

Emergency Services News Briefing

June 2026



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Introduction

In this edition of our news briefing, we draw attention to some of the key developments and publications in the sector, including the Southport Inquiry, Fraud Strategy, the Crime and Policing Act and pressures on the on-call firefighter duty system.



Police

Southport public inquiry

The “Phase 1 Report” of the Southport Inquiry was published in April 2026. The inquiry was setup to examine the circumstances that led up to the knife attack at a children’s dance club in Southport in July 2024, Chaired by Sir Adrian Fulford. The inquiry reviewed decisions made across education, health, social care, policing, youth justice and other agencies, examining how information was shared, interpreted and acted upon. The report considered five fundamental problems in how the perpetrator’s risk was understood and managed during interactions with individual agencies.

As part of its work, the inquiry reviewed the police response to the perpetrator’s prior contact with law enforcement, including incidents involving knife possession and concerns raised during their time in education.

The inquiry made 67 recommendations to address its findings. While some of the recommendations are specific to the forces involved, many apply more broadly across policing and partner agencies, including:

- Managing interventions for children or young people that present a high-risk of harm.
- Shared multi-agency risk assessment tools.
- Ensuring police force policies, guidance and training on the taking of risk to protect the public from an obvious threat to life.
- Police forces adopting a model to provide immediate and direct support to Force Incident Managers where they have not already.
- National policing bodies to consider whether reforms to guidance or training in regard to autism spectrum disorder are required.
- National Police Chiefs’ Council, College of Policing and Home Office to review if current policing information systems are fit for modern policing needs, including the limitations on cross-force access.



Questions for committee’s consideration

- How has the Force assessed the Inquiry’s findings and recommendations against its own arrangements?
- What assurance can be provided that any resulting actions are being implemented effectively?

Crime and Policing Act becomes law, granting new powers to tackle local crime

The Crime and Policing Act has received Royal Assent, marking the biggest overhaul of crime-fighting powers in decades. The legislation introduces more than 70 measures, including new police powers to tackle anti-social behaviour and retail crime. These include a standalone offence of assaulting a retail worker and the removal of the £200 threshold for shop theft.

It also creates new offences covering child criminal exploitation, cuckooing and internal concealment of drugs, strengthens stalking protections, and introduces tougher controls on online knife sales. The Act is underpinned by a commitment to deliver 13,000 additional neighbourhood police officers by the end of this Parliament and aims to strengthen frontline policing and public confidence across England and Wales.



Questions for committee’s consideration

- Have officers read and understood the new powers introduced by the Act?
- Is there a clear plan to implement them?

Child Cruelty Offender Register announced

The government has announced the introduction of a new national register for people convicted of child cruelty offences, placing them under police monitoring similar to registered sex offenders. The register will cover offences related to causing or allowing serious harm or death of a child including child cruelty, neglect or abandonment, female genital mutilation and infanticide.

Individuals on the register may be required to notify police of changes such as moving home, changing identity, travelling abroad or living with children again.

The measures are intended to strengthen safeguarding, improve police visibility of offenders who have harmed children and support multi-agency efforts to protect children. The register forms part of the Crime and Policing Act.

Police staff resignations and dismissals linked to 'key jamming' investigation

In February 2026, the BBC reported that Northamptonshire Police's counter-corruption unit found at least 1,516 hours of alleged "key jamming" in 2025, equating to a minimum of £44,000 in potentially fraudulent working time claims.

The "key jamming" practice involves staff making their computers appear active while they are absent, most commonly by placing an object on a keyboard. The county's Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Danielle Stone, said "the behaviour falls well below the standards we all expect" and stressed the importance of protecting public funds and maintaining public trust.

The force said nine police staff and two staff from the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner were identified, with outcomes so far including one dismissal, three resignations, a final written warning and six ongoing investigations.

Other forces had also experienced incidents of "key jamming" in recent months, including one in Durham and multiple incidents reported by Greater Manchester Police.

Fraud Strategy 2026-2029

The "Fraud Strategy 2026-2029" has been published by the Home Office, setting out a system-wide approach to tackling fraud, now the most common crime type in the UK. The Fraud Strategy will support the Police Reform White Paper's commitment on smarter crime prevention and keeping the public safe through its partnership approach to preventing fraud.

