

Fire statistics monitor

April 2010 to March 2011. Issue No. 02/11



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Data contained in this publication

This Fire Statistics Monitor consists of analysis of data for England up to the period April 2010 to March 2011.

There are now 42 accompanying data tables that are published in spreadsheet format. An index can be found in the last pages of this publication. Among these tables, four [3hi-3hiv] are new with this edition. These contain data for each of the four categories of severity for non-fatal casualties. This follows the introduction of the following tables in recent editions: 1c&d, 2c&d, 3bii-v, 4d, and 6a-d. Numbers of non-fire incidents attended by Fire and Rescue Services are also included in this publication (section 4.3 and tables 7a-d) as in previous editions.

The intention is to continue to develop this range of data tables. Feedback and requests are welcome.

Next edition

The next edition of this Fire Statistics Monitor will be published either in December 2011 or January 2012. It will contain data for incidents up to the end of September 2011.

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1 Key points of provisional 2010-11 data

1.1 Fire fatalities and non-fatal casualties

- The provisional¹ total number of fire fatalities in England in 2010-11 was 321, 15 (4 per cent) fewer than in 2009-10. This is 28 per cent fewer than ten years previous (446 in 2000-01) and 58 per cent fewer than twenty five years earlier (765 in 1985-86).
- The provisional¹ number of fatalities in England in accidental dwelling fires in 2010-11 was 212, one fewer than in 2009-10. This is 25 per cent fewer than ten years previous (282 in 2000-01) and 53 per cent fewer than twenty five years earlier (450 in 1985-86).
- There were 7,400 non-fatal casualties² in fires in England in 2010-11. This was two per cent higher than in 2009-10. This is 17 per cent fewer than ten years previous (8,900 in 2000-01) and 4 per cent fewer than twenty five years earlier (7,700 in 1985-86).

Summary table 1: Fire casualties, England			
	2010-11(r)	change 2009-10 to 2010-11(p)	change 2000-01 to 2010-11(p)
Fire fatalities	321	-4%	-28%
of which in accidental dwelling fires	212	-0.5%	-25%
Non fatal fire casualties excluding precautionary checks ²	7,400	+2%	-17%
(p) Provisional			

¹ See Definitions note 3.

² Excluding precautionary check (see Definitions note 4)

1.2 Fires, false alarms, and non-fire incidents

- Fire and Rescue Services attended a total of 227,000 fires in England in 2010-11, 6 per cent fewer than in 2009-10. This is 37 per cent fewer than ten years previous (2000-01).
- The total number of fire false alarms attended in England fell by 5 per cent to 272,000 in 2010-11. This is 28 per cent fewer than ten years previous (2000-01).
- Fire and Rescue Services attended 134,000 non-fire incidents in 2010-11, down 6 per cent on 2009-10 and 23 per cent fewer than in 2000-01.
- The greatest components among non-fire incident categories are road traffic collisions (22%), water removal (12%), lift releases (12%), and effecting entry (12%).

Summary table 2: Incidents attended, England

	2010-11(p)	change 2009-10 to 2010-11(p)	change 2000-01 to 2010-11(p)
Fires	227,000	-6%	-37%
False alarms	272,000	-5%	-28%
Non-fire incidents	134,000	-6%	-23%
Total incidents attended	633,000	-5%	-31%
(p) Provisional			

