Home Office

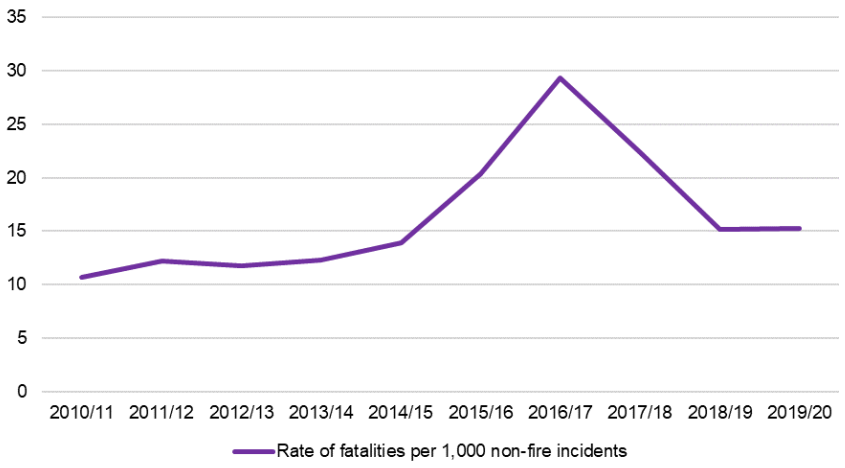
Detailed analysis of non-fire incidents attended by fire & rescue services,
England, April 2019 to March 2020

This release contains statistics about non-fire incidents attended by fire and rescue services (FRSs) in England for the year ending March 2020. The statistics are sourced from the Home Office's online Incident Recording System (IRS) and include statistics on all non-fire incidents and related fatalities and non-fatal casualties, with long term comparisons.

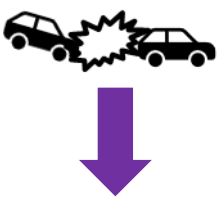
Key results

In 2019/20 there were **171,959 non-fire incidents** and **2,618 fatalities in non-fire incidents** (both increased six per cent compared with the previous year).

In 2019/20 there were **15 fatalities per 1,000 non-fire incidents.** The fatality rate peaked around 2016/17 predominantly due to the introduction of the emergency medical responding trials.



During the first COVID-19 national lockdown, the number of non-fire incidents was below the expected range based on 2015-19 data. This was predominantly driven by a reduction in road traffic collisions.



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Home Office responsible statistician:
Deborah Lader

Press enquiries:
pressoffice@homeoffice.gov.uk
0300 123 3535

Public enquiries:
firestatistics@homeoffice.gov.uk

1 Non-fire incidents summary

FRSs attend many types of incident that are not fires or fire false alarms, these are known as non-fire incidents or special service incidents. Examples include flooding incidents, responding to road traffic collisions, animal assistance, effecting entry/exit and assisting other agencies.

Key results

In 2019/20, there were

- **171,959 non-fire incidents.** This is an increase of six per cent from the previous year (162,253) and an increase of 37 per cent from five years ago (125,239).

The most common categories of non-fire incidents attended were

- **Road traffic collisions** (31,088 incidents, virtually unchanged compared with 2018/19)
- **Effecting entry/exit** (26,339 incidents, a six per cent increase compared with 2018/19)
- **Assisting other agencies** (18,330 incidents, a 24% increase compared with 2018/19)

Trends in non-fire incidents

Since 1999/00, the year for which data on non-fire incidents was first collected, the number of non-fire incidents has tended to fluctuate except for one six-year period of steady gradual decline (2008/09 to 2014/15) followed by a two-year period of sharp increase (see Figure 1.2 for detail).

Between 1999/00 and 2008/09 the number of non-fire incidents fluctuated between 155,000 and 175,000. There was then a general decline in the number of non-fire incidents from around 155,000 in 2008/09 to around 125,000 in 2014/15. This period saw declines in 19 of the 23 specific non-fire incident types[1]. The incident types that saw the greatest reductions, in absolute numbers of incidents, were; lift releases, medical incidents (first responder) and non-fire false alarms.

Following this period of decline there were two substantial year on year increases. In 2015/16 the number of non-fire incidents was up to around 153,000 and peaked in 2016/17 at around 175,000. These increases coincided with the introduction, in 2015, of the National Joint Council supported trials of emergency medical responding, where FRSs formed

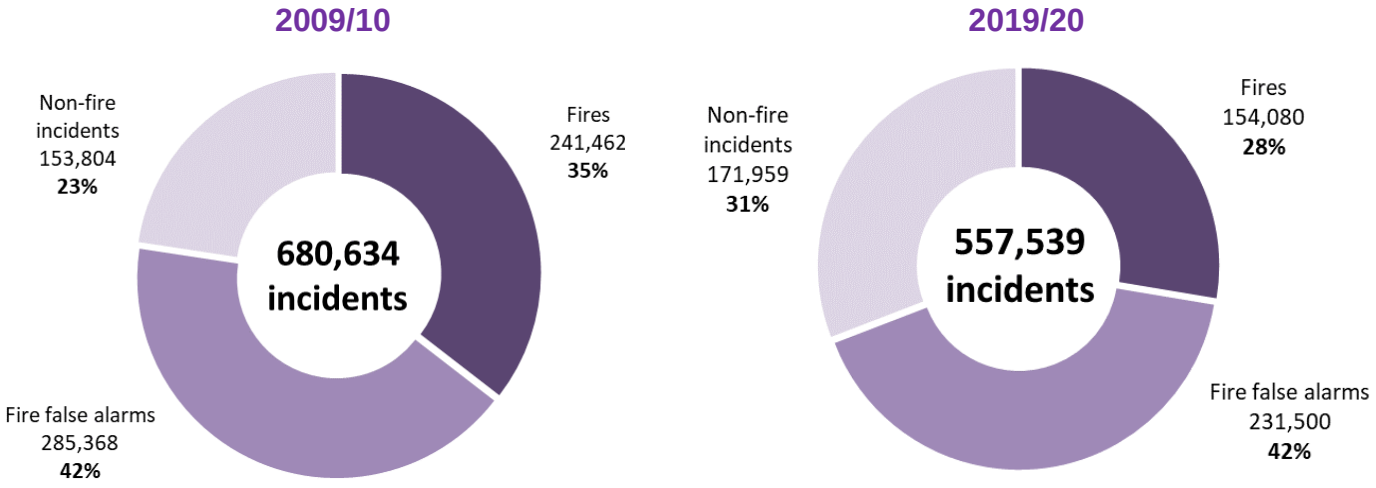
[1] Data on specific non-fire incident types available from 2009/10 onward. See table FIRE0901 for the full list of non-fire incident types.

agreements with ambulance trusts to undertake health and care related work, particularly co-responding. The Fire Brigades Union removed support for the trials in September 2017, which is likely to have driven the subsequent reduction in the number of non-fire incidents seen in 2017/18 and 2018/19.

In 2019/20, however, the number of non-fire incidents increased to 171,959 compared with 162,253 in 2018/19 (a 6% increase). This increase is the net result of distinct changes within specific non-fire incident categories (see Table 1 for detail).

