

Fire statistics monitor

April to September 2010. Issue No. 01/11





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Any enquiries regarding this document/publication should be sent to us at:

Department for Communities and Local Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU
Telephone: 030 3444 0000

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Data contained in this publication

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

Numbers of non-fire incidents attended by Fire and Rescue Services are also included in this publication (section 4.3) as in the last edition. This follows the introduction of the following annex tables in recent editions: 1c&d, 2c&d, 3bii-v, 4d, and 6a-d. The intention is to continue to develop this range of data tables. Feedback and requests are welcome.

Next edition

The next edition of this publication has been pre-announced for June or July 2011. It will contain data for incidents up to the end of March 2011.

Responsible statistician

Gavin Sayer
0303 444 2818

1 Key points of provisional April to September 2010 data

1.1 Fatalities and non-fatal casualties

- The provisional¹ total number of fire fatalities in England in the six months from April to September 2010 was 140, 19 (12 per cent) fewer than in April to September 2009. This is 27 per cent fewer than ten years previous (191 in April to September 2000) and 60 per cent fewer than twenty five years earlier (346 in April to September 1985).
- The provisional¹ number of fatalities in England in accidental dwelling fires between April and September 2010 was 88, 10 fewer than April to September 2009. This is 21 per cent fewer than ten years previous (111 in April to September 2000) and 41 per cent fewer than twenty five years earlier (148 in April to September 1985).
- In the six months from April to September 2010, the number of non-fatal casualties in fires in England increased by 3 per cent to 4,300 from 4,200 during April to September 2009. This is 34 per cent fewer than ten years previous (6,500 in April to September 2000) and 7 per cent fewer than twenty five years earlier (4,600 in April to September 1985).

1.2 Fires, false alarms, and non-fire incidents

- Fire and Rescue Services attended a total of 136,000 fires in England in the six months from April to September 2010, 3 per cent fewer than in April to September 2009. This is 46 per cent fewer than ten years previous (April to September 2000).
- The number of building fires fell by 6 per cent to 29,000, and there were 15,000 road vehicle fires, 16 per cent fewer than in April to September 2009.
- The total number of fire false alarms attended in England fell by 8 per cent to 137,000 in April to September 2010. This is 31 per cent fewer than ten years previous (April to September 2000).
- Fire and Rescue Services attended 66,300 non-fire incidents in April to September 2010, down 9 per cent on April to September 2009. The largest non-fire incident categories are road traffic collisions (22%), lift releases (13%), effecting entry (13%) and water removal (9%).

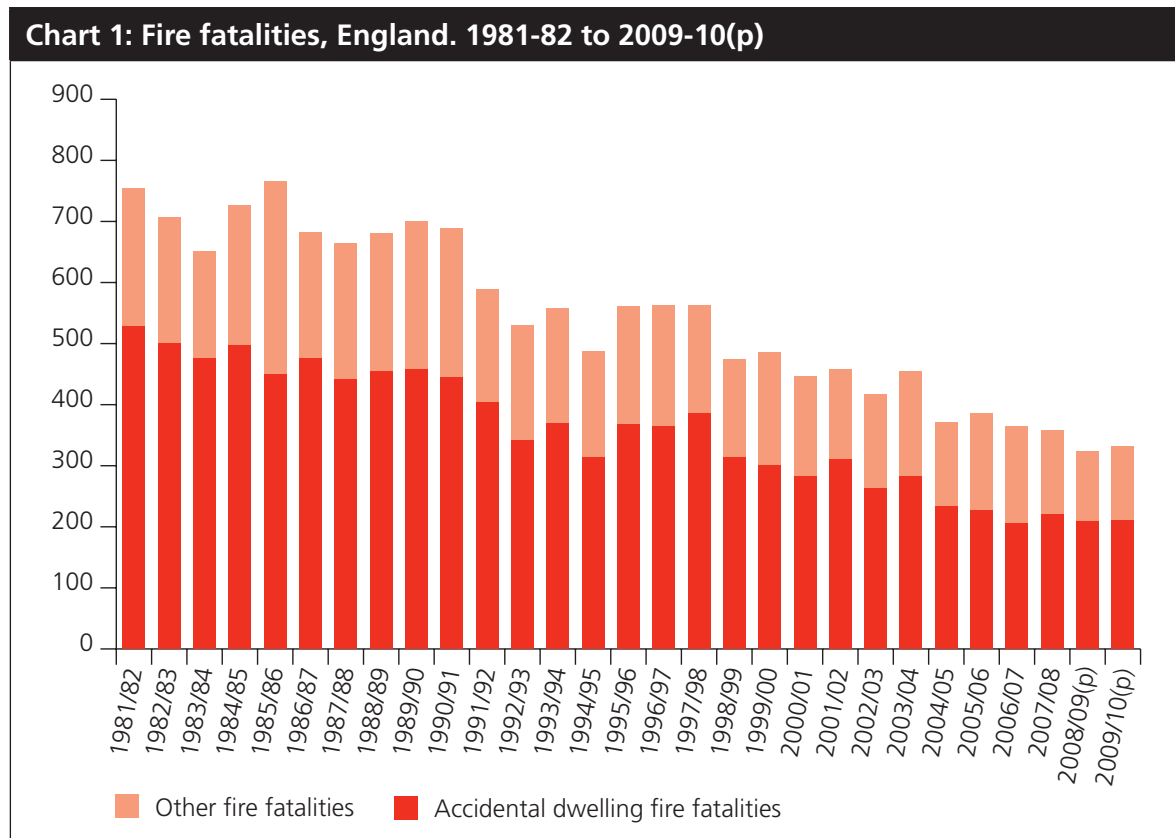
¹ See definition 3.