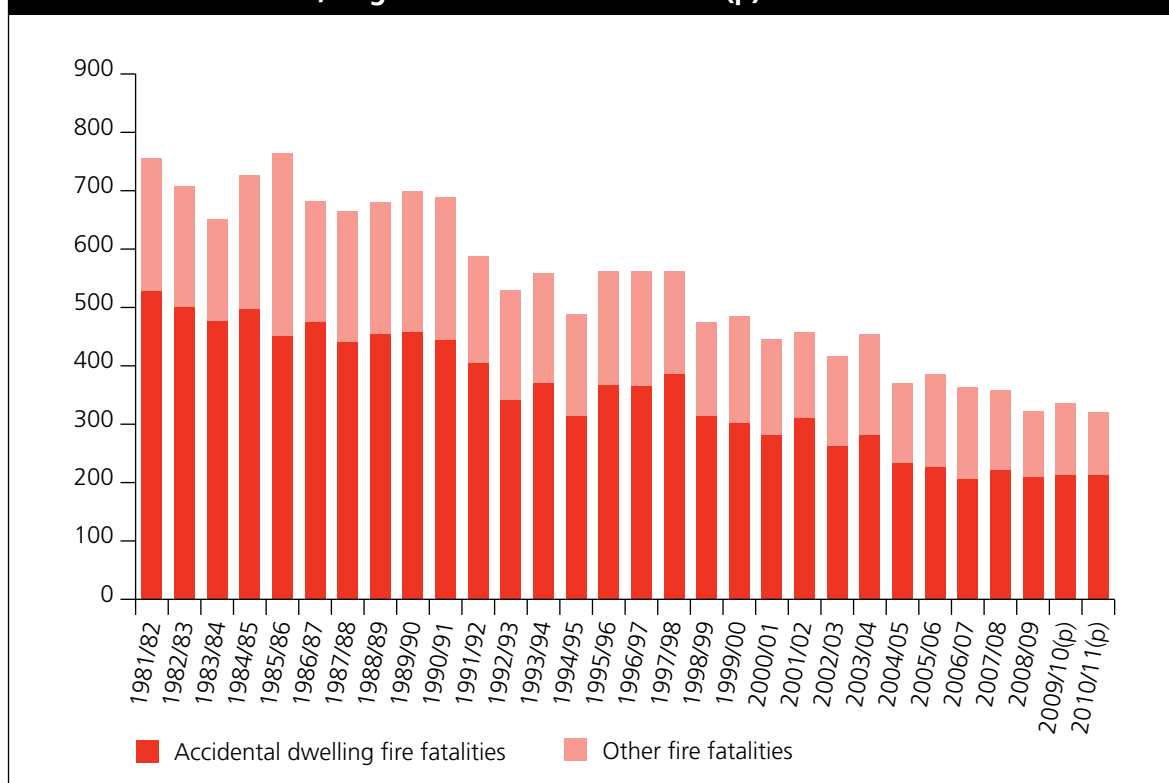
2 Fire fatalities

(see also annex tables 2b&d, 3e and 4b)

- Provisional figures (subject to revision – see definition 3 for further explanation) of the total number of fire fatalities in England show:
- In 2010-11 there were 321 fire fatalities, 15 (4 per cent) fewer than in 2009-10. Chart 1 shows the long term downward trend in fire fatalities.
- Of the 321 fire fatalities during 2010-11, two-thirds (212) occurred in accidental dwelling fires.

Summary tables 3 and 4 show that fluctuations are a common feature of these data. As a result, trends can be assessed much more readily from annual totals, as in chart 1.

Chart 1: Fire fatalities, England. 1981-82 to 2010-11(p)



Summary table 3: All fire fatalities, England

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10(p)	2010-11(p)	Change 2009-10 to 2010-11
April-June	81	100	81	60	91	92	+1
July-September	86	80	66	59	70	56	-14
October-December	93	94	102	110	85	87	+2
January-March	126	90	109	94	90	86	-4
April – March (12 months)	386	364	358	323	336	321	-15
(p) Provisional							

Summary table 4: Fatalities in accidental dwelling fires, England

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10(p)	2010-11(p)	Change 2009-10 to 2010-11
April-June	52	62	44	36	58	59	+1
July-September	40	37	37	34	42	32	-10
October-December	51	51	64	67	55	66	+11
January-March	83	55	76	72	58	55	-3
April – March (12 months)	226	205	221	209	213	212	-1
(p) Provisional							

3 Non-fatal fire casualties

Fire non-fatal casualties (see also annex tables 2b&d, 3f&g and 4c&d)