Although the total number of all types of incident attended by FRSs has decreased over the last 10 years, the number of non-fire incidents attended has increased both in terms of the absolute number and as a proportion of all incidents attended. See Figure 1.1 for further detail [2].

Figure 1.1: Incidents attended by fire and rescue services in England, by incident type, for 2009/10 and 2019/20



Source: FIRE0102

Categories of non-fire incidents

The 23 specific non-fire incident types are grouped into nine 'main categories' for this release and seven main categories for presentation in charts. The rationale for this is to create broader categories which are easier to display and comment on. These categories comprise either the most common incident types, similar incident types or incident types of particular interest. The "Other" category contains many of the smaller non-fire incident types which do not fit neatly within the other eight main categories.

The main categories of non-fire incident types with the highest number of incidents recorded for 2019/20 were:

[2] Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

- Road traffic collisions (31,088; virtually unchanged compared with 2018/19)
- Effecting entry/exit (26,339; up 6% versus 2018/19)
- Assisting other agencies (18,330; up 24% versus 2018/19)

The increased number of non-fire incidents in 2019/20 compared with the previous year is predominantly attributable to increases in the following non-fire incident main categories; 'Assist other agencies', 'Flooding and rescue or evacuation from water' and 'Effecting entry/exit'. These three categories account for 83 per cent of the increase in non-fire incidents in 2019/20 compared with the previous year. The non-fire incident category in which the most notable decrease occurred was 'Medical incidents' (a decrease of 1,593 incidents, down 8%) however this was outweighed by the increases in other categories.

See Table 1 for all main categories and FIRE0901 for all specific non-fire incident types.

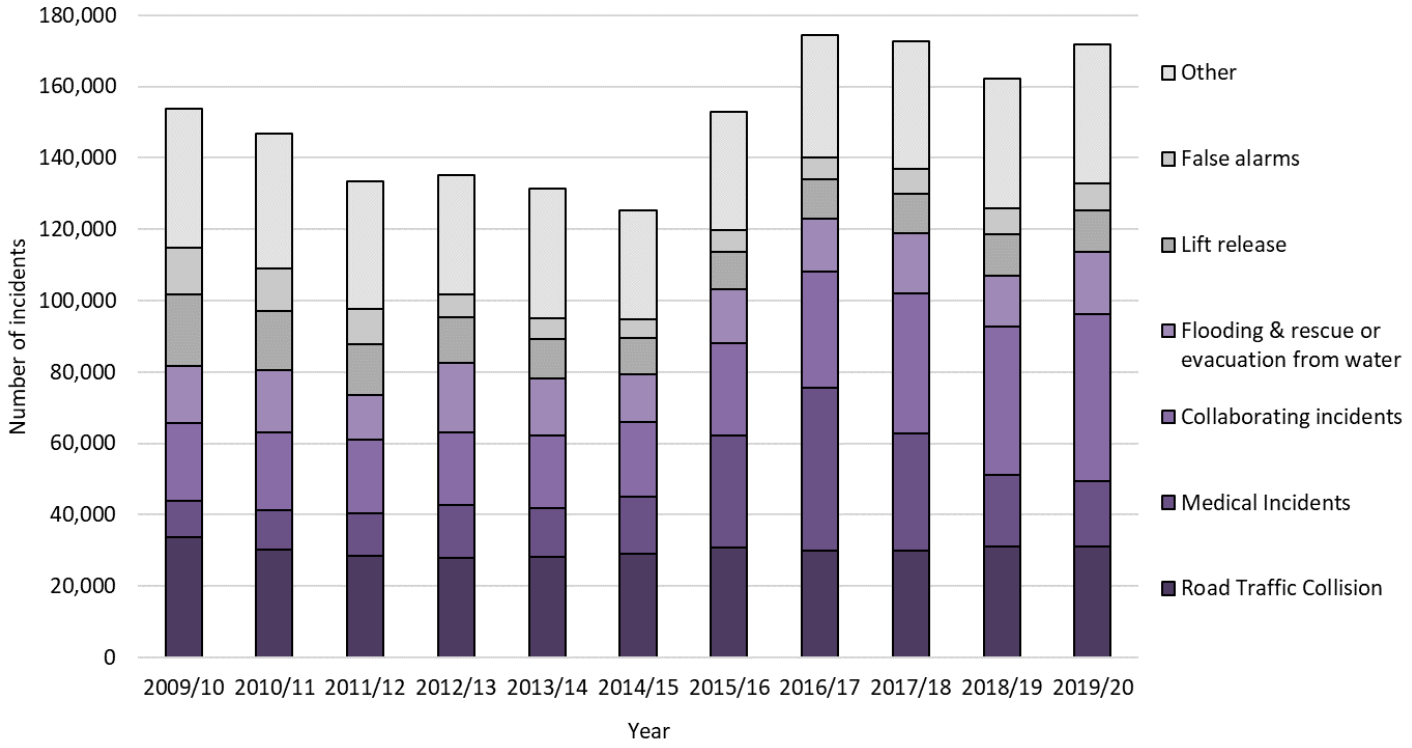
Table 1: Number of non-fire incidents and percentage change by non-fire incident main categories, England, 2018/19 and 2019/20

Non-fire incident type	2018/19	2019/20	% change
Total	162,253	171,959	6%
Road Traffic Collision	31,114	31,088	0%
Effecting entry/exit	24,880	26,339	6%
Assist other agencies	14,821	18,330	24%
Medical incidents [1]	19,906	18,313	-8%
Flooding and rescue or evacuation from water [2]	14,381	17,505	22%
Lift release	11,507	11,703	2%
False alarms [3]	7,272	7,459	3%
Suicide (including attempts)	1,910	2,035	7%
Other [4]	36,462	39,187	7%

Source: FIRE0901
Notes:
1 Contains the "Medical incident - First responder" and "Medical incident - Co-responder" categories.
2 Contains the "Flooding" and "Rescue or evacuation from water" categories.
3 Contains the "Malicious False Alarm" and "Good Intent False Alarm" non-fire categories.
4 Contains the "Other transport incident", "Other rescue / release of persons", "Animal assistance incidents", "Removal of objects from people", "Hazardous Materials incident", "Spills and Leaks (not RTC)", "Making Safe (not RTC)", "Evacuation (no fire)", "Water provision", "Advice only", "Stand by" and "No action (not false alarm)" categories.

Detailed data on non-fire incident type were first collected when FRSs began to submit records via the online IRS in 2009/10. Since 2009/10 trends have varied across the non-fire incident main categories (see Figure 1.2). Table FIRE0902 provides more detail on the action taken under each of the 23 specific non-fire incident types.

Figure 1.2: Number of non-fire incidents by main categories, England, 2009/10 to 2019/20



Source: FIRE0901.
Note: Collaborating incidents include “Assisting other agencies”, “Effecting entry/exit” and “Suicide/attempts”.

2 Fatalities & non-fatal casualties in non-fire incidents

Key results

In 2019/20, there were:

- **2,618 fatalities in non-fire incidents.** This is an increase of six per cent compared with last year.
- **38,022 non-fatal casualties in non-fire incidents.** This is a decrease of three per cent compared with last year.