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 the six months from April to September 2010 there were 140 fire fatalities, 19 (12 per cent) fewer than in April to September 2009. Chart 1 shows the long term downward trend in fire fatalities.
- Of the 140 fire fatalities between April to September 2010, almost two-thirds (88) occurred in accidental dwelling fires.
- Summary tables 1 and 2 show that there were fewer fatalities from April to September 2010 compared to the same six months a year earlier. This contrasts with April to September 2009 when there were more fatalities compared to the same months of 2008, as reported in the May 2010 edition of this publication. Fluctuations are a common feature of these data, and as a result trends can be assessed much more readily from annual totals, as in chart 1.



Summary table 1: All fire fatalities, England

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09(p)	2009-10(p)	2010-11(p)	Change 2009-10(p) – 2010-11(p)
April-June	81	100	81	60	92	88	-4
July-September	86	80	66	59	67	52	-15
October-December	93	94	102	110	85	-	-
January-March	126	90	109	94	88	-	-
April-September (6 months)	167	180	147	119	159	140	-19
April – March (12 months)	386	364	358	323	332	-	-
(p) provisional							

Summary table 2: Fatalities in accidental dwelling fires, England

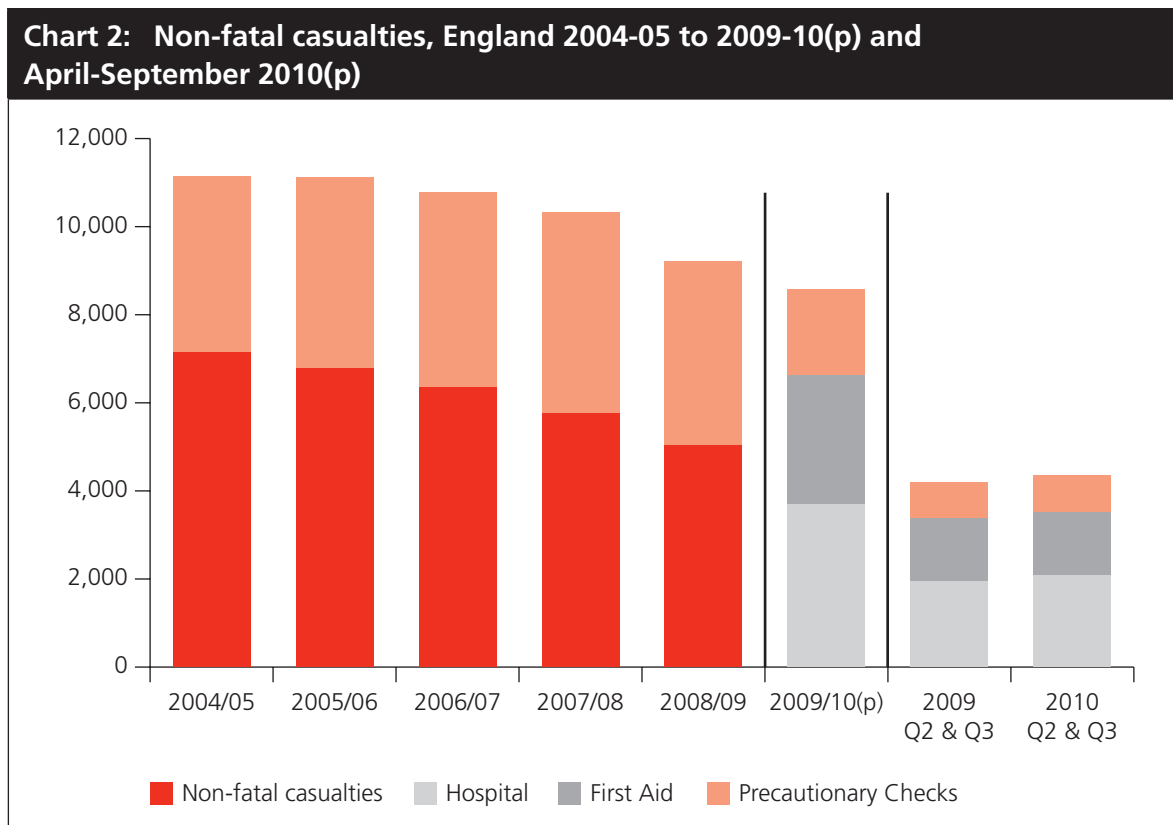
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09(p)	2009-10(p)	2010-11(p)	Change 2009-10(p) – 2010-11(p)
April-June	52	62	44	36	59	57	-2
July-September	40	37	37	34	39	31	-8
October-December	51	51	64	67	55	-	-
January-March	83	55	76	72	57	-	-
April-September (6 months)	92	99	81	70	98	88	-10
April – March (12 months)	226	205	221	209	210	-	-
(p) provisional							