The strategy commits more than £250m over three years and is structured around three pillars:

- Disrupting fraud at source.
- Safeguarding individuals and businesses.
- Strengthening the response to victims and offenders.

Key measures include the creation of a new Online Crime Centre from 2026 and expanded use of intelligence led prevention activity by police. They also include a new national Report Fraud service to replace Action Fraud, and stronger international collaboration to disrupt organised fraud networks.

Responsibility for fraud and economic crime will transfer to the new National Police Service, with a focus on improving coordination, investigative capability and victim support across England and Wales.



Questions for committee's consideration

- What assurances can be provided that 'key jamming' incidents can be detected by the organisation's IT controls?

Government plan to halve knife crime within a decade

The Home Office has published “Protecting Lives, Building Hope,” setting out a cross government plan to halve knife crime in England and Wales within 10 years. Police data records that 50,430 knife-enabled crimes were committed in the year to September 2025.

The plan combines early intervention, prevention and enforcement, with four core strands focused on:

- Supporting young people.
- Stopping those at risk from becoming involved.
- Targeted policing.
- Reducing repeat offending.

Measures include continued investment in Violence Reduction Units, expanded neighbourhood policing, tougher controls on knife sales including online retailers, enhanced intelligence led Stop and Search, and new interventions for children found carrying knives.

The plan allocates £26.25m this year to 27 police force areas through the new Knife Crimes Concentrations Fund, following £5m invested last year to develop and test approaches in 11 areas. The 27 police force areas cumulatively experience 90% of the knife crime committed across England and Wales.

A new National Knife Crime Centre has been officially launched to support the policing efforts to tackle knife crime. Funded by the Home Office and led by the National Police Chiefs’ Council’s (NPCC) knife crime lead, the centre will focus on disrupting illegal knife supply routes, particularly online and overseas sales, and driving consistent national best practice.

Knife Homicide levels fall

The Home Office has reported that knife homicides have fallen by 27% and more than 63,000 knives and weapons have been removed from the streets across England and Wales in its “Protecting Lives, Building Hope” publication. Over the same period, knife-point robberies fell by 10% and hospital admissions for stabbing injuries decreased by 11%.

The reduction follows national surrender schemes, bans on weapons such as zombie-style knives and machetes, Border Force seizures, and police operations targeting serious violence and county lines activity.



Questions for committee’s consideration

- Is the Force aligning its local approach to knife crime with the national strategy?
- What assurance is there that activity is targeted and effective?

Independent evaluation published on Serious Violence Reduction Orders pilot

An independent evaluation of the Serious Violence Reduction Orders (SVROs) pilot, which ran between April 2023 and April 2025 across four police force areas has been published by the Home Office. SVROs give police the power to stop and search individuals convicted of knife or offensive weapon offences without additional reasonable grounds.

The evaluation found that SVROs led to increased stop and search activity among recipients but did not show a statistically significant reduction in violent re-offending during the pilot period. While SVROs were viewed by police as a useful tool for proactive policing, the report highlights mixed evidence on their deterrent effect and notes concerns around proportionality, resourcing and the absence of rehabilitative support.

The findings will inform future decisions on the use of SVROs as part of wider efforts to reduce serious violence.

Reductions in serious violence in areas with Violence Reduction Units

A Home Office evaluation of Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) has found statistically significant reductions in violence-related hospital admissions in police force areas receiving serious violence funding. Over nearly six years, areas with VRUs saw an estimated reduction of around 550 hospital admissions for sharp-object assaults among people aged 24 and under, alongside wider reductions in violent assault admissions across all ages.

The report highlights policing as central to the VRU whole-systems approach, with police leading tactical responses to serious violence incidents, contributing intelligence and hotspot policing, and working with partners to identify and support individuals at risk.

While impacts on police recorded crime and homicide were less conclusive due to data volatility and low volumes, the evaluation concludes that police activity, alongside multi-agency prevention work, has contributed to gradual and cumulative reductions in serious violence.

Police are struggling to keep pace with online child sexual abuse

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has reported that police forces in England and Wales are struggling to investigate online child sexual abuse and manage registered sex offenders because demand continues to outweigh resources.

