



Home Office

Fire and rescue workforce and pensions statistics: England, April 2017 to March 2018

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1 Key facts

This release presents statistics which cover 31 March 2018 specifically (for point in time statistics), the financial year 2017/18 (1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018) and in one case the calendar year 2017 for fire and rescue services (FRSs) in England. The results show:

Total workforce and leavers

- **40,451 staff (FTE) were employed by FRSs** on 31 March 2018. This was a one per cent decrease compared with the previous year (40,657 in 2017). Since the peak in 2009, the number of FRS staff has decreased by 22 per cent.
- **32,340 staff (FTE) were employed as firefighters** on 31 March 2018. This was a one per cent decrease compared with the previous year (32,761 in 2017). Since 2009 the number of firefighters has decreased by 23 per cent.
- During the financial year 2017/18, **3,988 staff left FRSs**. This is nine per cent of staff headcount. From 2009/10 the proportion of FRS staff leaving had been on a slow upward trend from seven per cent to ten per cent in 2016/17.

Workforce diversity

- **5.7 per cent (1,980) of firefighters were women** in England in 2018. This compares with 5.2 per cent in the previous year (1,832 in 2017). Since 2010 the main cause in the increase in the proportion of women firefighters has been a decrease in the number of men firefighters.
- **4.1 per cent (1,293) of firefighters were from an ethnic minority group** in England in 2018. This compares with 3.9 per cent in the previous year (1,255 in 2017). This has been caused by the number of white firefighters decreasing by a greater rate than the number of firefighters from an ethnic minority group. There were 85 fewer firefighters from an ethnic minority group in 2018 than in 2011. This compares with 14.6 per cent of the English population in the 2011 Census belonging to an ethnic minority group.

Firefighter health and safety

- There was a total of **2,588 firefighter injuries** during 2017/18, three per cent greater than in the previous year (2,523 in 2016/17). The number of firefighter injuries was on a downward trend for over a decade but has plateaued since 2014/15.
- There were **933 incidents involving an attack on firefighters** in 2017/18, the highest recorded figure since data were first collected in 2010/11.

Firefighter pensions

- The **Firefighters' Pension Scheme deficit in 2017/18 was around £552 million**. This was a three per cent increase compared with the previous year (£535 million in 2016/17). Expenditure was around £811 million while income was around £259 million.

2 Introduction

This release covers statistics on the fire and rescue service workforce, the diversity of that workforce, the health and safety of the firefighters, including attacks on them, and firefighters' pensions. This publication covers the financial year 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 (with the exception of opt outs which are 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017) with point in time statistics from 31 March 2018. The publication is updated annually.

Information on workforce and on-duty firefighter health and safety is recorded by individual FRSs and is provided to the Home Office through a manual collection via excel spreadsheets. Statistics on attacks on firefighters are sourced from the Incident Recording System and, more information on that can be found in the [fire statistics guidance](#). Pensions statistics are provided to the Home Office via an online data collection system.

This publication is accompanied by fire data tables, which can be found on the [fire statistics data tables page](#) which contains all data tables on fire published by the Home Office.

The following tables have been updated and added as part of this publication:

Fatalities and casualties: 0508, 0509 and 0510.

Workforce: 1101, 1102, 1103, 1104, 1105, 1106, 1107, 1108, 1110, 1111, 1112, 1120, 1121 and 1122.

Pensions: 1301, 1302, 1303, 1304 and 1305.

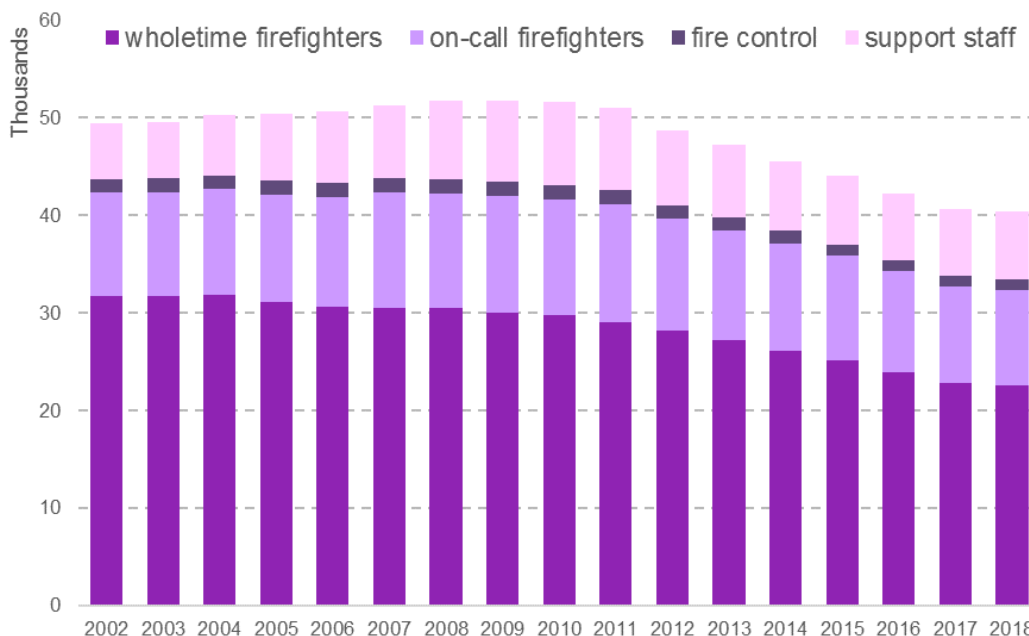
3 Total workforce and leavers

Total workforce

Figure 3.1 (below) shows that the total full-time equivalent (FTE) workforce gradually increased from around 49,400 in 2002 to a peak of roughly 51,700 in 2009. This was an average increase of less than one per cent per year (0.7%). Over this time total firefighters (FTE) was broadly stable (decreasing by around 400), while control and support staff (FTE) increased by roughly 2,700.