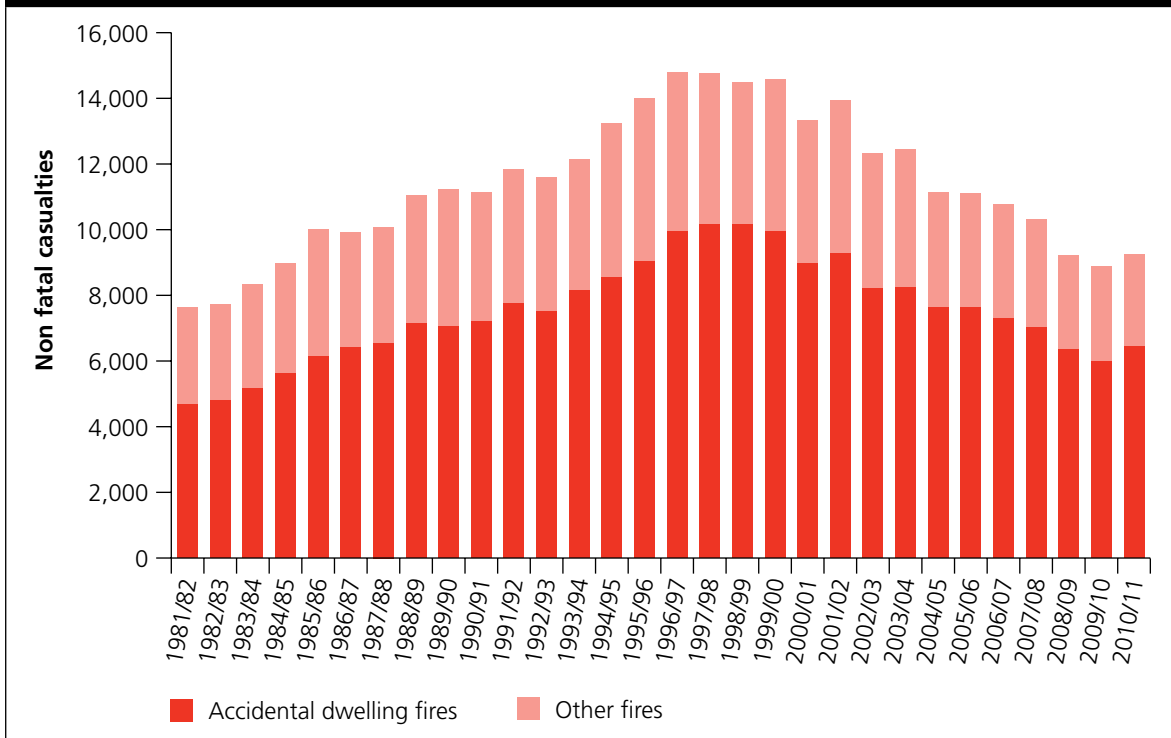
In 2010-11, the number of non-fatal casualties in fires recorded in England was 9,300, 4 per cent higher than in 2009-10. Much of this increase follows from the increase in numbers of recorded casualties who showed no obvious sign of injury but for whom a precautionary check was recommended. (See summary table 5).

Summary table 5: Injury severity for non-fatal fire casualties, England, April 2010 - March 2011			
	2009-10	2010-11	change 2009-10 to 2010-11
Hospital severe	740	740	-1%
Hospital slight	3,400	3,600	+6%
First aid	3,100	3,100	-2%
Non-fatal casualties excluding precautionary checks	7,300	7,400	+2%
Precautionary check recommended ¹	1,600	1,900	+17%
Non-fatal casualties including precautionary checks	8,900	9,300	+4%
of which resulting from dwelling fires	6,900	7,400	+7%
of which from accidental dwelling fires	6,000	6,400	+7%