The report highlights that referrals from the National Crime Agency rose by 66% in one year, from 12,469 cases in 2023 to 20,704 in 2024, while the number of registered sex offenders has increased by 48% over the past decade.

HMICFRS found investigators carrying unmanageable caseloads, delays of up to two years for digital forensic examinations, inconsistent training, and uneven access to digital tools across forces. The inspectorate concluded that individual forces cannot resolve these issues alone and has made 16 recommendations, including several directed at national bodies, calling for urgent investment, national coordination, and improved training to better safeguard children.

New statutory guidance on sex-based harassment offence

Statutory guidance for the police has been published providing operational direction on section 4B of the Protection from Sex-Based Harassment in Public Act 2023. The offence applies where intentional harassment, alarm or distress is caused to a victim because of their sex or presumed sex and carries a maximum sentence of two years' imprisonment.

The guidance sets out how officers should assess evidence, record crimes, support victims and determine whether the sex-based element is met, including examples of behaviours and contextual factors.

Chief officers are required to have due regard to the guidance, which applies across England and Wales, and are expected to act in accordance with it.

Rise in recorded deaths linked to suicide following domestic abuse

The Domestic Homicide Project, funded by the Home Office, has published the "Domestic Homicides and Suspected Victim Suicides 2020-2025 Year 5 Report" which examines deaths related to domestic abuse across England and Wales. The report highlights an increase in recorded deaths linked to domestic abuse in the past year, driven by improved recognition of suicides following domestic abuse.

In the year to March 2025, the Project recorded 347 domestic abuse-related deaths, an increase of 85 on the previous year, with most of the rise attributed to suspected suicides following domestic abuse.

Across the past five years, 1,452 deaths have been recorded, including intimate partner homicides, adult family homicides, child deaths and unexpected deaths where there was a history of domestic abuse. The increase follows changes in police practice requiring officers to check for domestic abuse history at the scene of suicides and unexpected deaths, alongside wider improvements in investigation, training and data sharing.

Project data also shows a rise in post death domestic abuse investigations and charges. Over the five-year period, 17 suspected suicide following domestic abuse (SVSDA) cases resulted in posthumous domestic abuse charges, with three also subject to ongoing unlawful manslaughter investigations.

The report provides recommendations to inform future work by police forces and associated parties, including:

- Formally identify and record deaths of children under 16 linked to domestic abuse.
- Update police safeguarding referral practices for children and young people experiencing relationship abuse.
- Make greater use of coercive and controlling behaviour legislation to bring more perpetrators to justice.
- Ensure consistent, standardised information sharing between police and coroners to identify any domestic abuse history relevant to an inquest.



Questions for committee's consideration

- What assurance can the Force provide that the statutory guidance has been incorporated and that practice is consistent with it?

Independent review on reducing the number of police forces

Lord Bernard Hogan-Howe has been appointed to lead an independent review into the structure of policing in England and Wales, with the aim to move to a smaller number of larger police forces. The review will make evidence-based recommendations on the optimum number of forces, their geographic boundaries, and how they should be governed and held to account.

The review follows proposals set out in the Police Reform White Paper and will consider how larger regional forces could improve capacity for complex and specialist policing, including homicide, serious organised crime, firearms, roads policing and cybercrime. Local Policing Areas would sit within the larger forces, with a focus on neighbourhood priorities such as anti-social behaviour, theft and drug dealing.

Recommendations are expected to be submitted to the Home Secretary by the summer.

The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC), Chair Emily Spurrell commented:

“Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) back much of what is proposed under the government’s plans to modernise policing, but we have seen no evidence to suggest the public want fewer forces, or that reorganisation would deliver improved services. The public want a responsive police force that understands and acts on local priorities. Regional forces will remove the connection to those they serve and who increasingly fund policing through local taxation.

The objective must be to improve policing for communities across England and Wales and help restore the public’s trust in policing by effectively holding forces to account.”