3 Non-fatal fire casualties

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

In the six months from April to September 2010, the number of non-fatal casualties in fires recorded in England was 4,300, 3 per cent more than in April to September 2009.

As can be seen from the data points since 2009–10 in chart 2, 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.



Summary table 3: Non-fatal fire casualties, England, April-September 2009(p) and 2010(p)

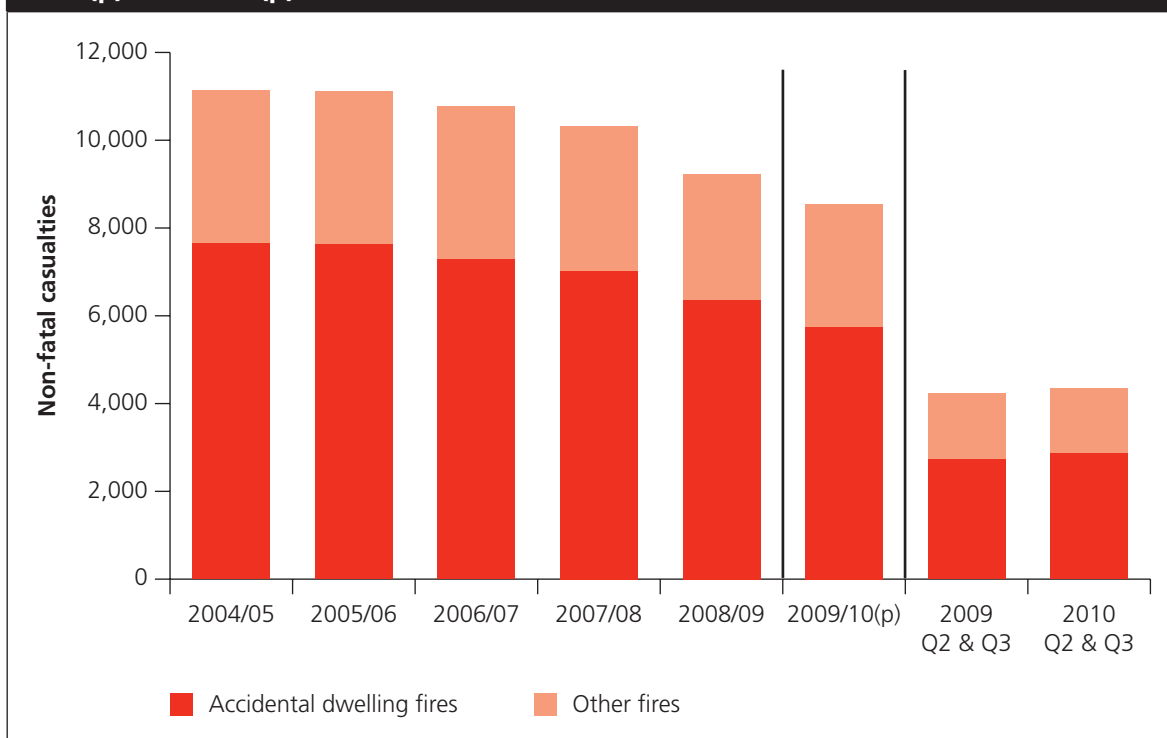
	April-Sep 2009(p)	April-Sep 2010(p)	change 2009 to 2010(p)
Non-fatal casualties including precautionary checks ^{1,2}	4,200	4,300	+3%
of which resulting from dwelling fires	3,100	3,300	+6%
of which from accidental dwelling fires	2,700	2,900	+5%

