death	Casualties
Not known	1

Casualties by Ward

East Sutherland & Edderton



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

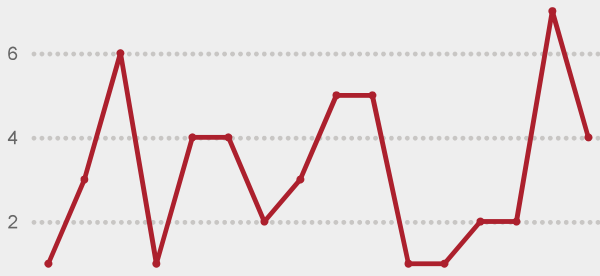
There were **0 ADF Casualties** within this reporting period. It should be noted that these figures do not include those who have been recommended to have a precautionary check up.

You will note that in the table above there is reference to 1 Casualty, which was a fatality. This fatality was not attributable to an ADF Fire, hence why it does not show in the Fatal Casualties section above.

5. Non-Fire Casualties

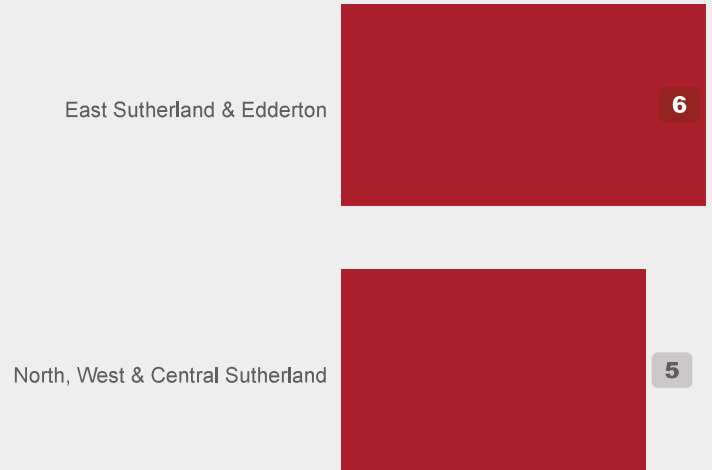
2025-26 Q3 & Q4

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Nature of Injury/Cause of Death	Casualties
Not known	6
Back / Neck injury (spinal)	1
Breathing difficulties (Other than 'Overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes, asphyxiation')	1
Chest pain / Heart condition / Cardiac arrest	1
Hypothermia	1
Other medical condition	1

Casualties by Ward



7

Non-Fatal Casualties

4

Fatal Casualties

4

People Rescued by Firefighters

Extent of Harm (Non-Fatal)



0

First Aid Given at Scene



5

Hospital Slight Injuries



2

Hospital Serious Injuries

There were **4 Fatal Casualties** and **7 Non-Fatal Casualties** during this reporting period, which is an increase when compared to the previous reporting period.