AI to improve intelligence from control room calls

West Yorkshire Police has become the first force in England and Wales to deploy a new artificial intelligence capability designed to extract intelligence from historic control room calls. Developed with the NPCC Digital Public Contact programme, the Post Call Analysis (PCA) system securely transcribes, summarises and categorises calls, helping forces analyse demand, identify repeat callers and detect hidden vulnerability.

Early pilot activity showed improved capture of intelligence and a 21% increase in the identification of calls containing indicators of vulnerability than through standard methods. The system is designed to support control room staff and operates in line with national standards for the responsible and ethical use of AI in policing.

Funding boost to expand specialist police patrols

£5m of new funding has been announced to expand specialist police patrols under Project Servator, a national policing tactic designed to disrupt criminal and terrorist activity through highly visible and unpredictable deployments.

The funding will support increased patrols by specially trained officers, initially focused in London and Greater Manchester, to protect communities and key public spaces. Officers involved in Project Servator are trained to identify suspicious behaviour, disrupt hostile reconnaissance and provide public reassurance, with previous deployments leading to arrests, weapons and drug seizures and intelligence linked to counter-terrorism activity.

The funding forms part of wider measures to protect communities and faith sites amid heightened concerns around hate crime and public safety.

Undercover policing operation expanded to nine additional forces

Project Vigilant, an undercover policing operation aimed at disrupting predatory behaviour and preventing violence against women and girls, is being expanded to nine more police forces across England and Wales. The Home Office has confirmed an additional £1m funding to support more than 200 undercover deployments in night-time economy hotspots, including town and city centres.

Undercover officers are trained to identify early warning signs of predatory behaviour, allowing uniformed officers to intervene before offences escalate. The new funding will also support new technology trials, data analysis, upgraded communications equipment and officer training.

The expansion forms part of the government’s wider Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, which focuses on prevention, early intervention and targeted action against offenders.



Questions for committee’s consideration

- Has your Force and Fire Service implemented clear training in relation to AI roll out and AI use?
- Have you got appropriate governance arrangements in place to monitor the roll out and use of AI tools across your organisations?

Over 3,000 neighbourhood police deployed

More than 3,000 additional neighbourhood police officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) have been deployed into frontline roles across England and Wales, with the government meeting its target of 2,972 FTE two months ahead of schedule.

As at the 28 February 2026, Home Office figures highlighted that 3,123 officers and PCSOs have been recruited or redeployed into neighbourhood policing since April 2025, focusing on tackling local crime and anti-social behaviour.

The increased neighbourhood presence has supported intensified patrol activity, including the Home Office's Winter of Action, which resulted in nearly 18,000 arrests across more than 600 towns and cities. Arrests included offences linked to retail crime, sexual offences, street crime and violent assault.

The uplift forms part of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, which aims to deliver 13,000 additional neighbourhood officers by the end of the current parliament.

Importance of equipment and training in emergency police response

The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) has highlighted the critical role of specialist equipment, clear guidance and officer training when police respond to life-threatening incidents. An investigation into a police response to a mental health-related emergency found that officers attending the scene did not have immediate access to suitable method-of-entry equipment, delaying entry to a locked property during a time-critical incident.

While no misconduct was identified, the IOPC said the case highlighted learning for policing, including the need for police vehicles to carry appropriate entry equipment and for officers to have clear, consistent guidance on preserving life at scenes involving suspected suicide. The IOPC has recommended that national guidance, including the "Suicide and Bereavement Response guidance," and training be reviewed and updated to support officers in making fast, life-saving decisions during emergency responses.



Questions for committee's consideration

- Can the Force demonstrate that increases in neighbourhood policing are translating into improved outcomes?



Questions for committee's consideration

- What assurances are there that frontline staff have the equipment, training and guidance needed to respond effectively in time critical incidents?

Survey highlights staffing and capacity pressures in response policing

A survey of nearly 2,000 emergency response officers (from all forces across England and Wales) conducted by the Police Federation of England and Wales (the Police Federation) has found that 91% are working in teams they consider unsafe due to staffing shortages. More than half of the respondents said response policing is not working well, with officers reporting pressures caused by large coverage areas, frequently being single crewed, equipment failures and sustained demand across shifts.

The findings are supported by a new film "My Last Set" launched by the Police Federation, which features officers' testimonies describing long working hours, repeated exposure to traumatic incidents and limited opportunities for rest.