¹ See Definitions note 4

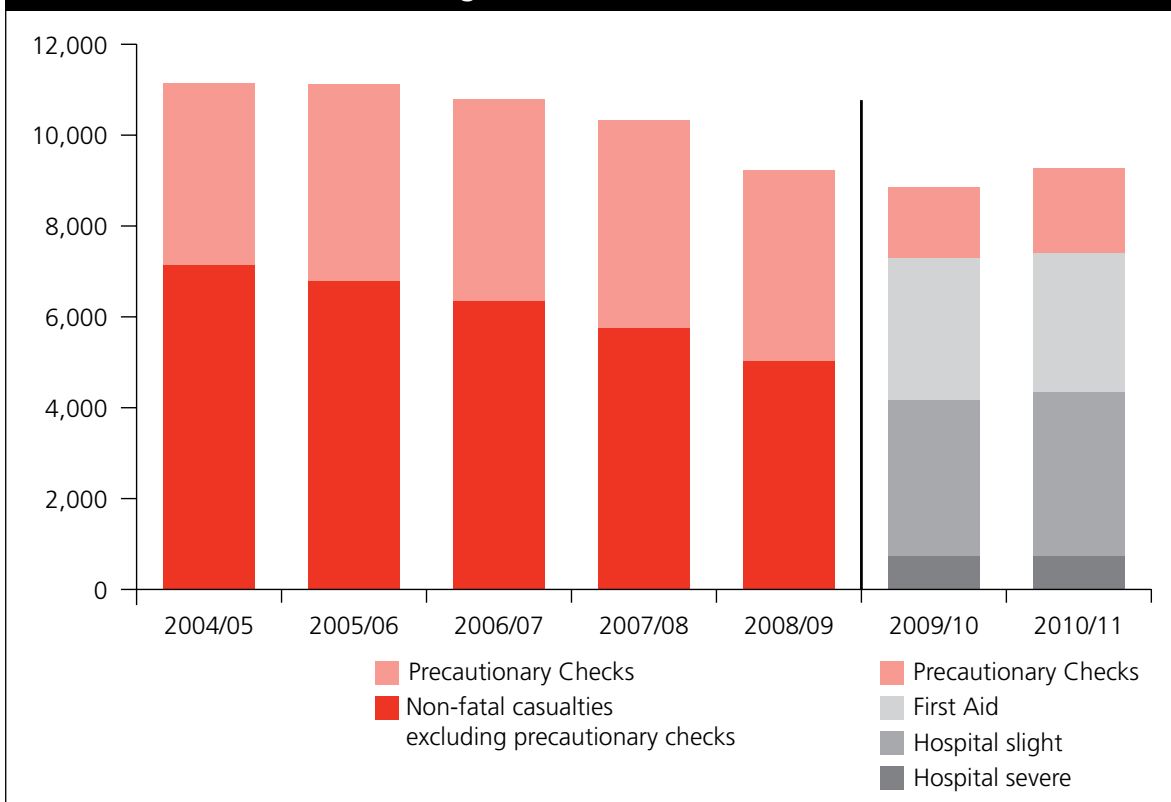
This increase contrasts with a strong downward trend since the mid 1990s. Total non-fatal casualties in 2010-11 were 37 per cent lower than their peak in 1996-97. (See chart 2. See also tables 2a-d and 6a-d for figures for earlier years.)

Chart 2: Non-fatal casualties, England, 1981/82 to 2010-11



As can be seen from the data points since 2009–10 in chart 3, the introduction of the new Incident Recording System (IRS) has led to a change in the way that non-fatal casualties are categorised. These changes to categories are explained in note 3 in the section ‘Comparability’ at the back of this publication.

Chart 3: Non-fatal casualties, England 2004-05 to 2010-11



4 Fires, false alarms and non-fire incidents

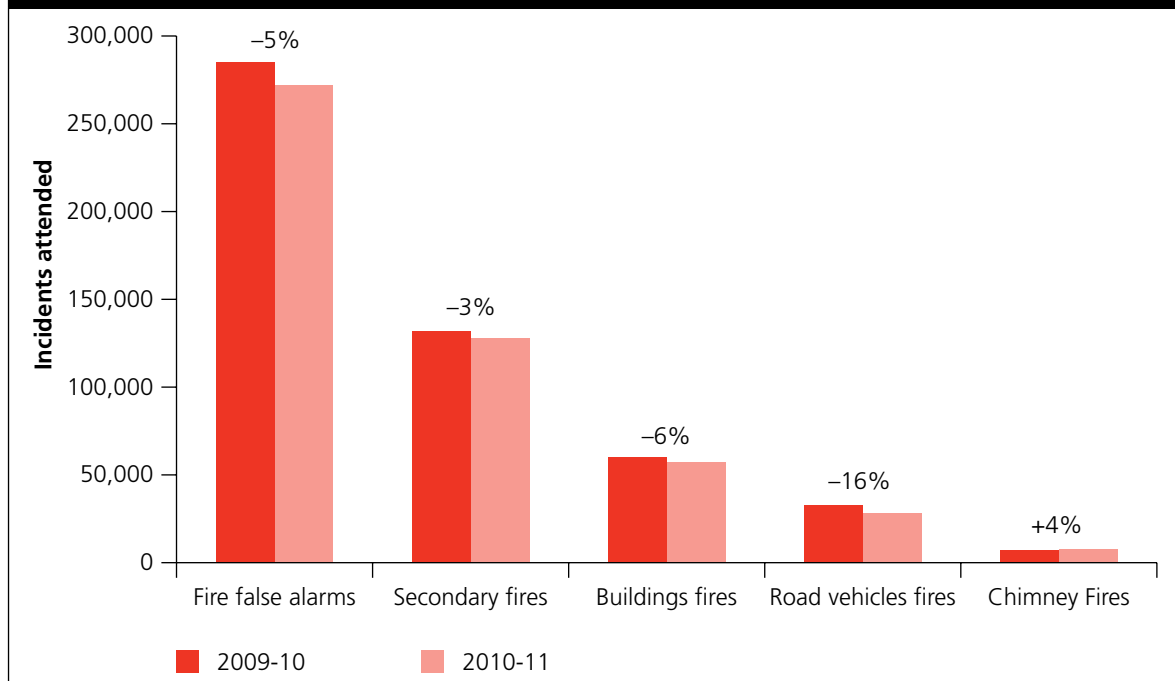
4.1 Fires (see also annex tables 1b&d, 3, 4 and 5)