Since 2009 the total workforce (FTE) has decreased, from around 51,700 to roughly 40,500 in 2018 (22 per cent lower). This shows an average decrease of more than two and half per cent per year over this period (2.7%). There were 9,600 fewer firefighters, whether wholetime¹ or on-call², (around 23 per cent lower) compared with 2009.

Figure 3.1 Total staff employed (FTE) by FRSs in England, 2002 to 2018



Source: FIRE1101

Specifically:

- **40,451 staff (FTE) were employed by FRSs on 31 March 2018.** This was a one per cent decrease compared with the previous year (40,657 in 2017), a 14 per cent decrease compared with five years ago (47,192 in 2013) and a 22 per cent decrease compared with ten years ago (51,703 in 2008).
- **32,340 FRS staff (FTE) were firefighters** on 31 March 2018. This was a one per cent decrease compared with the previous year (32,761 in 2017), a 16 per cent decrease compared with five years ago (38,454 in 2013) and a 23 per cent decrease compared with ten years ago (42,222 in 2008).

¹ A full-time firefighter, regardless of rank.

² A firefighter responding when required during their 'on-call' hours, sometimes called Retained Duty System.

- **1,061 FRS staff (FTE) were fire control³** on 31 March 2018. This was a two per cent increase compared with the previous year (1,043 in 2017), a 20 per cent decrease compared with five years ago (1,319 in 2013) and a 30 per cent decrease compared with ten years ago (1,522 in 2008).
- **7,050 FRS staff (FTE) were support staff⁴**. This was a three per cent increase compared with the previous year (6,852 in 2017), a five per cent decrease compared with five years ago (7,419 in 2013) and a 11 per cent decrease compared with ten years ago (7,959 in 2008).

[Further information on total workforce can be found in fire data tables 1101 and 1102.](#)

Workforce leavers

Information on leavers is collected on a headcount (i.e. an individual rather than FTE) basis. The list of reasons individuals left the service in table FIRE1111 is not exhaustive, in fact almost a third of staff leaving in 2017/18 left for “other reasons”. The Home Office has reviewed the leaver’s categories with the aim of amending the information collected from 2018/19 in order to provide a more complete picture of reasons for leaving.

Since data became available in 2010 the proportion of FRS staff that left the FRS increased slowly from seven per cent to ten per cent in 2016/17. This is partly caused by increases in the rate of staff retiring through either “normal retirement”, “early retirement” or “ill health”. In 2017/18 this figure was nine per cent.

Specifically:

- During the financial year 2017/18, 3,988 staff left FRSs. This was nine per cent of staff headcount. This proportion was ten per cent in the previous year (4,425 staff in 2016/17) and eight per cent five years ago (3,847 in 2012/13).
- The most common reason staff left FRSs in 2017/18 was because of a “normal” or “early” retirement, which accounted for a total of 31 per cent (1,233) of those leaving. This was 28 people per thousand members of FRS staff. In the previous year this rate was 33 people while five years ago the rate was 21 people.
- The second most common reason staff left FRSs in 2017/18 was to take employment outside FRSs, which accounted for 23 per cent (908) of those leaving. On-call firefighters (43 per cent) and Support Staff (40 per cent) make up disproportionate parts of this 908.
- In 2017/18, 91 FRS staff retired through “ill health”, two per cent of those leaving. This was 2.1 people per thousand members of FRS staff. In the previous year this rate was 2.3 people while five years ago the rate was 2.2 people.

[Further information on workforce leavers can be found in fire data tables 1110, 1111 and 1112.](#)

³ A uniformed member of staff working in a fire and rescue service control centres to answer emergency calls and deal with mobilising, communications and related activities, regardless of rank.

⁴ A member of staff employed by the FRS who is not a firefighter or in fire control. It includes for example administrative roles, clerical support, analytical support, finance, vehicle maintenance, property management etc.

4 Workforce diversity

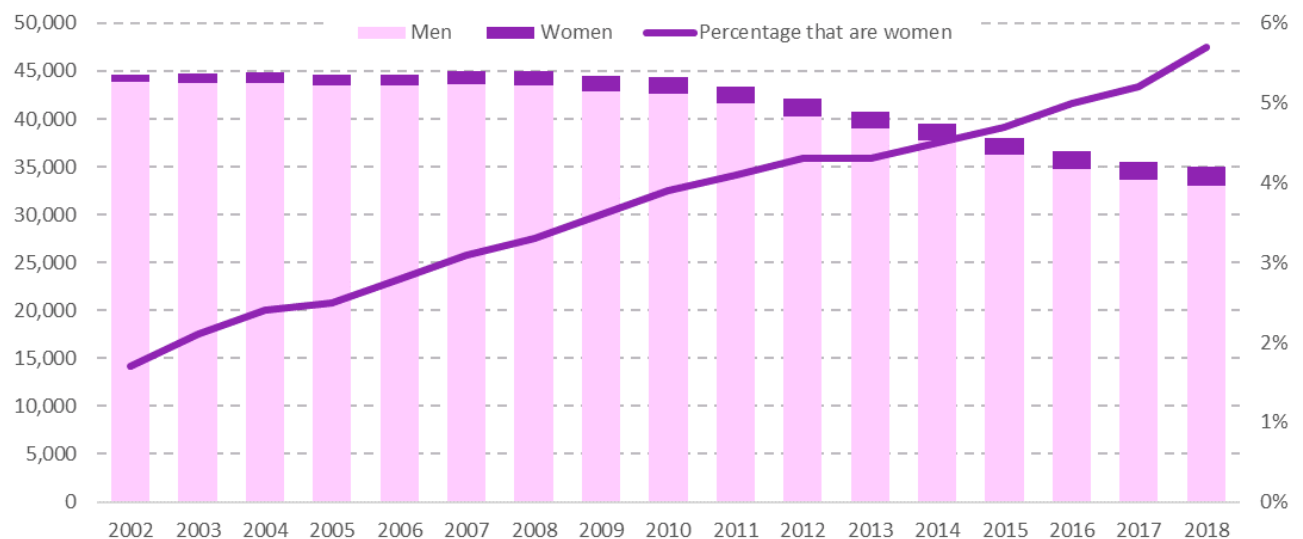
This section covers information on five diversity characteristics – gender, ethnicity, age, religion and sexual orientation as well as new statistics on those joining FRSs. The figures in this section are taken as of 31 March 2018.