Fatalities in non-fire incidents

Detailed comparable data on fatalities in non-fire incidents first became available for 2010/11 and remained stable at around 1,600 fatalities in each year up to and including 2013/14. There was then a period of sharp increases followed by a period of similarly sharp decreases to around 2,500 fatalities in 2018/19. This rise and subsequent fall in the number of fatalities in non-fire incidents coincided with the introduction and subsequent termination of the emergency medical responding trials – a period in which FRSs attended a significantly higher number of medical incidents. In 2019/20, there were 2,618 fatalities in non-fire incidents, an increase of six per cent compared with last year.

The number of fatalities in non-fire incidents is related to the number of non-fire incidents attended (i.e. in general the more non-fire incidents FRSs attend, the more fatalities in such incidents will be recorded). Another key factor is the type of incidents FRSs attend. Incident types such as ‘Suicide / attempts’ and ‘Assist other agencies’ typically have a higher fatality rate (see Figure 2.1 for more detail).

The change in the number of fatalities in non-fire incidents in 2019/20 compared with the previous year was the net result of different changes within the specific non-fire incident categories. The predominant driver of the slight overall increase in total fatalities was the increased number of fatalities in collaborating incidents (an increase of 197 fatalities compared with the previous year, up 17%). To note, the number of collaborating incidents also increased from 41,611 in 2018/19 to 46,704 in 2019/20.

Table 2: Number of fatalities in non-fire incidents, percentage change and fatality rate per 1,000 incidents by non-fire incident main categories, England, 2018/19 and 2019/20

Non-fire incident type	2010/11	2018/19	2019/20	% change vs 18/19	Fatality rate per 1,000 incidents
Total	**1,565**	**2,460**	**2,618**	**6%**	**15**
Suicide (including attempts)	162	265	253	-5%	124
Assist other agencies	178	490	636	30%	35
Road Traffic Collision	699	654	628	-4%	20
Effecting entry/exit	51	395	458	16%	17
Medical incidents	189	334	290	-13%	16
Flooding and rescue or evacuation from water	78	101	111	10%	6
Other	206	221	242	10%	N/A

Source: **FIRE0904a and FIRE0904b.**
Note: Rates for "other" are not meaningful because of the wide variety of incident types included within it.

The non-fire incident type main category with the highest rate of fatalities in 2019/20 was suicide (including attempts) with a rate of 124 per 1,000 incidents[3]. The rate of fatalities in suicides (including attempts) has however reduced in each of the last four years from a peak of 194 per 1,000 incidents in 2015/16. The nature of this incident type means it is likely to entail a high fatality rate.

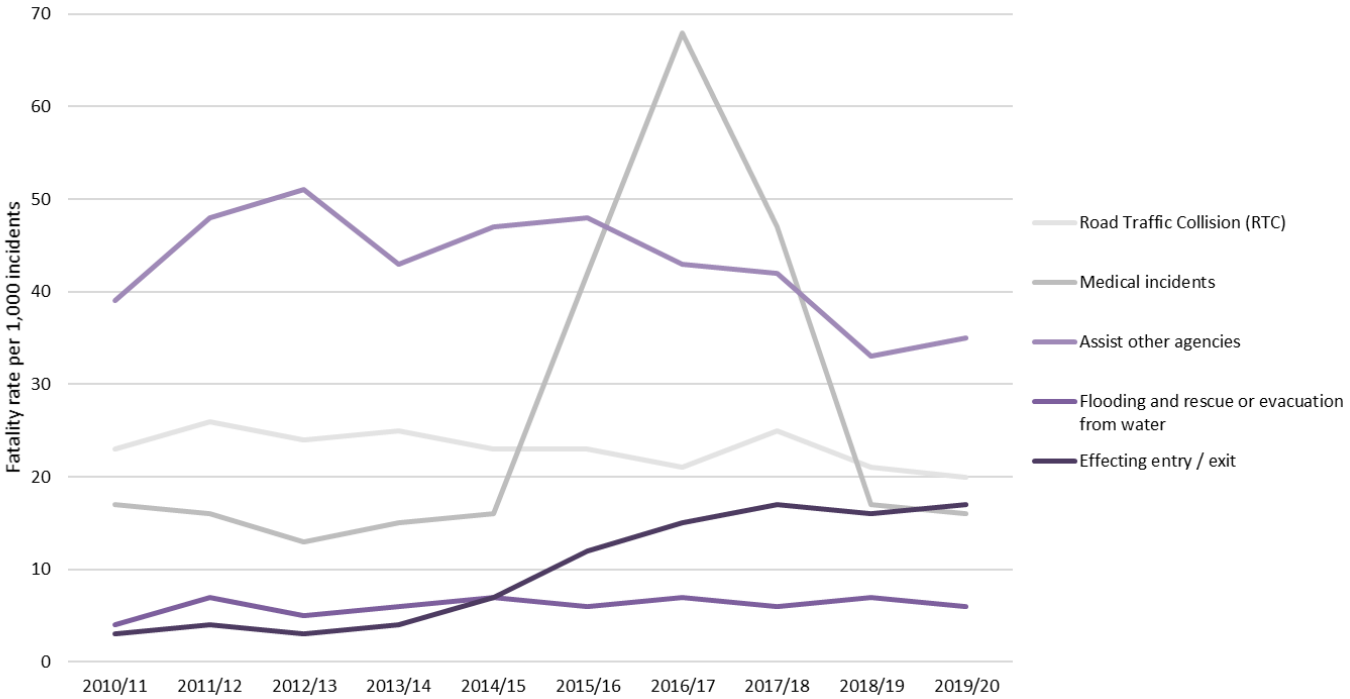
As in 2018/19, the non-fire incident type with the lowest rate of fatalities in 2019/20 was flooding and rescue or evacuation from water with a rate of six per 1,000 incidents. The rate of fatalities in each of the remaining non-fire incident type main categories remained broadly similar in 2019/20 compared with the previous year.

There was a spike in the rate of fatalities in medical incidents around 2016/17. This coincided with the beginning and end of the emergency medical responding trials that likely entailed FRSs attending a greater number of emergency medical incidents in which fatalities were more likely than typical medical incidents attended.

See Figure 2.1 and Table FIRE0904 for further detail.

[3] Excluding ‘false alarms’ as these do not entail any fatalities by definition, ‘lift release’ as the numbers are too small to provide reliable rates and ‘other’ as this category consists of disparate incident types hence the rate is not meaningful. To note, where an incident requires an FRS to undertake multiple actions (i.e. a suicide attempt and a rescue from water, for example) it is recorded as the action that was the most resource intensive.

Figure 2.1: Rate of fatalities by non-fire incident type (main categories) per 1,000 incidents, England, 2010/11 to 2019/20



Source: FIRE0904b
Note: the "Suicide (including attempts)" incident type is excluded from Figure 2.1 due to a significantly higher fatality rate compared with the other incident types.

Non-fatal casualties in non-fire incidents

As with fatalities, the number of non-fatal casualties in non-fire incidents is related to the number of non-fire incidents attended (i.e. in general the more non-fire incidents FRSs attend, the more non-fatal casualties in such incidents are recorded) and the type of incidents FRSs attend impacts the number of non-fatal casualties.