¹ A precautionary check is when an individual is sent to hospital or advised to see a doctor as a precaution, having no obvious injury or distress

² Includes cases recorded as first aid under the new Incident Recording System

(p) Provisional

Chart 3: Non-fatal casualties, England, 2004-05 to 2009-10(p) and April-September 2009(p) and 2010(p)



4 Fires, false alarms and non-fire incidents

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

A total of 136,000 fires were attended in England in the six months of April to September 2010, a 3 per cent decrease compared with the same six months a year earlier.

Summary table 3: Incidents and false alarms attended, England			
	April-September 2009(p) ⁴	April-September 2010(p) ⁴	Change April-September 2009-2010(p) ⁴
Primary fires (A)	55,000	49,000	-11%
Building fires (A1)	31,000	29,000	-6%
Dwelling fires (A1i)	19,000	18,000	-6%
of which accidental	16,000	15,000	-5%
Other buildings ¹ (A1ii)	12,000	11,000	-5%
Road vehicles (A2)	18,000	15,000	-16%
Other ² (A3)	6,500	5,000	-23%
Secondary fires ³ (B)	85,000	86,000	+1%
Chimney fires (C)	1,500	1,700	+10%
Total fires attended (A+B+C)	141,000	136,000	-3%
of which deliberate fires	79,000	73,000	-7%
Fire false Alarms	148,000	137,000	-8%
Total (fires and false alarms)	289,000	273,000	-6%
Non-fire incidents	73,000	66,000	-9%
Total (including non-fire incidents)	363,000	340,000	-6%

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 Each cell is rounded, thus while numbers are correct, table may nevertheless appear to give small discrepancies
 (p) Provisional

Chart 4: Percentage change in numbers of fires and false alarms, April-September 2009(p) compared with April-September 2010(p), England