Gender

Gender statistics are published at FRS level in [table 1103](#).

The **number** and **proportion** of women firefighters have slowly increased from 2002 (the first year for which comparable data are available). In 2002, 1.7 per cent (753) of all firefighters were women, by 2018 this proportion had reached 5.7 per cent (1,980). The percentage of police officers in England that were women in 2018 (29.8%)⁵ is over five times the percentage of firefighters that are women.

Figure 4.1: Gender of firefighters in England, 2002 to 2018



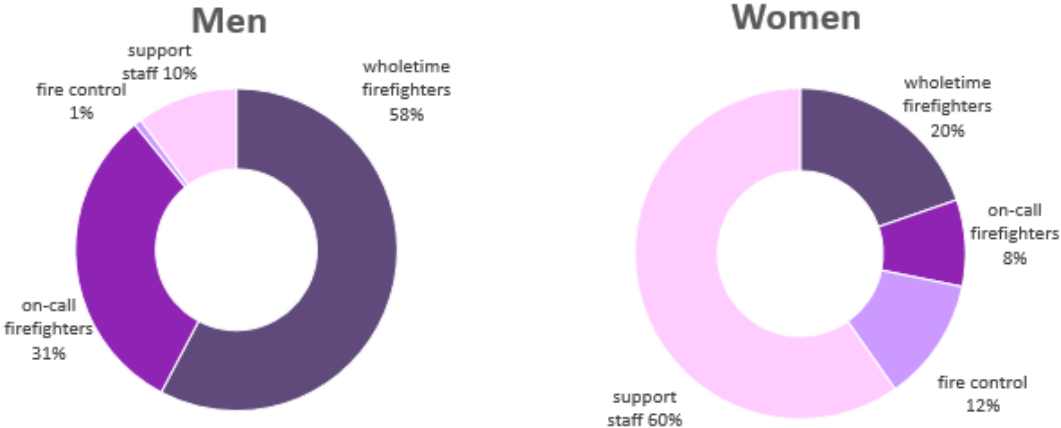
Source: FIRE1103

In the seven years since 2010 the main cause in the increase in the **proportion** of women firefighters has been a decrease in the **number** of men firefighters. The number of women firefighters has slightly increased by around 250 over this time whilst the number of men firefighters has decreased by almost 9,600.

In 2018, as shown in figure 4.2 below, 28 per cent of women and 89 per cent of men employed by FRSs were firefighters.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2018>

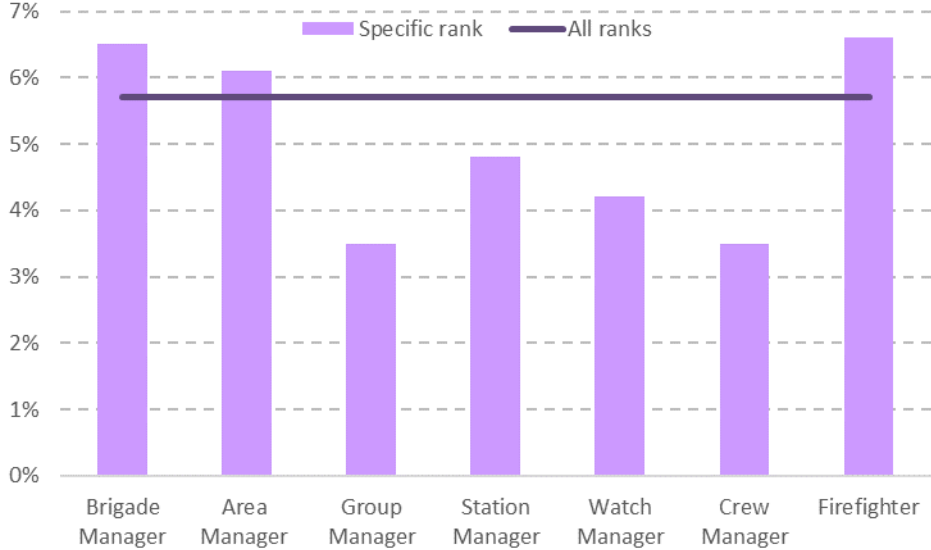
Figure 4.2: Gender of staff employed by FRSs, by role in England in 2018



Source: FIRE1103

The rank of women firefighters shows a mixed story, with the top two ranks (brigade managers and area managers) showing above average proportions of women (6.5 per cent and 6.1 per cent respectively, compared with 5.7 per cent for all ranks). The lowest rank (firefighter) also showed an above average proportion (6.6 per cent). The middle ranks (group manager, station manager, watch manager and crew manager) all showed proportions of women lower than the average for all ranks (ranging from 3.5 per cent to 4.8 per cent).