Fire and Rescue Services attended a total of 227,000 fires in England in 2010-11, six per cent fewer than in 2009-10.

Chart 4 and Summary table 6 show latest figures for broad categories of incidents. Some key points for fire incidents are as follows:

- There were 57,000 building fires in 2010-11, six per cent fewer than in 2009-10. This includes 36,000 dwelling fires and 11,000 other building fires.
- There were 28,000 road vehicle fires in 2010-11, which was 16 per cent lower than in 2009-10.
- There were 31,000 accidental dwelling fires in 2010-11 (down 5 per cent on 2009-10).
- In total there were 116,000 deliberate fires in 2010-11. This was 11 per cent lower than in 2009-10.

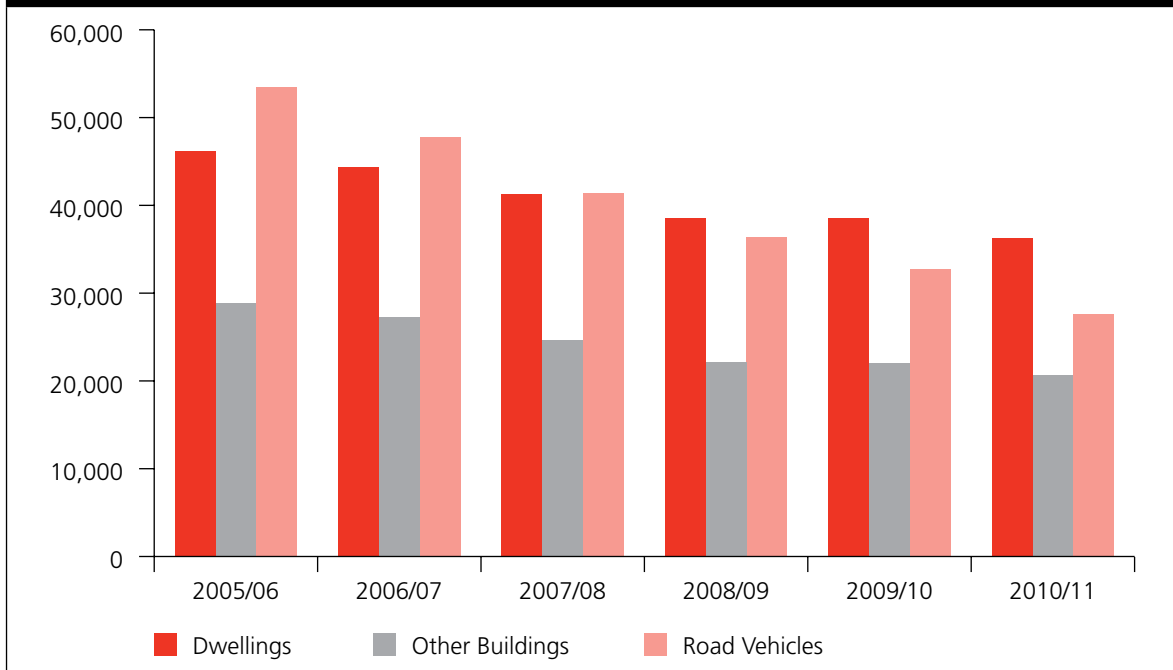
Chart 4: Percentage change in numbers of fires and false alarms, 2009-10 compared with 2010-11, England