Questions for committee's consideration

- How are you assured that policing capacity at your Force is sufficient to operate safely and effectively?

Growing financial pressures on police officers

A national survey has found that nearly half of police officers have considered opting out of their pension due to financial pressures, with 7% reporting they have already stopped making contributions. The findings come from the “Police Family Finance Index Report (Spring 2026)”, based on responses from more than 13,500 members of the police workforce across the UK.

The report links the trend to cost of living pressures, including rising housing costs and stagnant real-terms pay, with officers under 35 identified as being most likely to opt out of their pension. The report warns that opting out of pension schemes could have long-term implications for police officers, including wellbeing and financial security in retirement.

Police Federation warns pay pressures are driving experienced officers out

The Police Federation has warned that poor pay and ongoing real-terms pay cuts are accelerating the loss of experienced police officers and putting public safety at risk. In evidence submitted to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB), the Police Federation said nearly half of all constables now have five years’ service or less, with one in four officers considering leaving the service.

The Police Federation is calling for a minimum 7% annual pay award for the next three years, warning that continued pay restraint is undermining morale, retention and operational capability.

The NPCC has submitted evidence to the PRRB setting the case for a “fair and affordable pay uplift of 3.5%” for policing from September 2026. The NPCC submission details that the pay award must be fully funded as the significant workforce and financial pressures facing forces would mean any uplift above 2.5%, that was not fully funded, would place essential policing services at risk.

Changes to officers’ rest day protections

The Police Federation has warned that proposed changes to police rest day arrangements could undermine officer welfare and public safety. The NPCC has submitted proposals to the Police Remuneration Review Body that would reduce compensation for cancelled rest days and tighten re-rostering rules.

The Police Federation said the proposals would weaken existing safeguards that recognise the impact of cancelled rest days on officer wellbeing, morale and fatigue, particularly at a time of high demand and retention pressures across policing. A poll of officers found strong opposition to the changes (with 85% opposed to the proposed changes), with the Police Federation urging the government to reject the proposals.

New national charter launched to strengthen police and media relations

A new “Policing and Media Charter” has been launched to improve how police forces and the media work together, setting out shared principles, standards and expectations to support consistent and transparent communication. The charter has been jointly developed by the NPCC, the College of Policing, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and media organisations following more than two years of collaborative work.

The charter is part of a wider programme to improve police communications, alongside updated College of Policing Media and Communications Authorised Professional Practice (APP) and a revised CPS Joint Media Protocol.

The charter aims to support accurate reporting, maintain public confidence and provide clearer guidance for police communications teams and journalists.



Updated Crime Recording Rules Issued for Frontline Officers

Revised Crime Recording Rules for frontline officers and staff came into effect from April 2026, setting out updated national requirements for how crimes and incidents are recorded across England and Wales.

The guidance reinforces a victim focused approach and clarifies when crimes must be recorded (including recording without victim confirmation in specific circumstances). The document updates rules covering areas such as domestic abuse, stalking, online crime, spiking offences, violence against women and girls, and assaults on emergency workers. The update also includes revised outcome frameworks, cancellation rules, and mandatory crime flags to improve consistency, data quality and safeguarding across police forces.

The document sets out a vision “that all police forces in England and Wales have the best crime recording system in the world: one that is consistently applied; delivers accurate statistics that are trusted by the public and puts the needs of victims at its core.”

Government to scrap non-crime hate incident recording

The government has announced that police forces will stop recording non-crime hate incidents (NCHIs), following a review by the College of Policing and the National Police Chiefs’ Council. The Home Office has accepted all recommendations from the review, concluding that NCHIs are no longer fit for purpose due to unclear guidance, inconsistent application between forces and the recording of incidents that fall outside core policing duties.

Under the reforms, police will no longer record lawful free speech or routine personal disputes, with a new national standard for incident recording to be introduced. The updated standard will narrow the threshold for police involvement, focusing on preventing and detecting crime, protecting life and property, and maintaining public order, while still allowing police to monitor serious community tensions and protect those at risk.



Questions for committee’s consideration

- Has the Force updated practices to meet these revised crime recording rules?
- How will monitoring show if these revised rules are being applied consistently?