Figure 4.3: Proportion of staff who are women, by rank in England in 2018



Specifically:

- 5.7 per cent (1,980) of firefighters were women in England in 2018. This compares with 5.2 per cent in the previous year (1,832 in 2017), 4.3 per cent five years ago (1,756 in 2013) and 3.3 per cent ten years ago (1,502 in 2008).
- 75.5 per cent (848) of fire control were women in 2018. This compares with 76.0 per cent in the previous year (850 in 2017), 78.6 per cent five years ago (1,091 in 2013) and 78.8 per cent ten years ago (1,258 in 2008).

- 15.9 per cent (7,020) of all FRS staff were women in 2018. This compares with 15.1 per cent in the previous year (6,670 in 2017), 14.4 per cent five years ago (7,256 in 2013) and 14.1 per cent ten years ago (7,851 in 2008).
- In 2018, 89 per cent of men employed by FRSs were firefighters (compared to 90 per cent in 2017). In comparison only 28 per cent of women employed by FRSs were firefighters (increased from 27% in 2017).

Ethnicity

All FRSs collect and provide ethnicity information to the Home Office, however 4,223 (9.6%) of staff did not state an ethnicity in 2018. This proportion has varied between 7.2 per cent and 11.3 per cent over the past eight years. Ethnicity statistics are published at FRS level in [table 1104](#).

The **proportion** of firefighters that were from an ethnic minority group⁶ has increased slowly since 2011 (from when consistent data are available) from 3.5 per cent to 4.1 per cent in 2018. This compares with 14.6 per cent of the English population in the 2011 Census. The percentage of police officers in England in 2018 that are from an ethnic minority group (6.4 per cent) is over one and half times the percentage of firefighters that are from an ethnic minority group (4.1 per cent).

There were 85 fewer firefighters from an ethnic minority group in 2018 than in 2011, however as the **number** of white firefighters has decreased by a greater rate than the **number** of firefighters from an ethnic minority group, the **proportion** of firefighters that were from an ethnic minority group increased. All four ethnic minority groups were under-represented as firefighters when compared with the 2011 Census⁷.

Specifically:

- 4.1 per cent (1,293) of firefighters were from an ethnic minority group in England in 2018. This compares with 3.9 per cent in the previous year (1,255 in 2017) and 3.7 per cent five years ago (1,362 in 2013).
- 4.7 per cent (1,881) of FRS staff were from an ethnic minority group in England in 2018. This compares with 4.4 per cent in the previous year (1,786 in 2017) and 4.2 per cent five years ago (1,932 in 2013).
- In 2018, 69 per cent of FRS staff from an ethnic minority group were firefighters (compared with 70 per cent in 2017), in comparison 80 per cent of those with a white ethnicity employed by FRSs were firefighters (compared with 81 per cent in 2017).

Age

Statistics on the age of FRS staff by role are published at FRS level in [table 1105](#).

⁶ The Operational Statistics data collection collects ethnicity information using five groups- White, Mixed, Asian or Asian British, Black or Black British and Chinese or Other Ethnicity. The other option is "not stated" and these responses are removed from the calculations above.

⁷ The total resident population, not just those of working age

The average age of firefighters has been gradually increasing. In 2011 it was 40, moving to 41 in 2013 and to 42 in 2017 and 2018.

Specifically:

- 35 per cent (12,360) of firefighters were between 46 and 55 years of age in 2018. This is unchanged from the previous year (12,522 in 2017) and 30 per cent five years ago (12,404 in 2013). These figures are higher than the 22 per cent of the resident population⁸ aged 16 to 64 (and hence “working age”) who were aged 46 to 55 in June 2017.
- Only three per cent (1,172) of firefighters were aged 16 to 24 in 2018. This proportion was also three per cent in the previous year (1,046 in 2017) and five years ago (1,403 in 2013). These figures are far lower than the 17 per cent of the resident population aged 16 to 64 (and hence “working age”) who were aged 16 to 24 in June 2017.

Box 1: Experimental statistics and data quality

Statistics on **religion and sexual orientation** remain viewed as experimental statistics due to some quality limitations and other issues which users should be aware of. These include:

- Some FRSs not collecting these data.
- The data contain a relatively high proportion of “not stated” entries; the proportion varies significantly across different FRSs.
- As a result, 43 per cent of data for religion and 49 per cent for sexual orientation are either not collected or not stated in 2018. Therefore, the figures we do have may not be fully representative of FRSs as a whole.
- For data protection reasons we have combined or suppressed any categories with very small figures and statistics are published at an England level only. FRS level figures would require heavy suppression, greatly limiting the usefulness of many of the statistics.

The statistics serve a public good in understanding the diversity of the FRS workforce, but given the current quality limitations which have not improved since last year, they are still published as “Experimental Statistics”. **Experimental Statistics** are statistics which are published in order to involve users and stakeholders in their development and as a means to build in quality at an early stage.

Although we also collect statistics on **disability** they are not sufficiently complete or comparable to publish at present. We are looking to improve our understanding of these statistics and the scope for improving the quality. Also these statistics would need to be heavily suppressed as described above.

Religion (experimental statistics)

Religion statistics are published in [table 1106](#).

⁸ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/annualmidyearpopulationestimates/mid2017>

Eight FRSs did not have information on religion in the datasets they supplied to the Home Office in 2018, meaning that no data were available for nine per cent of staff, although this is less than the 27 per cent in 2011. A further 35 per cent of all FRS staff chose to not state their religion in 2018 (broadly the same percentage as previous years). All of these responses are excluded from the calculations below.

Figures are available from 2011 and have shown the proportion of firefighters that are Christian has been the biggest religious group, with proportions ranging from 54 to 62 per cent. In 2018 this figure was 54 per cent. These compare with 59 per cent of England's resident population in the 2011 Census.