Summary table 6: Incidents and false alarms attended, England			
	2009-10 ⁴	2010-11 ⁴	Change 2009-10 to 2010-11
Primary fires (A)	102,000	92,000	-10%
Building fires (A1)	60,000	57,000	-6%
Dwelling fires (A1i)	38,000	36,000	-5%
of which accidental	33,000	31,000	-5%
Other buildings ¹ (A1ii)	22,000	21,000	-6%
Road vehicles (A2)	32,000	28,000	-16%
Other ² (A3)	8,500	7,300	-15%
Secondary fires ³ (B)	132,000	128,000	-3%
Chimney fires (C)	7,400	7,600	+4%
Total fires attended (A+B+C)	241,000	227,000	-6%
of which deliberate fires	130,000	116,000	-11%
Fire false Alarms	285,000	272,000	-5%
Total (fires and false alarms)	527,000	499,000	-5%
Non-fire incidents	143,000	134,000	-6%
Total (including non-fire incidents)	669,000	633,000	-5%
¹ Largest components of which are commercial, health and education buildings ² Typically outdoor fires that are 'primary' because of a casualty or casualties, or attendance by five or more appliances ³ Typically outdoor fires not including property ⁴ Since each cell is rounded, components may not sum exactly to totals.			

Chart 5 shows the trend over recent years for the main categories of *primary fires*³. Each component shows a clear downward trend with the change compared to 5 years previous (2010-11 compared to 2005-06) being as follows: dwellings -21%, other buildings -28%, and road vehicles -48%. (See tables 1a-d and 6a-d for figures for earlier years.)

³ Primary fires are those involving any of: property, casualty or rescue, or 5 or more appliances attending.

Chart 5: Building and road vehicle fires, England, 2005-06 to 2010-11

4.2 False alarms (see also annex tables 1b&d and 3d)

In 2010-11, the number of false alarms attended in England fell by 5 per cent to 272,000. Within this category, the number of malicious false alarms fell by 13 per cent to 11,000. False alarms due to apparatus were down by 5 per cent to 185,000; these incidents constitute over two-thirds of all false fire alarms.

4.3 Non-fire incidents (see also annex table 7)

In 2010-11, Fire and Rescue Services attended a total of 134,000 non-fire incidents, down 6 per cent from 2009-10.

Attendances at road traffic incidents accounted for just under a quarter of non-fire incidents attended by fire and Rescue Services.

Summary table 7 shows numbers of incidents for the largest categories of non-fire incidents.

Summary table 7: Non-fire incidents in England, 2010-11				
Type of incident	2009-10	2010-11	Proportion 2010-11 (%)	change 2009-10 to 2010-11
Road traffic incidents	33,900	30,000	22	-12%
Non-road traffic incidents	108,700	104,300	78	-4%
of which :				
Spills and leaks	6,400	5,700	4	-10%
Water removal	15,300	16,800	12	+10%
Effecting entry	15,700	15,700	12	0%
Lift release	20,400	16,600	12	-19%
Other	50,900	49,600	37	-2%
Total non-fire incidents	142,600	134,300	100	-6%

Definitions

- 1 Details of the questions and categories used in the recording of incidents under the new Incident Recording System (IRS) are available in the document IRS Questions and Lists. This can be downloaded from:
www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/irsquestionslists

Categories of fire incident

- 2 **Primary** fires are those where one or more of the following apply: i) all fires in buildings, outdoor structures, and vehicles that are not derelict, ii) any fires involving casualties or rescues, iii) any fire attended by five or more appliances.

Secondary fires are the majority of outdoor fires including grassland and refuse fires, unless they involve casualties or rescues, property loss or unless five or more appliances attend. They include fires in derelict buildings.

Fatalities

- 3 Even if the fatal casualty dies subsequently, any fatality whose cause is attributed to a fire is included. There are also occasional cases where it transpires subsequently that fire was not the cause of death. Further, the Department obtains death certificate data from the Office for National Statistics which is used to cross check all records of fire fatalities. For all of these reasons, fatalities data may therefore be subject to revision.