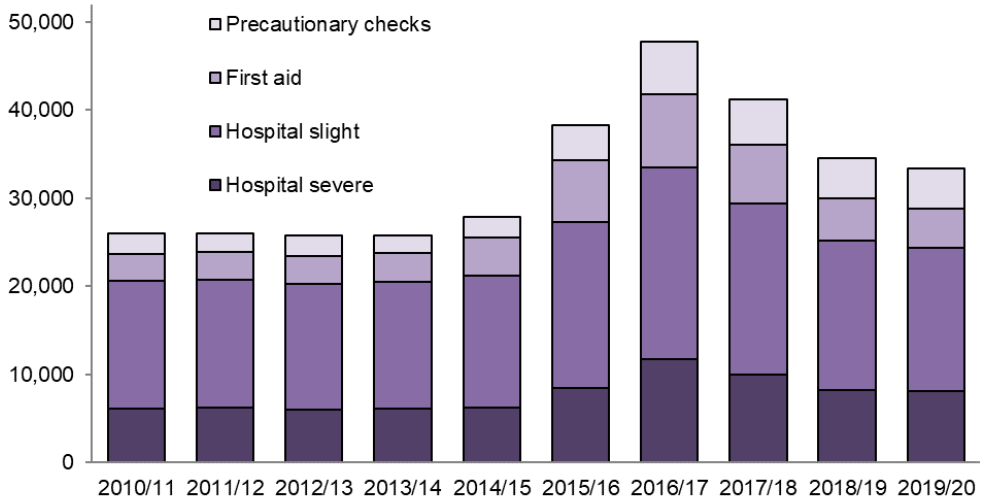
The number of non-fatal casualties in non-fire incidents remained relatively stable until 2014/15 - a similar trajectory to fatalities. There were then two year-on-year increases in 2015/16 and 2016/17 followed by decreases in each of the last three years (coinciding with the beginning and end of the emergency medical responding trials). These changes are attributable to the reduction in the number of medical incidents attended by FRSs and, in particular, medical co-responding.

In 2019/20 there were 38,022 non-fatal casualties in non-fire incidents, a decrease of three per cent from last year. As in 2018/19, the top three categories in 2019/20 were: road traffic collisions (19,915; accounting for 52% of non-fatal casualties), medical incidents (6,430; 17%) and assist other agencies (4,459; 12%). See Table FIRE0904d for more information.

Of the 38,022 non-fatal casualties in non-fire incidents, 16,259 (43%) were recorded as 'hospital slight' in terms of injury severity and 8,124 (21%) were recorded as 'hospital severe'. The other injury severity categories; 'first aid' (4,433), 'precautionary checks' (4,549) and 'unknown' (4,657) accounted for 12 per cent each.

The proportion of non-fatal casualties in each injury severity category remained virtually identical to the previous year ('unknown' saw the only change, up 1%)[4]. There was a decrease in the number casualties in every injury severity category compared with last year (except the 'unknown' category).

Figure 2.2: Number of non-fatal casualties in non-fire incidents, by injury severity, England, 2010/11 to 2019/20



Source: FIRE0904d.
Note: Excludes injury severities recorded as unknown.

Non-fatal casualties are split into four subcategories:

- **Hospital severe** – at least an overnight stay in hospital as an in-patient
- **Hospital slight** – attending hospital as an outpatient (not a precautionary check)
- **First Aid given** – first aid given at scene (by anyone), including after a precautionary check
- **Precautionary check** – a precautionary check (to attend hospital or to see a doctor) was recommended (by anyone).

[4] The percentages referenced here do not always sum to 100% due to rounding.

3 Flooding and rescue or evacuation from water

Key results

- In 2019/20, there were **17,505 flooding and rescue or evacuation from water incidents**. This is an increase of 22 per cent compared with the previous year (14,381) and an increase of 32 per cent compared with five years ago (13,215).
- In 2019/20, FRSs attended **31 flooding and rescue or evacuation from water incidents per 100,000 people** in England.

The Incident Recording System (IRS) records FRS attendance at "Flooding" and "Rescue or evacuation from water" incidents. These data were first collected for the 2009/10 financial year when the online IRS was introduced.

Flooding incidents include those caused by burst water mains, flooding in open ground and weather-related incidents such as flash flooding. The types of incident recorded in the IRS range from those where no action is required, to pumping out or making safe and evacuation. In instances where a flood affects more than one home, FRSs record an incident for each home they visit. In extreme circumstances however, it is difficult for FRSs to give an accurate recording of each incident attended as they may have to move rapidly from one home to another when assisting with a flood. Rescue or evacuation from water includes incidents where people are rescued from a river or a lake or if people are stranded where water is rising. Rescues or evacuation cover a wide range of circumstances from those where people are rescued from a swimming pool, pond, lake or the sea to being in a vehicle surrounded by water.

The number of flooding and rescue or evacuation from water incidents has **fluctuated** since 2009/10 with a low of 12,560 in 2011/12 and a peak of 19,607 the following year in 2012/13. The fluctuations in the number of these incidents attended appear to be linked to rainfall. When looking at rainfall in England[5], there is a correlation with the number of flooding and rescue or evacuation incidents attended by FRSs in a year. Generally, the more rainfall in a year the more flooding and rescue or evacuation from water incidents FRSs attend (see Figure 3.1). The data covering the last ten years suggests there is a linear relationship with an R-squared (R^2) value[6] of 0.47.

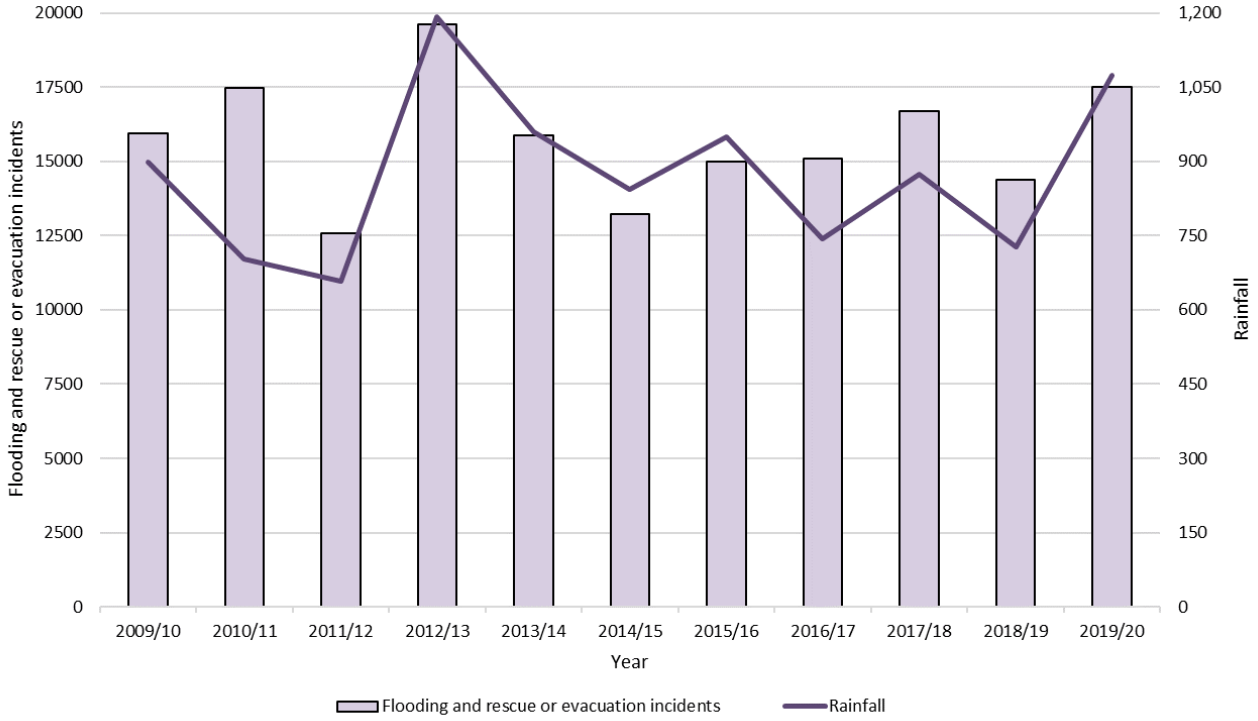
In 2019/20, there were 17,505 flooding and rescue or evacuation from water incidents, a 22 per cent increase compared with the previous year (14,381). The number of incidents in