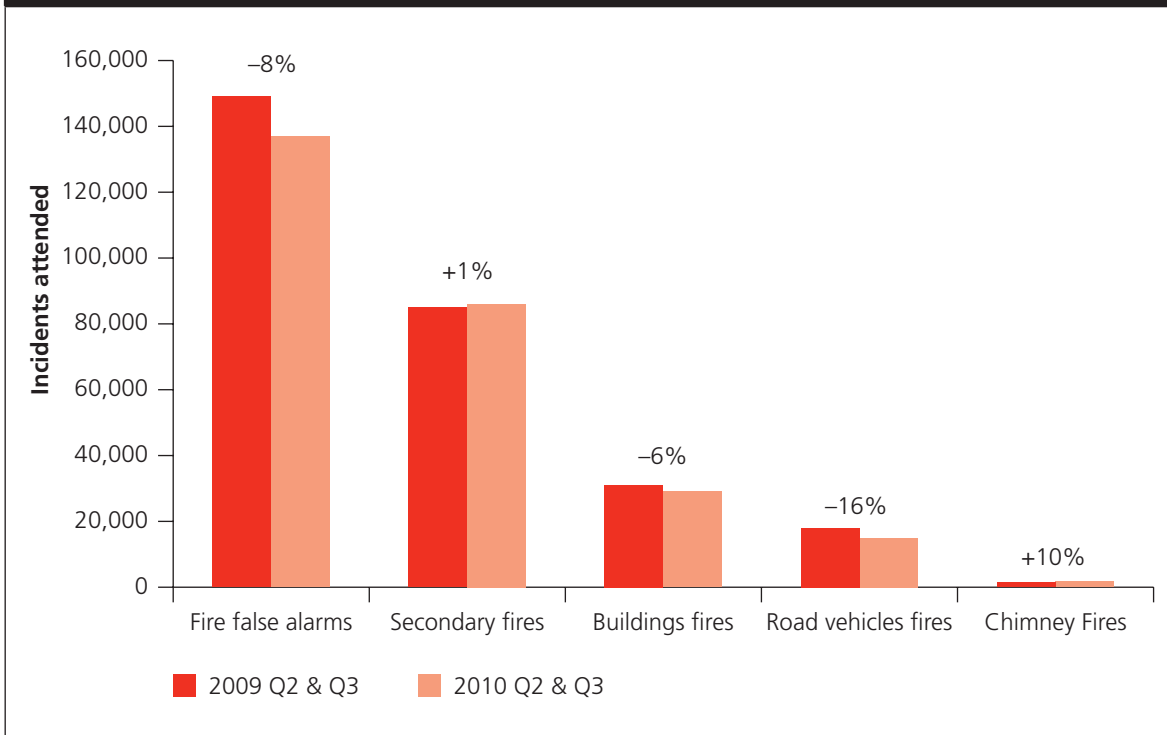
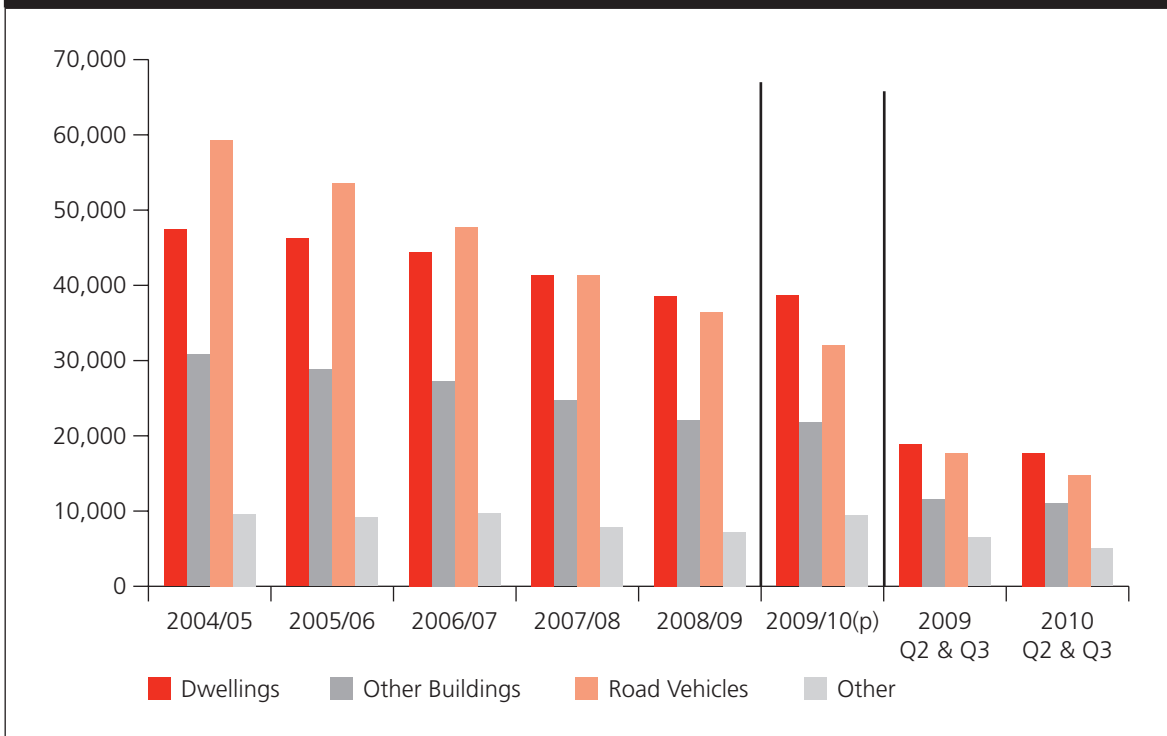


Chart 5: Primary Fires, England, 2004-05 to 2009-10(p) and April-September 2009(p) and 2010(p)



The number of building fires was 6 per cent lower at 29,000. This includes 18,000 dwelling fires and 11,000 other building fires (e.g. commercial premises and schools). The number of road vehicle fires fell by 16 per cent to 15,000.

There were 15,000 accidental dwelling fires in April to September 2010 (down 5 per cent the same six months a year earlier).

There were 73,000 deliberate fires in the six months of April to September 2010. This is 7 per cent lower than April to September 2009.