Non-fatal casualties and Precautionary checks

- 4 Non-fatal casualties are recorded as being in one of four classes of severity as follows:
 - (i) Victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be serious
 - (ii) Victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be slight
 - (iii) First aid given at scene
 - (iv) Precautionary check recommended – this is when an individual is sent to hospital or advised to see a doctor as a precaution, having no obvious injury or distress.

Data and data quality

- 1 Commentary on the statistics in this publication is for the period April 2010 to March 2011. There is considerable seasonality and other fluctuation which can make interpretation difficult, especially for periods of less than twelve months. The hot dry summer of 2003 is a particularly acute example.
- 2 Tables 1a and 1b and 2a and 2b (accompanying spreadsheet tables) contain data for 2002 and 2003 which include estimates for November 2002 and January and February 2003 to account for the lack of information recorded during fifteen days of national industrial action. These estimates have been produced using comparable data for the same month of the previous year – a daily rate was calculated then multiplied by the number of strike days. Information on the actual number of fatal casualties which occurred during the strike periods were obtained from the Ministry of Defence and media and is included in tables 2a and 2b.

Comparability of data under the Incident Recording System (IRS) and its predecessor, the Fire Data Report system

- 1 The Incident Recording System was adopted nationally by 1 April 2009. Sixteen Fire and Rescue Services switched to the Incident Recording System before this date: Five switched by 1 April 2008. A further three switched in Autumn 2008, and eight switched in the first quarter of 2009. Quality assurance of the data on which this monitor is based identified the following two areas of potential discontinuity arising from the switchover from the old Fire Data Report system, which was largely paper-based, to the new Incident Recording System questions.
- 2 The first area relates to increases (typically slight) in the numbers of certain types of incident within the data of a handful of Fire and Rescue Services, notably in numbers of primary outdoor fires. These are apparently not real increases, but for example they may rather be the result of a small proportion of incidents in the past having been incorrectly reported as being 'secondary fires' rather than 'primary fires'. The following conclusions can be drawn:
 - it appears that these differences follow from incorrect reporting under the old Fire Data Report system
 - the effect on national totals appears to be slight
 - there is no suggestion of difference in completeness of recording of casualties.

- 3 The second area is the possibility of discontinuity in numbers of non-fatal casualties. Though the totals themselves do not suggest change in recording overall, the new categories have clearly affected sub-totals, notably the category 'precautionary check recommended'. This all follows from two improvements to the way in which non-fatal casualties have been recorded since the introduction of the Incident Recording System:
- a. The first change is that each casualty or fatality can be marked as 'not fire-related'. Around eight per cent of non-fatal casualties were marked as not fire-related in April 2010 to March 2011. However, in fire incidents, almost all non-fatal casualties can be expected to be 'fire-related', since very few would have occurred if there had not been a fire. Due to this concern, those non-fatal casualties marked 'not fire-related' have not been excluded. It is also worth noting that excluding the 8 per cent of non-fatal casualties would have introduced a large discontinuity compared to data from before the introduction of the new Incident Recording System.
 - b. The other potential issue arises since the Incident Recording System collects details of the injury of each non-fatal casualty in two questions, the first categorising the casualty as one of: '*severe injury (hospital)*', or '*slight injury*', or '*first aid*' or '*precautionary check advised*', while the second question records the type of injury.

This contrasts with the Fire Data Report system where a single question was used instead, with no category for 'first aid'. It appears that casualty cases recorded under Incident Recording System as 'first aid' would have most commonly been recorded under the old Fire Data Report system as 'precautionary check' (see chart 3), and a smaller proportion recorded as a specific type of injury. As noted, overall the total of all non-fatal casualty categories (including non-fatal casualties whose severity was either 'first aid' or 'precautionary check recommended' under Incident Recording System) appears to be consistent with totals under the Fire Data Report system.

Revisions policy

- 1 Revisions will be handled as per the Department for Communities and Local Government revisions policy with the following clarifications:
 - i) revisions due to receipt of subsequent information will normally be included routinely with every publication until the relevant time period is deemed to be 'closed'. Closure occurs after completion of the death certificates reconciliation exercise, which is currently carried out annually, and thus typically one to two years after the date of any incident.
 - ii) where revisions are needed for any other reason, notification with explanations will be provided in this and in other relevant publications.