[5] Rainfall data are taken from the Met Office's England year ordered rainfall statistics on their website: https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/summaries/datasets.

[6] R^2 is a statistical measure that indicates to what extent the variance of one variable explains the variance of a second variable. An R^2 value can range from -1 to 1. The further the R^2 value is from zero, the greater the indication of correlation.

2019/20 was the highest since the peak in 2012/13 and similarly saw the largest amount of rainfall recorded since 2012/13.

Figure 3.1 Rainfall (mm) and the number of flooding and rescue or evacuation from water incidents, England, 2009/10 to 2019/20



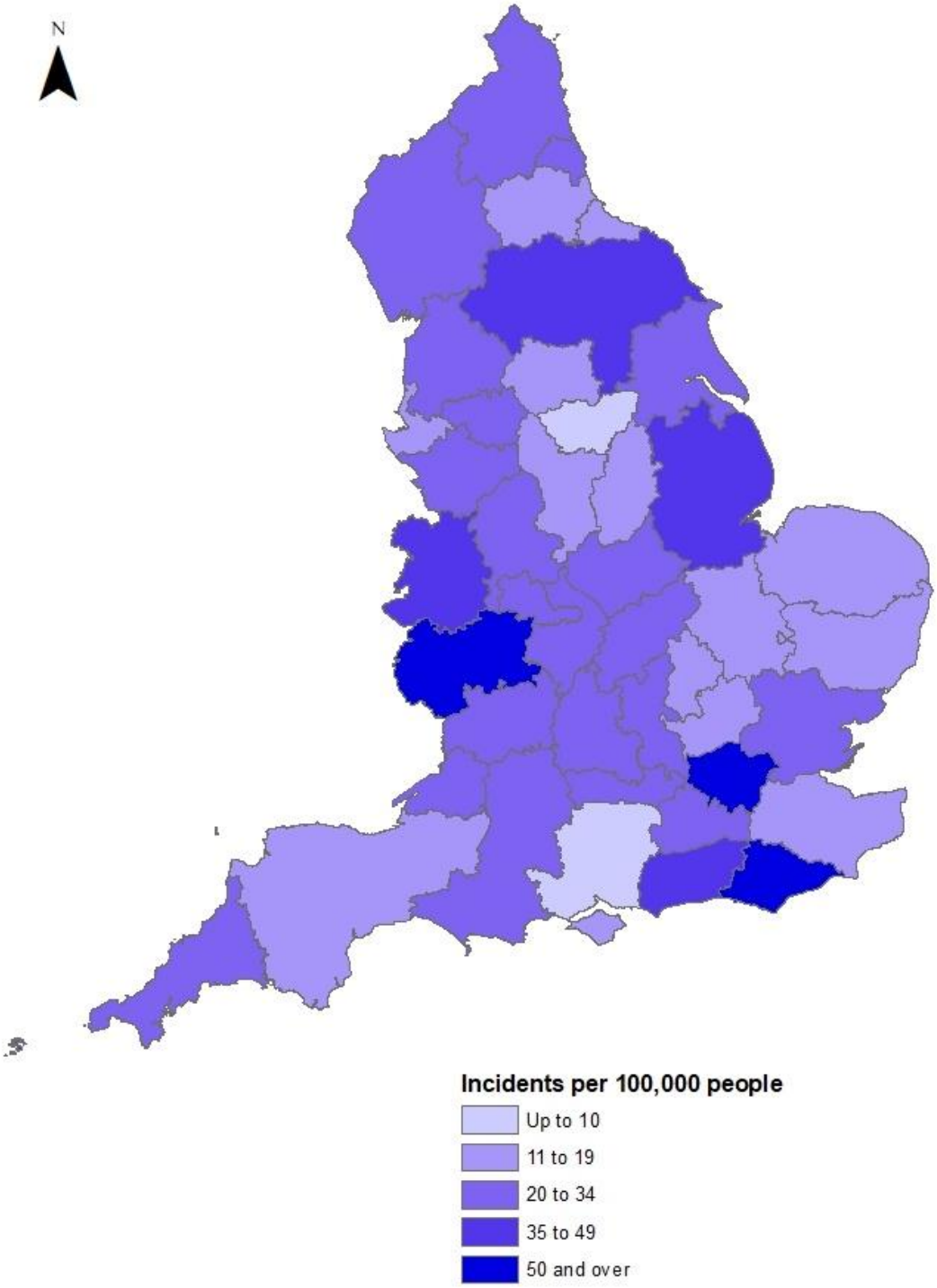
Source: **FIRE0901** and the Met Office

Flooding and rescue or evacuation from water incidents per 100,000 people

The rate of flooding and rescue or evacuation from water incidents attended per 100,000 people in England has **fluctuated** since the data were first collected in 2009/10.

In 2019/20, FRSs attended **31 flooding and rescue or evacuation from water incidents per 100,000 people** in England. At an FRS level (see Figure 3.2), **London** attended the most flooding and rescue or evacuation from water incidents per 100,000 people with a rate of 78. **Hampshire** attended the fewest with a rate of nine.

Figure 3.2 Flooding and rescue or evacuation from water incidents per 100,000 people by Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs), 2019/20



Source: **FIRE0903**

4 Non-fire false alarms

Key results

- In 2019/20, there were **7,459 non-fire false alarms**. This is an increase of three per cent compared with the previous year (7,272) and an increase of 42 per cent compared with five years ago (5,241).

The Incident Recording System (IRS) records data on both fire and non-fire false alarms (from 2009/10). The number of fire false alarms is significantly greater than the number of non-fire false alarms (over 30 times greater in each of the last five years). Fire-false alarms are published in table FIRE0104 and discussed in Fire and Rescue Incident Statistics releases.

Non-fire false alarms are categorised as either:

- Malicious[7]; or
- Good intent.[8]

The **number of non-fire false alarms** fell year-on-year from a peak of 13,208 in 2009/10 to a low of 5,241 in 2014/15. Since 2014/15 the number has steadily increased to 7,459 in 2019/20, a three per cent increase compared with the previous year (7,272) but a 44 per cent decrease compared with ten years ago (13,208).