The second largest group of firefighters is those that stated they had "no religion", ranging from 32 to 41 per cent over time. In 2018 this figure was 41 per cent. This compares with 25 per cent of England's resident population in the 2011 Census.

Sexual orientation (experimental statistics)

Sexual orientation statistics are published in [table 1107](#).

Six FRSs did not have information on sexual orientation in the datasets they supplied to the Home Office in 2018, meaning that no data were available for eight per cent of staff, although this is less than the 27 per cent in 2011. A further 40 per cent of all FRS staff chose to not state their sexual orientation in 2018 (broadly the same percentage as previous years). All of these responses are excluded from the details below.

Figures are available from 2011 and have shown the proportion of firefighters that stated they were gay, lesbian or bisexual has been three per cent in each year between 2011 and 2017.

Workforce joiner diversity

This year, for the second time, the Home Office collected information on the diversity of those joining FRSs. Last year this was a voluntary collection but it was mandatory in 2017/18.

The proportion of women, staff from an ethnic minority and younger staff within new joiners in 2017/18 was greater than from within existing numbers of firefighters. The proportion of firefighters who were women and staff from an ethnic minority was greater than in the previous year.

Specifically:

- During 2017/18, there were 2,612 new firefighters (by headcount not FTE), seven per cent of all firefighters.
- During 2017/18, 10.5 per cent of **new** firefighters were **women**, this is greater than the current 5.7 per cent of **all** firefighters that are women and the 8.7 per cent in 2016/17.
- During 2017/18, 5.2 per cent of **new** firefighters were from **an ethnic minority group**, this is greater than the 4.1 per cent of **all** firefighters that were from an ethnic minority group and the 5.1 per cent in 2016/17.

- During 2017/18, 74 per cent of **new** firefighters were 35 or under, this is greater than the 27 per cent of **all** firefighters that were 35 or under and the same as in 2016/17.

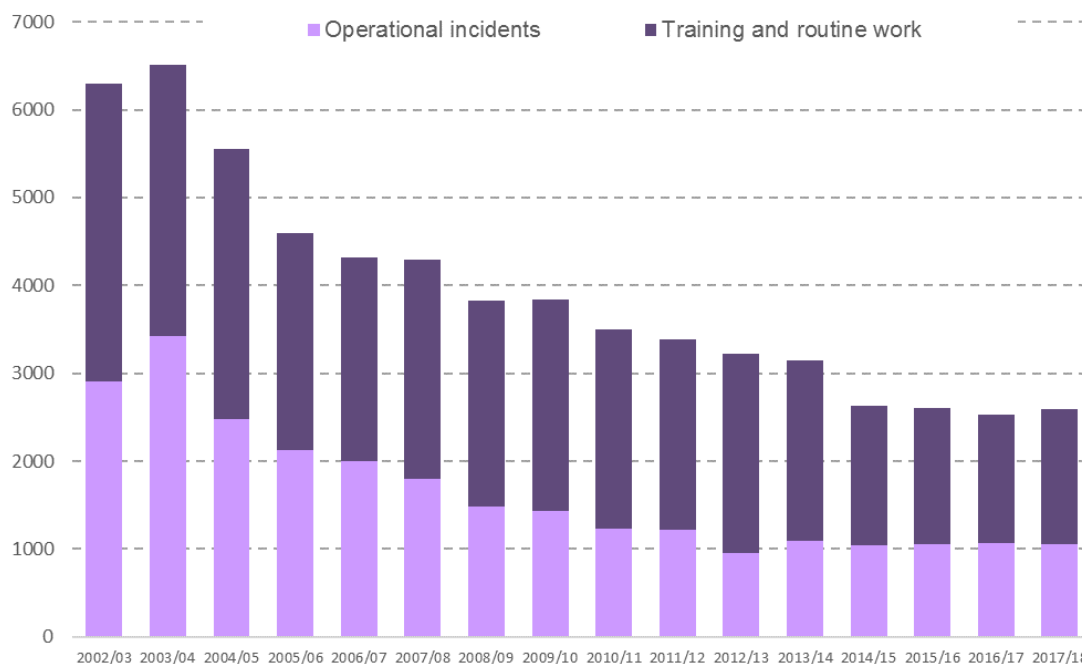
[Further information on workforce leavers can be found in fire data tables 1120, 1121 and 1122.](#)

5 Firefighters' health and safety

Data are collected on injuries sustained by on-duty firefighters and whether they were sustained during operational incidents (at fires, road traffic collisions or at other special service incidents) or during training (operational or fitness) and routine activities. The collection asks for the total number of personnel injured, the number of 'over seven day injuries', the number of RIDDOR⁹ major injuries, and the number of fatalities.

Between 2003/04 and 2014/15 the number of firefighters injured was on a downward trend, partly reflecting the reduced number of incidents attended as well as other factors, injuries decreased in both operational incidents (by more than two-thirds) and training and routine activities (by around a half). Since 2014/15 the number of injuries has plateaued at around 2,600 injuries per year.

Figure 5.1 Total injuries to firefighters by activity type, England; 2002/03 to 2017/18



Source: FIRE0508

Specifically:

- There was a total of 2,588 firefighter injuries during 2017/18, three per cent greater than in the previous year (2,523 in 2016/17) but 20 per cent lower than five years before (3,228 in 2012/13).
- 1,052 firefighter injuries were sustained during operational incidents, two per cent less than in the previous year (1,071 in 2016/17) but ten per cent greater than five years beforehand (957 in 2012/13).

⁹ For full definitions of RIDDOR injuries, see the HSE [online guidance](#).