Index of appendix data tables

Tables referred to in this document are available as separate downloadable files on the Department for Communities and Local Government website:
www.communities.gov.uk/fire/researchandstatistics/firestatistics/firestatisticsmonitors/

Workbook 1 & 2

Table 1a: Fires by location and false alarms, UK, 1999–2009Q1

Table 1b: Fires by location and false alarms, England, 1999–2011Q1

Table 1c: Fires by location and false alarms (non-deliberate), UK, 1999–2009Q1

Table 1d: Fires by location and false alarms (non-deliberate), England, 1999–2011 Q1

Table 2a: Casualties from fires, UK, 1999–2009Q1

Table 2b: Casualties from fires, England, 1999–2011Q1

Table 2c: Casualties from non-deliberate fires, UK, 1999–2009Q1

Table 2d: Casualties from non-deliberate fires, England, 1999–2011Q1

Workbook 3 (*tables by Fire and Rescue Service, 2001–02 – 2010–11 and 2007Q2 2011Q1*)

Table 3a: All fires, including chimney fires,

Table 3b (i): Primary fires

Table 3b (ii): Dwelling fires

Table 3b (iii): Other building fires

Table 3b (iv): Road vehicle fires

Table 3b (v): Fires in non-domestic buildings

Table 3c: Secondary fires

Table 3d (i): False alarms

Table 3d (ii): Malicious false alarms

Table 3d (iii): False alarms due to apparatus

Table 3d (iv): False alarms made with good intent

Table 3e: Fatal casualties

Table 3f: Non-fatal casualties

Table 3g: Non-fatal casualties (excluding precautionary checks and first aid cases)

Table 3h (i): Non-fatal casualties (Hospital severe) 2009-10 and 2010-11

Table 3h (ii): Non-fatal casualties (Hospital slight) 2009-10 and 2010-11

Table 3h (iii): Non-fatal casualties (First Aid) 2009-10 and 2010-11

Table 3h (iv): Non-fatal casualties (Precautionary check) 2009-10 and 2010-11

Workbook 4 (*tables by Fire and Rescue Service, 2001–02 – 2010–11 and 2007Q2-2011Q1*)

Table 4a: Accidental dwelling fires

Table 4b: Fatal casualties in accidental dwelling fires

Table 4c: Non-fatal casualties in accidental dwelling fires

Table 4d: Non-fatal casualties excluding pre-cautionary checks and first aid cases

Workbook 5 (*tables by Fire and Rescue Service, 2001–02 – 2010–11 and 2007Q2-2011Q1*)

Table 5a: Deliberate primary fires

Table 5b: Deliberate road vehicle primary fires

Table 5c: Deliberate primary fires in locations other than road vehicles

Table 5d: Deliberate secondary fires

Workbook 6 (Incidents and casualties long time series, UK and England)

Table 6a: Primary fires, dwelling fires, accidental dwelling fires

Table 6b: Fatalities in i) all fires and in ii) accidental dwelling fires

Table 6c: Non-fatal casualties

Table 6d: Deliberate fires by main types

Workbook 7 Special Service Incidents (*by Fire and Rescue Service*)

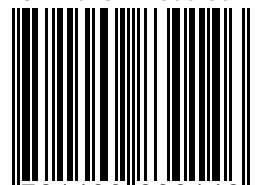
Population workbook – Population by Fire Authority area

Further information on fire statistics can be obtained from:

<p>For queries about data availability and requests for analyses:</p> <p>Jon Gamble Communities & Local Government Fire and Resilience Directorate Eland House, 3rd Floor Bressenden Place London SW1E 5DU</p> <p>Tel: 0303 444 3923 Email: Jon.Gamble@communities.gsi.gov.uk</p>	<p>For suggestions relating to publications and other feedback:</p> <p>Gavin Sayer Communities & Local Government Fire and Resilience Directorate Eland House, 3rd Floor Bressenden Place London SW1E 5DU</p> <p>Tel: 0303 444 2818 Email: Gavin.Sayer@communities.gsi.gov.uk</p>
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