The **number of fire false alarms** has followed a similar trajectory, falling year-on-year from its peak in 2009/10 at 285,368 to its lowest figure in 2015/16 at 214,398. Since 2015/16 the number has steadily increased to 231,500 in 2019/20, a very small increase compared with the previous year (231,224) but a 19 per cent decrease compared with ten years ago (285,368).

Although the number of non-fire false alarms has followed a similar overall trajectory to the number of fire false alarms, the number of non-fire false alarms has exhibited a greater rate of change in both the period of decline in the first half of the decade and the subsequent period of modest increase. See Figure 4.1 for further detail.

The **proportion of non-fire incidents that are false alarms** fell from nine per cent in 2009/10 to 4 four per cent in 2013/14 and has remained at this figure in all but one year

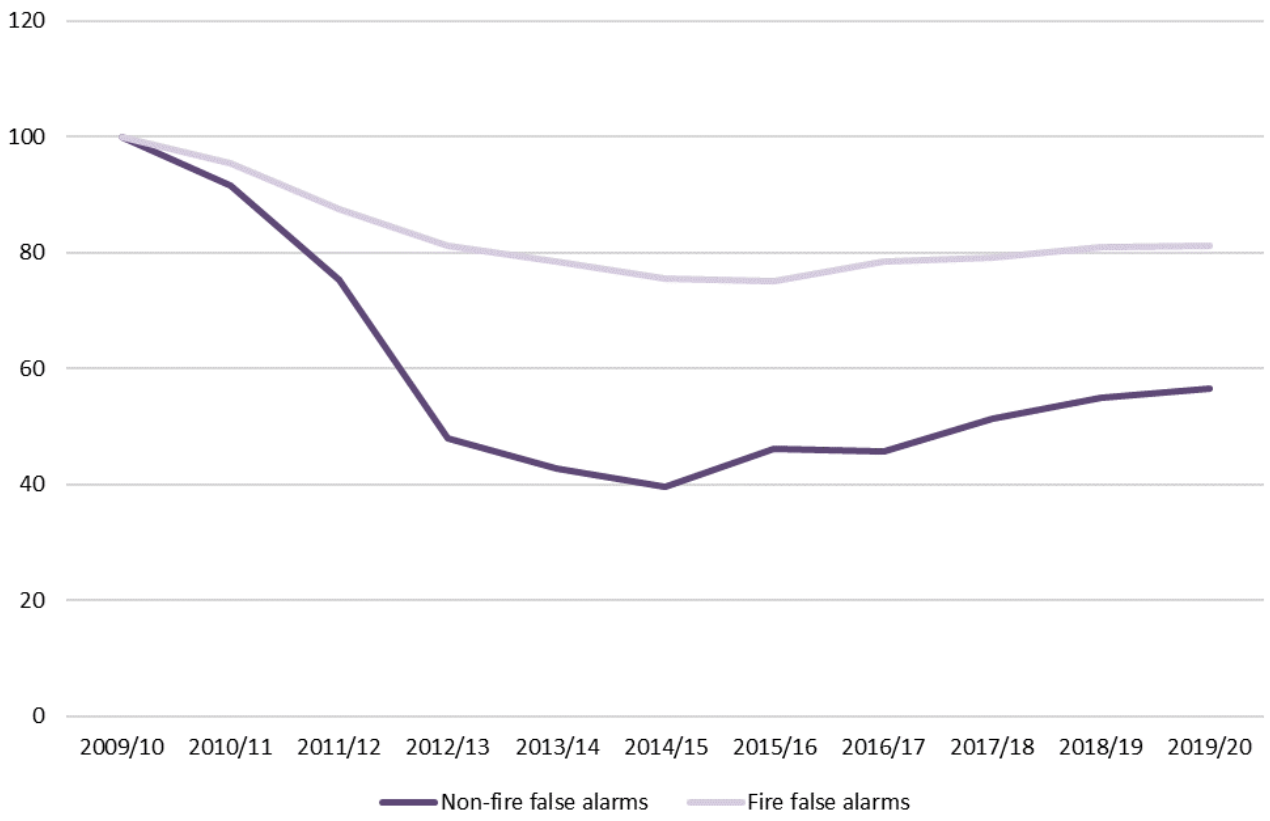
[7] Malicious non-fire false alarms - are calls made with the intention of getting the FRS to attend a non-existent incident, including deliberate and suspected malicious intentions.
[8] Good Intent non-fire false alarms - are calls made in good faith in the belief that the FRS really would attend a special service incident.

since. In 2016/17 there was a marginal decrease to three per cent, the lowest proportion on record.

The **proportion of non-fire false alarms that are malicious** slowly decreased from six per cent in 2010/11 to three per cent in 2013/14. This figure has remained stable at three per cent in each year since 2013/14. Conversely, the proportion of non-fire false alarms that are good intent slowly increased between 2009/10 and 2013/14 and has remained stable since.

Figure 4.1 Indexed fire and non-fire false alarms, England, 2009/10 to 2019/20

Indexed values, 2009/10=100



Source: FIRE0901

Non-fire false alarms per 100,000 people

The number of non-fire false alarms per 100,000 people was on a downward trend from when the data were first collected in the IRS in 2009/10 until 2014/15. Since then the number of non-fire false alarms per 100,000 people has gradually increased but remains much lower than in 2009/10. In 2019/20 there were 13 non-fire false alarms per 100,000 people in England. This compared with 13 in the previous year and 25 in 2009/10.

At an FRS level [9], **South Yorkshire** had the most non-fire false alarms per 100,000 people with 27, followed by Lancashire with 26 and Cornwall with 22. The FRS with the least non-fire false alarms per 100,000 people was **Cambridgeshire** with 0 (there was 1 non-fire false alarm but the per 100,000 people figures are rounded to the nearest whole number which in this case is 0) followed by Lincolnshire and Surrey with 3.

[9] The number of non-fire false alarms per 100,000 people can vary greatly for Isles of Scilly due to its small population and the typically small number of non-fire false alarms. This region has therefore been excluded from this analysis.

5 Non-fire incidents attended during COVID-19 National Lockdown

In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, lockdown restrictions came into effect from 23rd March 2020 and imposed strict limits on daily life. These included significant restrictions on freedom of movement and a requirement by law for a range of businesses to close.

This section analyses the number of non-fire incidents, by incident type, on a weekly basis under the first national lockdown (22nd March 2020 to 27th June 2020) compared against a baseline of the average of the previous five years (2015 to 2019).

Whilst the timespan of the first national lockdown goes past the end of March 2020 (and hence the usual end date of this release), given the quality of the data are sufficient at the national level, the importance of the topic area and that timeliness is a key principle in the GSS's Quality statistics in government this analysis is included now, rather than in a future release.

Weekly figures are highly susceptible to fluctuation and so an upper and lower range, using the mean and standard deviation of the 2015-2019 baseline figures, was calculated. Any figures beyond this range would fall outside of what would typically be expected, although these results could be explained by various factors such as bank holiday dates, the weather and not simply the lockdown.