Fire

National Fire Chiefs Council welcomes funding progress

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) has welcomed recent progress on fire and rescue service funding following the government's Spring Statement and the local government finance settlement, while warning that financial pressures on services remain significant. The final local government finance settlement includes the provision of an additional £15m to ensure standalone Fire and Rescue Authorities see a core spending power increase.

The NFCC Chair commented "the government's recent funding settlement was an encouraging step forward. The strengthened funding floor and additional support for standalone fire and rescue authorities reflect sustained and constructive engagement between NFCC, government and parliamentarians."

However, the NFCC cautioned that services continue to face rising and more complex demand, alongside the legacy impact of prolonged financial constraint. The NFCC stressed that greater funding stability will support forward planning. However, long-term investment was still required to ensure fire and rescue services can respond to modern risks, prevent and protect people from fire and other risks in the community and meet public expectations.

Grenfell Phase 2 Annual Report 2026

The first annual report on progress implementing the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 recommendations has been published by the government, confirming that all 58 recommendations were accepted and that implementation is in progress. As of February 2026, 12 recommendations (including two of the remaining Phase 1 actions) have been completed and 70% are expected to be closed by the end of 2026.

Of the 13 actions specifically for fire and rescue services, nine were reported as in progress and four having been completed, including:

- Three recommendations in regard to HMICFRS inspection and report on the London Fire Brigade. This included the control room arrangements, assessing the training and competency of incident commanders and the arrangements for identifying high-risk residential buildings and collecting, storing and distributing information relating to them.
- All fire and rescue services should agree and regularly review protocols with local water undertakers on water supplies for firefighting.



Questions for committee's consideration

- How is the Service ensuring medium term financial planning remains aligned to operational risk and service priorities despite ongoing funding pressures?

Fire safety to be embedded earlier in the building planning system

The NFCC has warned that fire safety must be built into the planning process from the outset, as government planning reforms seek to accelerate housing delivery. It highlighted that decisions made at the planning stage can shape community risk for decades, and that essential fire service requirements such as access routes, firefighting water supplies and risk information are too often addressed late or overlooked entirely.

Fire chiefs highlighted concerns that the separation of planning and building control systems, alongside expanded Permitted Development Rights (which can lead to items bypassing full planning scrutiny), could lead to unsafe designs and costly remediation to meet fire safety standards.

A planning policy position has been published by the NFCC calling for stronger consultation with fire and rescue services, clearer requirements for firefighting access and water provision, and formal recognition of fire services as essential infrastructure within developer funding mechanisms.

Changes to fire and rescue service inspection cycle

HMICFRS has set out updates to its fire and rescue service inspection programme for the 2025-27 cycle, with the first reports published in March 2026. The revised programme retains the core inspection framework but introduces new and strengthened areas of focus in response to sector challenges and learning from previous inspections.

Key changes for the cycle include:

- A greater emphasis on leadership at all levels.
- Increased scrutiny of Fire and Rescue Authorities' governance, oversight and project management.
- Deeper assessment of values, culture and misconduct.
- Assessment on how services support community resilience.



Questions for committee's consideration

- Is the Service prepared for the revised inspection focus, particularly in relation to leadership, governance, culture and project management?

Review highlights pressures on the on-call firefighter duty system

A national research study examining the long-term sustainability of the on-call firefighter duty system has been published by the NFCC. The on-call duty system provides fire cover across around 90% of the UK's landmass, particularly in rural and lower-risk areas. The review, based on national data, responses from more than 1,600 on-call firefighters and UK-wide case studies, found the system remains vital but is facing increasing strain.

Key challenges identified include:

- Declining firefighter numbers.
- Recruitment and retention difficulties.
- Training models largely designed around wholetime firefighters.

The report sets out a range of options for reform, from local improvements to wider structural change, with NFCC confirming it will work with fire and rescue services and government to take forward recommendations.

Government announces national health and wellbeing support for firefighters

The government has announced a new Firefighters Concordat on Health and Wellbeing, setting out a coordinated approach to improving firefighter health monitoring, prevention and early intervention. The initiative includes consistent, regular health checks for firefighters nationwide and new government funded research into occupational risks such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, musculoskeletal conditions and mental health.