- 61 were classed as major injuries¹⁰, compared with 130 in the previous year and 74 five years earlier.
- There were no firefighter fatalities recorded in 2017/18. Over the last decade there have been 9 firefighter fatalities in total.

[Further information on firefighters' health and safety found in fire data tables 0508 and 0509.](#)

¹⁰ For a full definition please see the [Fire Statistics Definitions Document](#)

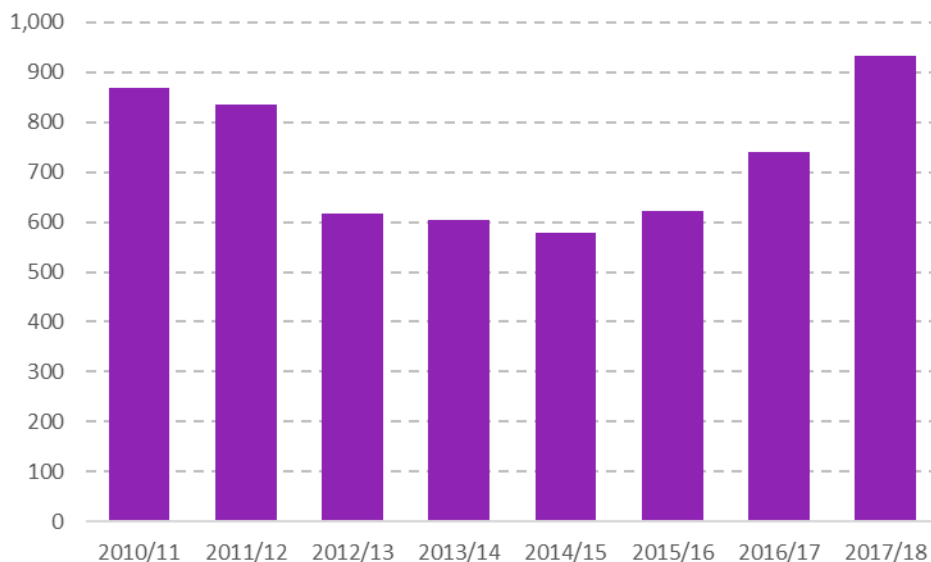
6 Attacks on firefighters

This chapter summarises the number of incidents attended by FRSs in England involving an attack on firefighters. The statistics are sourced from the Home Office's IRS¹¹.

It should be noted that the IRS does not provide a complete picture of attacks on firefighters as it only covers incidents attended by firefighters through an emergency call. It does not cover attacks occurring on, for example, training or routine activities. In addition, it provides a count of the number of incidents that involved an attack not the number of attacks, as more than one firefighter could have been attacked at one incident. The IRS only allows one option to be coded and FRSs record the one that best describes it, so there may be an undercount of some types of attacks and it may be possible for verbal attacks to include an injury.

In 2017/18, there were 933 incidents involving an attack on firefighters, an increase of 194 (26 per cent) on the previous year and the highest recorded since data were first collected in 2010/11.

Figure 6.1 Attacks to firefighters, England; 2010/11 to 2017/18



The majority of incidents involving an attack involved verbal abuse (53%, 498 incidents in 2017/18) and a further 30 per cent involved objects being thrown at firefighters and /or appliances (280 incidents). The remaining incidents involved physical abuse (5%, 43 incidents), harassment (4%, 36 incidents) and other acts of aggression (8%, 74 incidents). These proportions were similar to those in previous years.

In 2017/18, there were 81 injuries in total from these 933 incidents. The majority (74) were classified as slight and the remaining 7 as serious (requiring a hospital stay). This was an increase of 31 (62 per cent) on the previous year and the highest recorded since data were first collected in 2010/11.

¹¹ More information on the IRS can be found in the [Fire Statistics Definitions Document](#)

7 Firefighters' Pensions

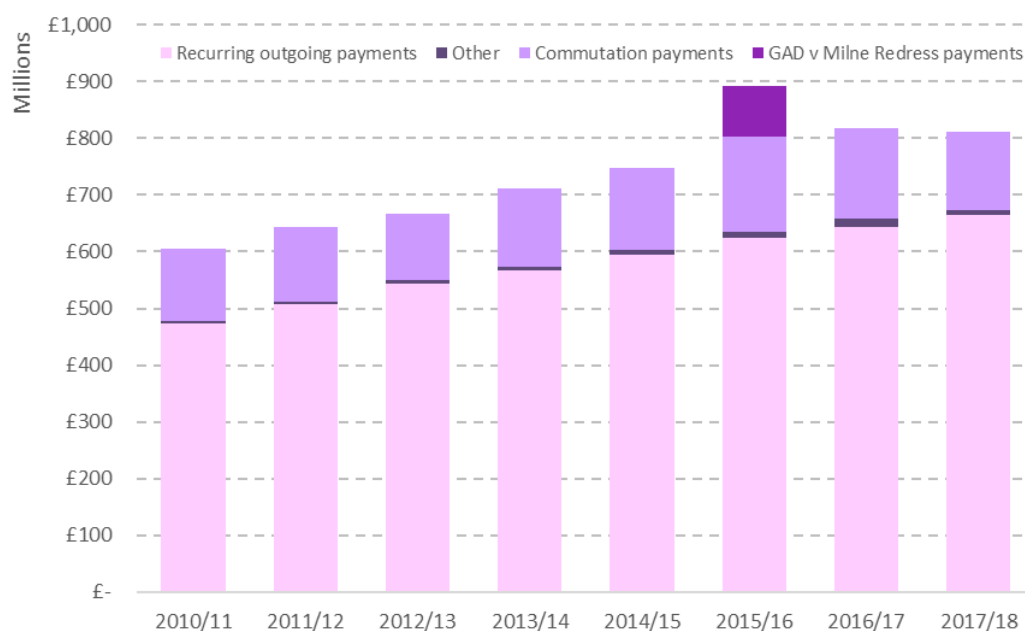
This section provides income, expenditure and membership submitted by all 45 fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) in England. This includes data from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 (or 1st January 2017 to 31st December 2017 for opt outs). There are three pension schemes for firefighters: the 1992 Scheme, the 2006 Scheme and the 2015 Scheme ([See full definitions](#)).