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

In April to September 2010, the number of false alarms attended in England fell by 8 per cent to 137,000. Within this category, the number of malicious false alarms fell by 19 per cent to 5,500. False alarms due to apparatus were down by 7 per cent to 92,000; these incidents constituted two-thirds of all false fire alarms during this period.

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

In April to September 2010, Fire and Rescue Services attended a total of 66,300 non-fire incidents, down 9 per cent from the same six months a year earlier.

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

Summary table 5 shows numbers of incidents for the largest categories of non-fire incidents.

Summary table 5: Non-fire incidents in England, April-September 2009(p) compared with April-September 2010(p)

Type of incident	April-September 2009(p)	April-September 2010(p)	Proportion April-September 2010(p) %	change April-September 2009(p) to 2010(p)
Road traffic incidents	16,600	14,900	22	-10%
Non-road traffic incidents	56,500	51,500	78	-9%
of which :				
Spills and leaks	3,500	3,200	5	-10%
Water – removal/provision	7,500	5,800	9	-22%
Effecting entry	8,300	8,400	13	+1%
Lift release	11,100	8,600	13	-23%
Other	26,100	25,500	38	-2%
Total non-fire incidents	73,100	66,300	100	-9%
(p) provisional				

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 include all fires in non-derelict buildings and outdoor structures, non-abandoned vehicles or any fires involving casualties or rescues or 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 if five or more appliances attend. They include fires in derelict buildings.

Fatalities

- 3 A person whose death is attributed to a fire is counted as a fatality even if the death occurred later. There are also occasional cases where it transpires subsequently that fire was not the cause of death. The figures for fatalities are thus subject to revision, following cross-checking by statistical staff in the Department of the information supplied by Fire and Rescue Services against death certificate data provided by the Office for National Statistics. This includes cause of death which may be the findings of Coroner's court proceedings. Uncertainty as to whether fire was the cause of death can be particularly common in road vehicle fires that follow a road accident. This publication contains finalised death figures up to the end of March 2008, and provisional figures for subsequent periods. Results of the cross-checking process for April 2008 to March 2009 were not available until after the deadline for this publication. The consequent revisions will be included in the next edition of this publication. To date, this cross-checking has consistently resulted in a small net reduction in the number of fatalities caused by fire.

Precautionary checks

- 4 A precautionary check 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 to September 2010. 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 1 and 2 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 is calculated then multiplied by the number of strike days. Information on the actual number of fatal casualties which occurred during the strike periods has been obtained from the Ministry of Defence and media and is included in this monitor in Tables 1 and 2.

Comparability of data under the new Incident Recording System 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 largely paper-based Fire Data Report system to the new Incident Recording System questions.
- 2 The first area relates to increases (typically slight) in the numbers of certain incident types 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 fatal and non-fatal 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 affect sub-totals, notably the category 'precautionary checks'. 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'. 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. However around seven per cent of non-fatal casualties were marked as not fire-related in April to September 2010. Due to this concern, those non-fatal casualties marked 'not fire-related' have not been excluded. Furthermore, excluding them 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 non-fatal casualties 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 2), and a smaller proportion recorded as a specific injury. As noted, overall the total of all non-fatal casualty categories (including first aid as well as precautionary checks under Incident Recording System) appear to be consistent with data 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. It was not however possible to revise data for 2009/10 in this publication (though numbers of fatalities were revised). The other data for 2009/10 were not revised, as a result of one Fire and Rescue Service still being unable to transfer a complete set of records for 2009/10. Instead relevant tables were provided by this Fire and Rescue Services, resulting in a large amount of processing to add to national totals. It is intended that all 2009/10 data will be revised when data for 2010/11 are published for the first time (June or July 2011 – exact date to be confirmed).
 - 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, 1999–2010Q3

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

Table 1d: Fires by location and false alarms (non-deliberate), England, 1999–2010 Q3

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

Table 2b: Casualties from fires, England, 1999–2010Q3

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

Table 2d: Casualties from non-deliberate fires, England, 1999–2010Q3

Workbook 3 (*tables by Fire and Rescue Service, 2001–02 – 2009–10 and 2007Q2-2010Q3*)

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)

Workbook 4 (*tables by Fire and Rescue Service, 2001–02 – 2009–10 and 2007Q2-2010Q3*)

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 – 2009–10 and 2007Q2-2010Q3*)

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*)

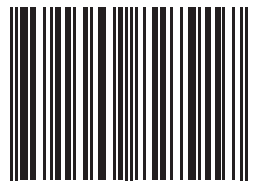
Population workbook – Population by Fire Authority area

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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