The concordat will be delivered through a national working group under the Ministerial Advisory Group on Fire and Rescue Reform, involving fire and rescue services, representative bodies and health partners.

The NFCC Chair commented:

"Firefighter health and wellbeing is a long-standing priority for the NFCC, and we welcome continued recognition of the unique risks firefighters face through their work."



National eLearning on safe engagement with children and young people

A new Introduction to Working with Children and Young People eLearning module has been launched by the NFCC, providing nationally consistent guidance for fire and rescue service staff and volunteers involved in prevention, education and community engagement activities. The resource is intended to support safe, confident and professional engagement with children and young people, including understanding safeguarding responsibilities and maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.

The eLearning module is designed as a baseline resource for induction and refresher training and complements existing safeguarding frameworks and qualifications. The resource is intended to be by fire and rescue services to support local training programmes.

Fire and rescue incidents for the year ending December 2025

The fire and rescue incident statistics have been updated for the year ending December 2025. Key figures include:

- Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) attended 642,264 incidents, a 6.8% rise from the previous year. This includes 175,918 fires (up 29%), 252,162 false alarms (virtually unchanged), and 214,184 non-fire incidents (up 1%).
- There were 283 fire-related fatalities (up 10%) and 6,838 non-fatal casualties (up 7.3%), with 201 fatalities occurring in dwellings. One fatality was reported in high-rise flats.
- Primary fires rose by 9.3% to 66,832, while secondary fires surged by 46% to 107,283. Outdoor primary fires saw a 62% increase.
- Average response time to primary fires was 9 minutes 25 seconds, up 21 seconds from the previous year. Secondary fire response times increased to 9 minutes 57 seconds, reflecting higher incident volumes.



Questions for committee's consideration

- Has the Service benchmarked itself against these statistics?
- Are there any outliers or areas of concern to address?
- Are there positive takeaways for your Service?

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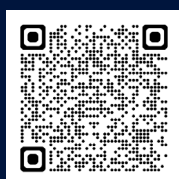
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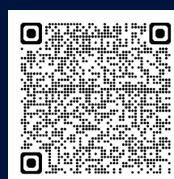
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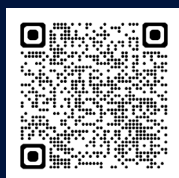
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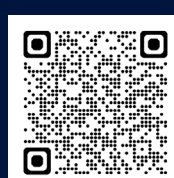
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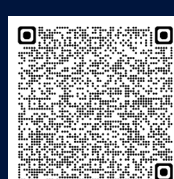
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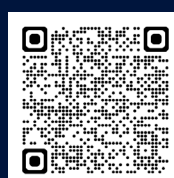
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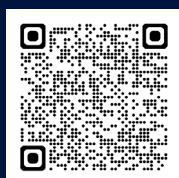
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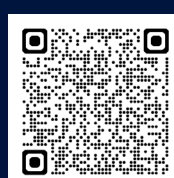
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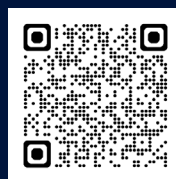


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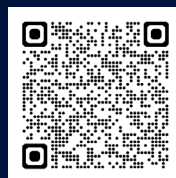
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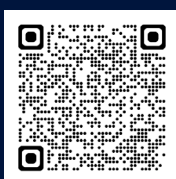
['Keep your hands off our rest days'](#)



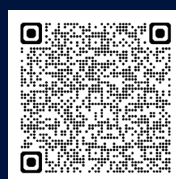
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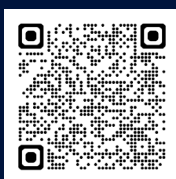
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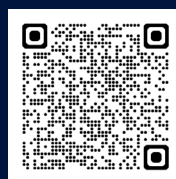
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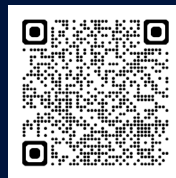
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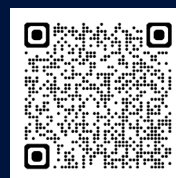
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