Pension scheme expenditure and income

Pension scheme expenditure in this context refers to total eligible pension spend by employers in respect of their retired employees and paid directly out of their local pension fund account.

Between 2010/11, from when consistent and comparable data were collected, and 2016/17 the firefighters' pension scheme expenditure has gradually increased, with the 2016/17 total (around £820 million) 35 per cent greater than in 2010/11 (around £600 million). The only exception to the gradual increase was caused by a large redress payment¹² of £89 million in 2015/16. The figure for 2017/18 was one per cent lower than 2016/17.

Figure 7.1 Firefighters' Pension Scheme Expenditure in England, 2010/11 to 2017/18



Source: FIRE1301

Specifically:

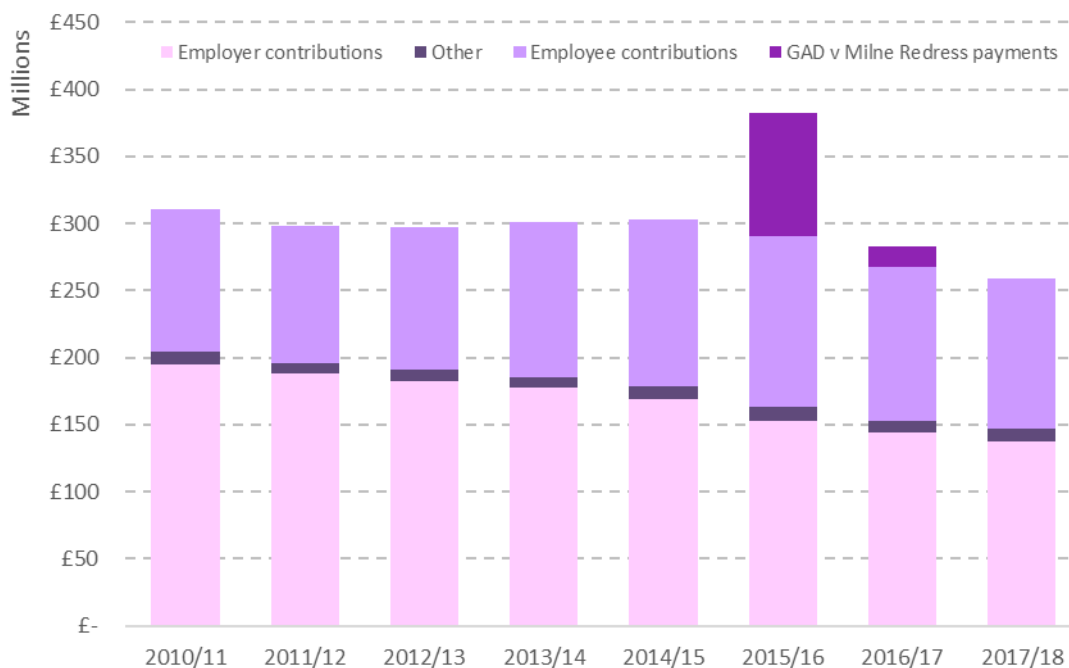
- **Firefighters' Pension Scheme expenditure in 2017/18 was around £811 million.** This was a one per cent decrease compared with the previous year (£818 million in 2016/17) and 22 per cent higher than five years previously (£667 million in 2012/13).

¹² In May 2015, the Pensions Ombudsman's findings in the case of Milne v the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) meant that FRAs were required to pay commutation redress to affected members of the 1992 Scheme who retired between 2001 and 2006.

- In 2017/18, **82 per cent of expenditure was “recurring outgoing payments”** and 17 per cent was “commutation payments”. Transfers and Miscellaneous expenditure together total less than one per cent.

Pension scheme income is the cash flow paid into the local pension fund account by an employee (member of the scheme) and employer. The Firefighters' pension scheme income was broadly stable from 2010/11, from when consistent and comparable data have been collected from, until 2014/15. Since then, excluding the additional grant payments received by FRAs in respect of GAD v Milne and the employee contributions holiday, income has decreased gradually. Income in 2017/18 was 15 per cent lower than in 2014/15.