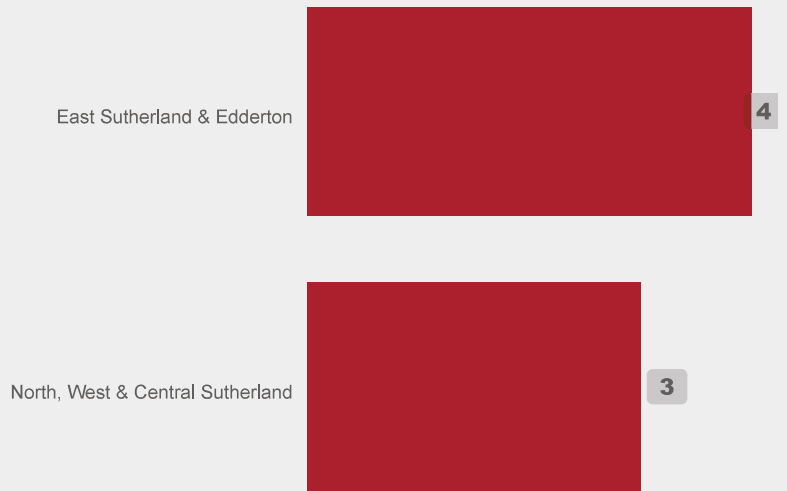
6. Deliberate Fires

2025-26 Q3 & Q4

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Incidents by Ward

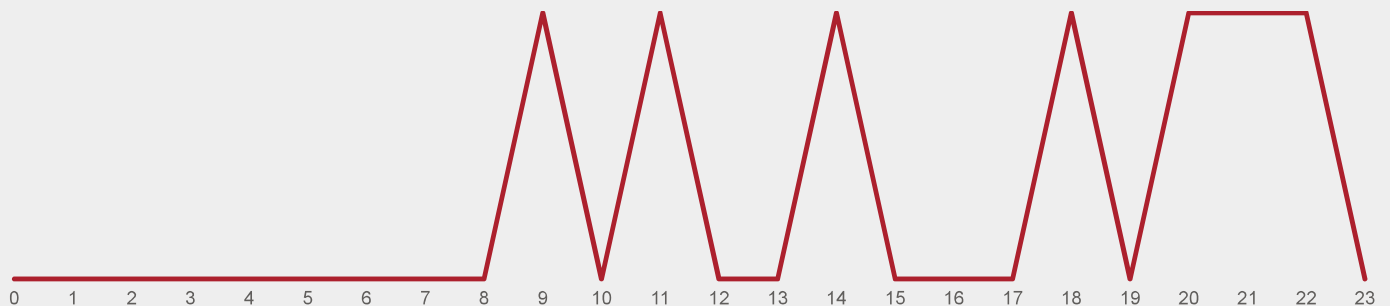


Property Type	Incident
Grassland, woodland and crops	4
Refuse	2
Road Vehicle	1

7

Deliberate Fires in this period

Hour of Day

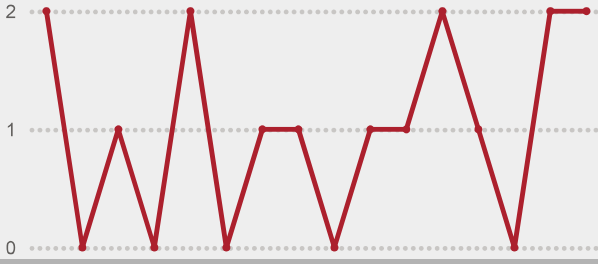


During this reporting period we attended **7 Deliberate Fires**, which is a slight decrease when compared to the previous reporting period. Referrals are made to other agencies for those at work within our communities.

7. Non-Domestic Fires

2025-26 Q3 & Q4

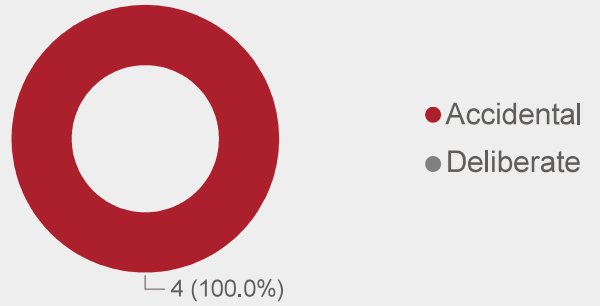
Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Top 15 Property Types

Property Type	Incidents
Hotel/motel	1
Other Residential Home	1
Retail	1
Vehicle Repair	1

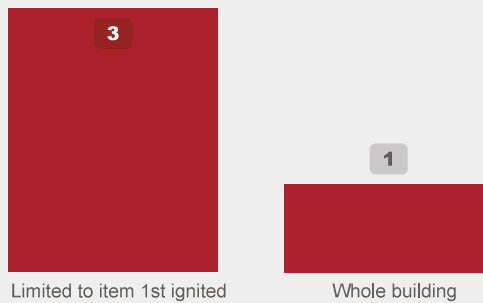
Incidents by Ward



4

Non-Domestic Fires in this period

Extent of Damage

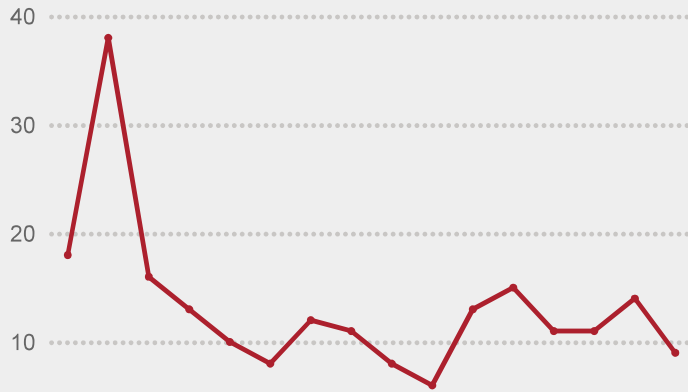


There were 4 **Non-Domestic Fires** during this reporting period, which is a slight increase when compared to the previous reporting period.

8. Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

2025-26 Q3 & Q4

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Incidents by Ward



Top 15 Property Types

Property Type	Incidents
Residential Home	10
Hospitals and medical care	4
Hotel/motel	4
Sheltered Housing - not self contained	4
Public admin, security and safety	1

23

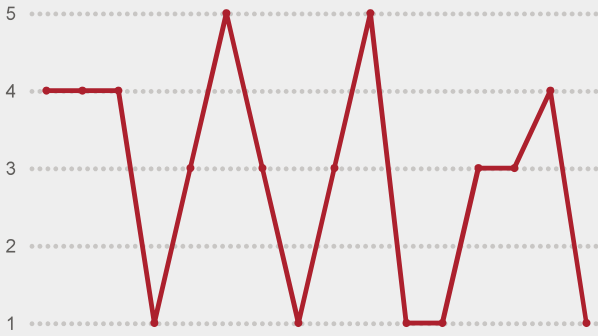
Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals in this period

Within this reporting period we attended **23 Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS)**, this is a slight increase when compared to the previous period. The figures continue to remain low following the Service's change to attend at commercial business and workplace premises.

9. Road Traffic Collisions

2025-26 Q3 & Q4

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



5

Road Traffic Collisions in this period

Property Type	Incidents
Car	3
Van	2

Incident Type	Incidents
Vehicle (Non-fire)	5

Incidents by Ward



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

Extent of Harm (Non-Fatal)

 **0**
First Aid Given at Scene

 **2**
Hospital Slight Injuries

 **0**
Hospital Serious Injuries

During the reporting period we attended **5 Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)** which is comparable to the previous period.

There were **2 Non-Fatal Casualties** both of who went to hospital with what appeared to slight injuries.

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

10. Home Fire Safety Visits

2025-26 Q3 & Q4

HFSVs by Ward

29

Home Fire Safety Visits

North, West & Central Sutherland

16

East Sutherland & Edderton

13

11. Fire Safety Enforcement

Job Type	Count
Audit	15

Audits by Ward

East Sutherland & Edderton

9

North, West & Central Sutherland

6

We undertook **29 Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs)** within this reporting period. With the introduction of the new, modernised Home Fire Safety Visits 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 system and referral pathways are embedded in.

Our Fire Safety Enforcement Officers and Auditing Officers have conducted **15 Audits** within this period.

12. Station Availability and Establishment

2025-26 Q3 & Q4

- 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	Oct 25 – Nov 25 Availability* %	Staff 30/11/25	Dec 25 – Mar 26 Availability* %	Staff 31/03/26
Bettyhill	16.14%	6	51.57%	7
Bonar Bridge	7.62%	4	13.79%	5
Dornoch	96.64%	13	96.06%	13
Durness	65.90%	5	62.87%	4
Golspie	55.57%	8	66.43%	8
Helmsdale	73.74%	6	76.58%	6
Kinlochbervie	74.66%	6	81.96%	7
Lairg	80.58%	10	88.14%	10
Lochinver	0%	3	0%	4
Scourie	0%	1	0%	1
Tongue	0%	2	0%	2

Due to a change in systems the availability has been split into two time periods to account for the change over date.

Throughout Q3 and Q4, the Community Action Team delivered a wide range of prevention, education, and community-focused activities across Sutherland.

Secondary schools within our area benefited from the Early Driver Intervention Scheme, which was delivered in partnership with Highland Council's Safer Roads department.

Primary schools received Winter Water Safety sessions ahead of the colder months.

Engagement with vulnerable adults continued to be a core priority, with tailored wellbeing support provided across the region.

Risk Recognition Training for Carers

Personnel delivered Risk Recognition training to carers at the Lawson Hospital in Golspie.

Anthony Nolan

We undertook some Partnership planning with the Anthony Nolan charity to progress and support future school-based initiatives within our area.

Home Fire Safety Visits

We undertook multiple Home Fire Safety Visits, reinforcing the Service's commitment to prevention and community safety. These visits are targeted at those with the highest risk of experiencing a fire in the home. During our visits we provide identification of potential fire risks in their home, information about bedtime routines, help to create a robust escape plan and provide advice and test smoke alarms.

14. 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.