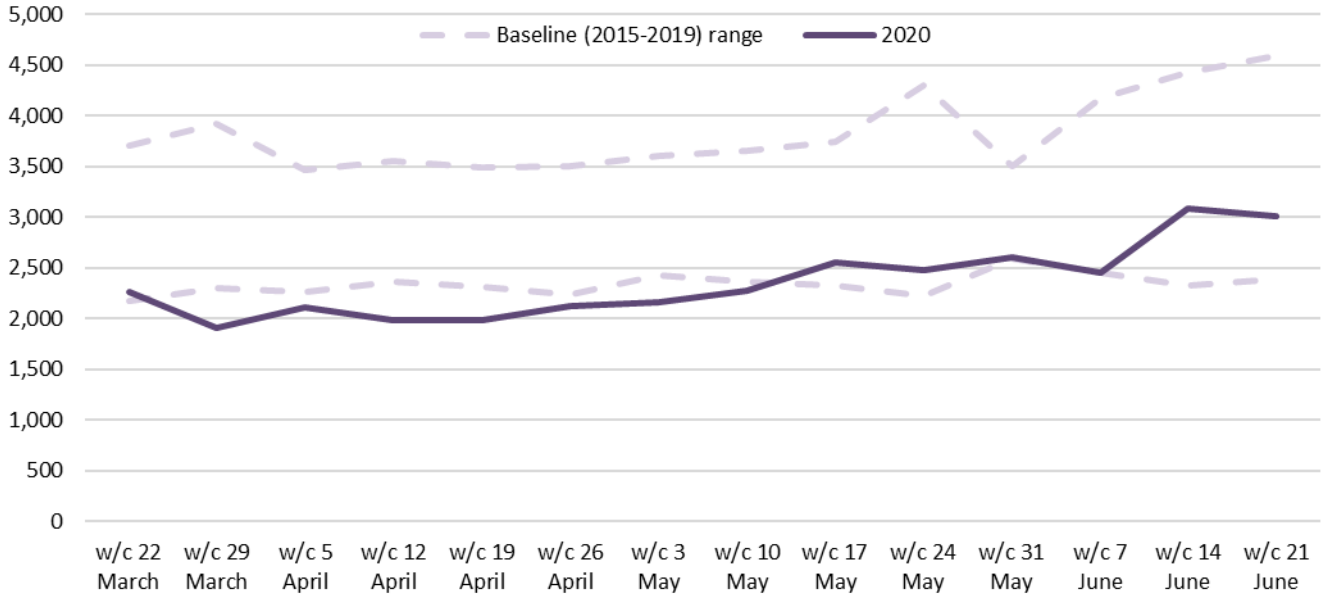
Key results

The number of non-fire incidents attended by FRSs during the first national COVID-19 lockdown was generally lower than typically seen during the same time period between 2015 and 2019. This was predominantly driven by a reduction in the number of Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) attended. The numbers of other non-fire incident types were generally within the typical expected range.

Total non-fire incidents

The number of non-fire incidents attended by FRSs during the first national lockdown was slightly lower than expected. In eight of the 14 weeks of lockdown the number fell below the range of what would be expected based on the average numbers seen during the same time period between 2015 and 2019 (i.e. below the 2 dotted lines in Figure 5.1). In the six weeks for which the numbers fell within the expected range the numbers were nevertheless towards the lower end (i.e. in the bottom half).

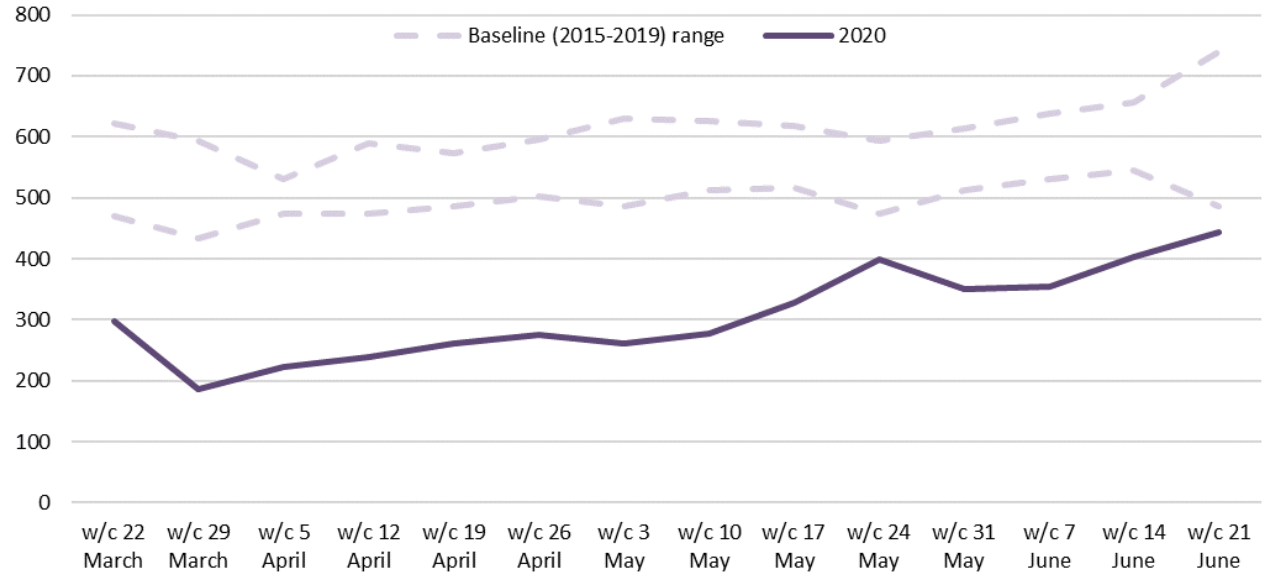
Figure 5.1: Total non-fire incidents attended by FRSs, England, 22nd March to 27th June 2020 compared with the 2015-2019 baseline.



Road traffic collisions (RTCs)

The number of RTCs attended by FRSs between 22nd March and 27th June 2020 was out of the ordinary during the lockdown. In all 14 weeks captured by this analysis the number of RTCs fell below the range of what would be expected (i.e. below the 2 dotted lines in Figure 5.2). This supports the hypothesis that the lockdown caused fewer vehicle journeys and hence fewer RTCs[10].

Figure 5.2: Total RTCs attended by FRSs, England, 22nd March to 27th June 2020 compared with the 2015-2019 baseline.