Figure 7.2 Firefighters’ Pension Scheme Income in England, 2010/11 to 2017/18



Source: FIRE1302

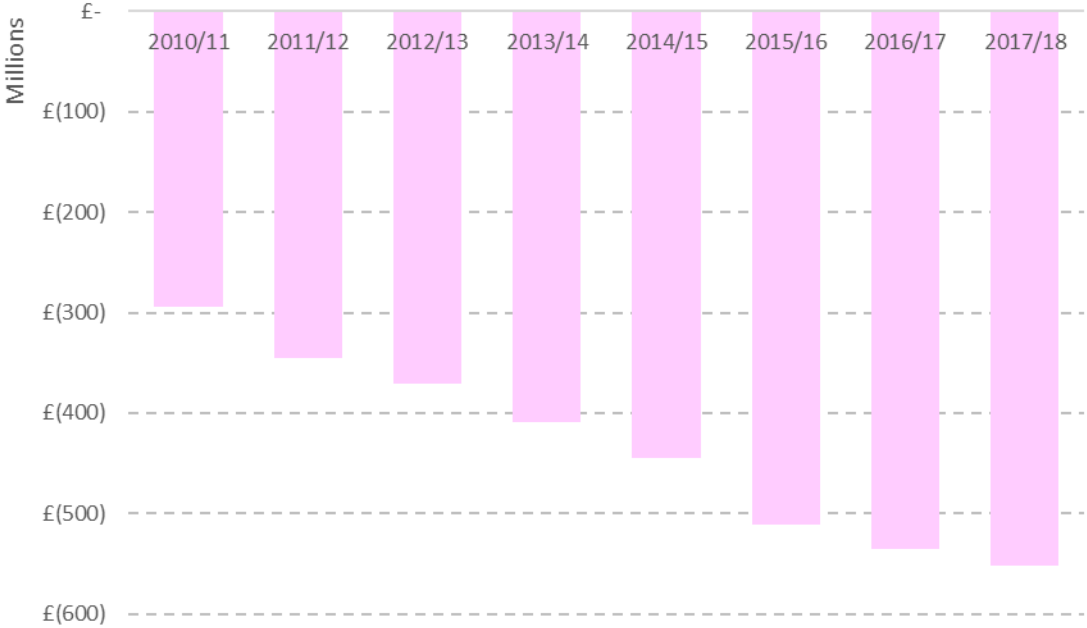
Specifically:

- **Firefighters’ Pension Scheme income in 2017/18 was around £259 million.** This was three per cent decrease compared with the previous year (£268 million in 2016/17) and 13 per cent decrease from five years previously (£297 million in 2012/13).
- In 2017/18, **53 per cent of income was “employer contributions”**, 43 per cent was “employee contributions” and the remaining four per cent comprised transfers, miscellaneous income and ill-health charges.

It is also possible to look at changes in the **Pension Scheme Deficit**, that is, the annual difference in expenditure and income of the Firefighters’ Pension Fund.

The **Firefighters’ Pension Scheme deficit in 2017/18 was around £552 million.** This was a three per cent increase compared with the previous year (£535 million in 2016/17) and a 49 per cent increase compared with five years previously (£370 million in 2012/13).

Figure 7.3 Firefighters’ Pension Scheme Total Deficit in England, 2010/11 to 2016/17



Source: FIRE1303

[Further information on fire pension income and expenditure can be found in fire data tables 1301, 1302 and 1303.](#)

Pension scheme membership

The statistics on Pension Scheme membership reflect data returns submitted by all 45 FRAs in England. The information on Firefighters’ Pension Scheme membership within this release covers the three schemes in England - the 1992, 2006 and 2015 Schemes ([See full definitions here](#)). Regular firefighters employed before 6 April 2006 were eligible for membership of the 1992 Scheme, which was closed to new membership on 5 April 2006. The 2006 Scheme was introduced for regular and on-call (or retained) firefighters employed since 6 April 2006. A Modified Scheme was introduced in April 2014 in response to an Employment Tribunal decision in 2011 that required retained firefighters, employed during the period 1 July 2000 and 5 April 2006 inclusive, to be given access to a pension arrangement that provided similar benefits as those provided by the 1992 Scheme. Newly recruited regular and retained firefighters are now only eligible to join the 2015 Scheme which was introduced in England on 1 April 2015. The data published in this release amalgamate the 2006 and Modified Scheme membership data.

The data refer to 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 only. This is due to a change in the way Firefighters’ Pension Fund (FPF) forms collected data on membership, which means that data are not directly comparable with previous years.

Home Office statisticians are currently considering the future collection of the 'pension scheme membership opt-out' information with regards to the burden of collection and the use made of the data in this publication. If you regularly use this information then please let us know when and how you use it by contacting us at firestatistics@homeoffice.gov.uk.

Of the total number of pensioner members as at 31 March 2018, **95 per cent (40,637) were members who have retired and were in receipt of benefits from the 1992 Scheme**. This was 96 per cent (39,974) on 31 March 2017. The other five per cent were in different schemes. Pensioners are those firefighters who have retired from service and are in receipt of their pension benefits.

14 per cent of deferred members were still employed as a firefighter. Deferred members include those firefighters who continue in employment but have elected to opt-out of their membership of the pension scheme, and those who have left their employment before reaching the age at which they are entitled to receive their pension benefits.

74 per cent (17,580) of active regular members and 89 per cent (8,730) of active retained members belonged to the 2015 Scheme as at 31 March 2018. The large majority of members being in the 2015 Scheme is due to the transition of 1992 and 2006 Scheme members to the 2015 Scheme on 1 April 2015. Regular firefighter members are personnel currently employed in the role of a firefighter and who are members of one of the pension schemes and pay employee contributions based on the pensionable pay that they earn. Retained firefighter members are personnel contracted to be available for agreed periods of time for firefighting purposes, but who may also have an alternative employment elsewhere.

There were 619 opt-outs from Pension Schemes in 2017 (opt out data are in calendar year format), and 92 per cent (571) of them were opt-outs from the 2015 Scheme. Of these 619 opt-outs, 181 (29 per cent) related to firefighters who had been re-enrolled to membership in accordance with auto-enrolment requirements, 233 (38 per cent) related to new recruits who elected not to join, and 205 (33 per cent) related to scheme members who opted out and became entitled to a deferred pension.

[Further information on fire pension scheme membership can be found in fire data tables 1304 and 1305.](#)

8 Further information

Guidance for using these statistics and other fire statistics publications can be found on or via the fire statistics collection page

www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-statistics

This publication is accompanied by reference data tables. All the fire statistics tables can be found at

www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fire-statistics-data-tables

Improving workforce statistics

If you have any comments on any of the statistics or presentation in this release, especially on the Experimental Statistics on diversity please contact us on Email:

FireStatistics@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

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