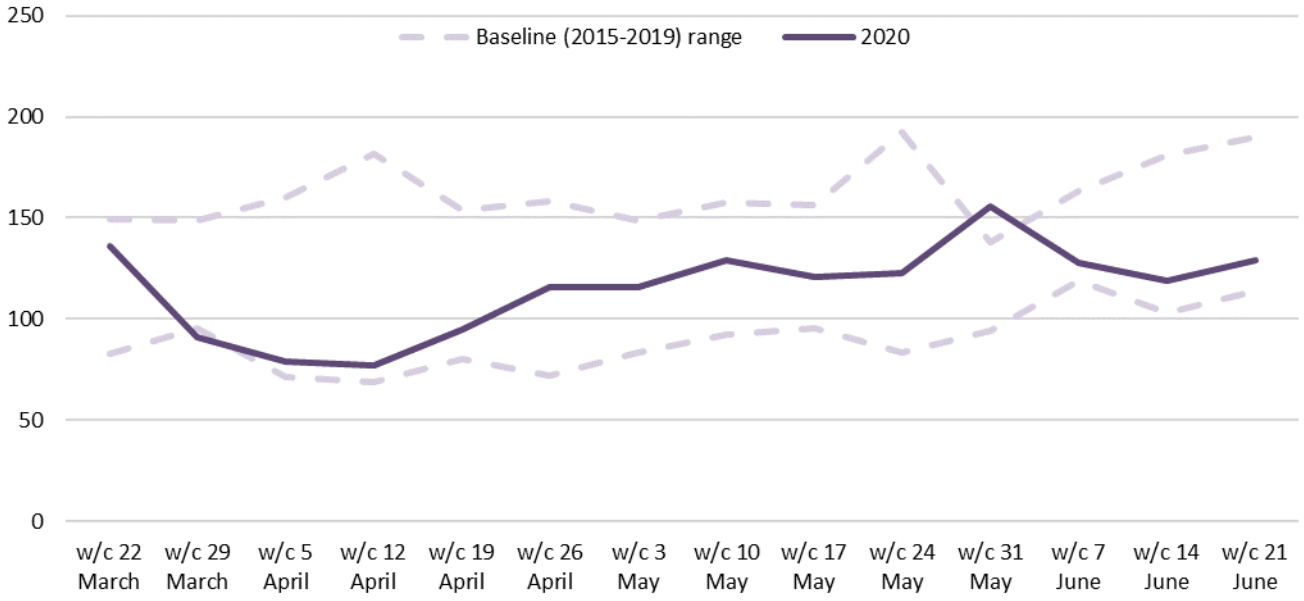


[10] Transport-use-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic

Non-fire false alarms

In general, the number of non-fire false alarms during the first national lockdown remained within the expected range. There was one week in which the number dipped slightly below the expected range and one week in which the number was above the expected range.

Figure 5.3: Total non-fire false alarms, England, 22nd March to 27th June 2020 compared with the 2015-2019 baseline.



Medical incidents

Figures for medical incidents have decreased since they peaked in 2016 and 2017. This makes the type of analysis utilised for the other incident types above misleading as the expected ranges produced are comparatively large. The figures in 2020 were slightly lower than in 2019 but this is probably as expected.

Assisting other agencies

Figures for assisting other agencies increased every year between 2015 and 2019 during the time span covered. As with medical incidents, this makes the type of analysis outlined above misleading for this incident type as the expected range produced is comparatively large. In general, the figures in 2020 were slightly higher than in 2019, as would have been reasonable to expect given the trend in the direction of travel in recent years.

6 Further information

Each year the content of this release is reviewed to ensure relevant topics are reported on; this year's release includes chapters covering overall trends in non-fire incidents, fatalities and non-fatal casualties in non-fire incidents, flooding and rescue or evacuation from water incidents, non-fire false alarms and non-fire incidents attended during the first COVID-19 national lockdown.

This release contains statistics about incidents attended by fire and rescue services (FRSs) in England. The statistics are sourced from the Home Office's online Incident Recording System (IRS). This system allows FRSs to complete an incident form for every incident attended, be it a fire, a false alarm or a non-fire incident (also known as a Special Service incident). The online IRS was introduced in April 2009. Previously, paper forms were submitted by FRSs and an element of sampling was involved in the data compilation process.

Fire and Rescue Incident Statistics and other Home Office statistical releases are available via the Statistics at Home Office pages on the GOV.UK website.

Data tables linked to this release and all other fire statistics releases can be found on the Home Office's Fire statistics data tables page.

Guidance for using these statistics and other fire statistics outputs, including a Quality Report, is available on the fire statistics guidance page.

The information published in this release is kept under review, taking into account the needs of users and burdens on suppliers and producers, in line with the Code of Practice for Statistics. If you have any comments, suggestions or enquiries, please contact the team via email using firestatistics@homeoffice.gov.uk or via the user feedback form on the fire statistics collection page.

Revisions

The IRS is a continually updated database, with FRSs adding incidents daily. The figures in this release refer to records of incidents that occurred up to and including 30 June 2020. This includes incident records that were submitted to the IRS by 16 September 2020, when a snapshot of the database was taken for the purpose of analysis. As a snapshot of the dataset was taken on 16 September 2020, the statistics published may not match those held locally by FRSs and revisions may occur in the future. This is particularly the case for statistics with relatively small numbers, such as fire-related fatalities. For instance, this can occur because coroner's reports may mean the initial view taken by the FRS will need to be revised; this can take many months, even years, to do so.

COVID-19 and the impact on the IRS

The figures presented in Chapters 1 to 4 of this release relate to incidents attended by FRSs during the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. In response to the coronavirus pandemic, restrictions in England and Wales started from 12 March 2020 and the first national lockdown was applied on 23 March 2020, which imposed strict limits on daily life. The start of the restrictions and the first eight days of lockdown are therefore captured in IRS data for the year ending March 2020. Chapter 5 looks at non-fire incidents attended by FRSs during the first COVID-19 National Lockdown.

Home Office statisticians have been monitoring incidents on the IRS since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown to ensure that data quality has not been reduced, and that all incidents are recorded. In addition, FRSs were asked to upload the information more quickly after attending an incident so that the IRS could be used to produce Management Information to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on FRSs capacity.

Changes to this release and future releases

This release has been published using the new Home Office statistical release template. We welcome comments on the new format of release. Please send any comments to FireStatistics@homeoffice.gov.uk.

Other related publications

Home Office publish five other statistical releases covering fire and rescue services:

- Fire and rescue incident statistics, England: focuses on incidents and fires attended by fire and rescue services and fire-related fatalities and casualties from those fires.
- Detailed analysis of fires attended by fire and rescue services in England: focuses on fires attended by fire and rescue services across England, fire-related fatalities and non-fatal casualties in those fires; including analyses of the causes of fires and smoke alarms ownership and operation.
- Fire and rescue workforce and pensions statistics: focuses on total workforce numbers, workforce diversity and information regarding leavers and joiners; covers both pension fund income and expenditure and firefighters' pension schemes membership; and includes information on incidents involving attacks on firefighters.
- Fire prevention and protection statistics, England: focuses on trends in smoke alarm ownership, fire prevention and protection activities by fire and rescue services.
- Response times to fires attended by fire and rescue services, England: covers statistics on trends in average response times to fires attended by fire and rescue services.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government publish one statistical release on fire:

- English housing survey: fire and fire safety report: focuses on the extent to which the existence of fire and fire safety features vary by household and dwelling type.

Fire statistics are published by the other UK nations:

Scottish fire statistics and Welsh fire statistics are published based on the IRS. Fire statistics for Northern Ireland are published by the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service using data from a system similar to the Incident Recording System, which means that they are not directly comparable to English, Welsh and Scottish data.

National Statistics

These statistics have been assessed by the UK Statistics Authority to ensure that they continue to meet the standards required to be designated as National Statistics. This statistical bulletin is produced to the highest professional standards and is free from political interference. It has been produced by statisticians working in accordance with the Home Office's Statement of compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, which covers Home Office policy on revisions and other matters. The Chief Statistician, as Head of Profession, reports to the National Statistician with respect to all professional statistical matters and oversees all Home Office National Statistics products with respect to the Code, being responsible for their timing, content and methodology. This means that these statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, impartiality, quality and public value, and are fully compliant with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

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