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Target Audience:  
FOD Inspectors

## POLICE AND FIRE SERVICE ACCIDENT STATISTICS

This SIM advises inspectors about the accident statistics for the years 2001/2002, 2000/2001 and 1999/2000 for the police and fire services in England, Scotland and Wales. It replaces SIM 7/2001/40, which should be cancelled.

### BACKGROUND

1 Accidents to police officers became reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) for the first time following the implementation of the Police (Health and Safety) Regulations 1999 on 14 April 1999 (see [OC 334/4](#)). Conversely, accidents to civilian support staff in police forces have always been reportable under RIDDOR. Accidents to firefighters have also been reportable under RIDDOR since its inception.

2 FOCUS recording of accident kind changed in the year 2001/2002. Although some categories remained broadly similar, other categories (such as manual handling) have been broken down to give better detail. Direct comparisons with the figures within these categories for previous years, including 1999/2000 (the baseline for Revitalising Health and Safety) are consequently difficult.

3 Process environment coding also changed in 2001/2002. Although this has had limited impact on fire service statistics, it has made it even more difficult to identify police civilian employee accidents. There is no dedicated SIC code for the police, and therefore police civilian employees can only be identified in Police environments, the codes for which have been reduced. For the year 2001/2002 it was only possible to identify 20 accidents to police support staff, from which it is impossible to draw any meaningful conclusions.

### POLICE ACCIDENT STATISTICS

4 The following tables for accidents to police officers in England, Scotland and Wales cover the years 2000/2001 and provisional statistics for 2001/2002. The figures for 1999/2000 (Table 3) are also included for information.

**Table 1: Injuries to police officers 2001/2002 Provisional**

<b>Kind</b>	<b>Fatal</b>	<b>Major</b>	<b>Over-3-day</b>	<b>Total</b>
Assault/violence		143	664	807

Trip/slip		137	466	603
Other Total		47	251	298
Body movement		6	220	226
Struck by		36	181	217
Person handling		20	153	173
Strike/Step on		29	127	156
Other handling		12	127	139
Struck by vehicle	1	11	119	131
Falls		26	89	115
Animal		5	59	64
Handling sharp		6	38	44
Exposure to substance		1	25	26
No information		3	7	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>2526</b>	<b>3009</b>

Table 2: Injuries to police officers 2000/2001

Kind	Fatal	Major	Over-3-day	Total
Assault/violence	1	194	938	1133
Trip		138	523	661
Handling/Sprains		29	528	557
Other kind		38	254	292
Struck by		36	188	224
Fall		37	152	189
Strike/Step on		25	136	161
Transport		12	67	79
Animal	1	3	59	62
Exposure/hot substance		4	41	45
Not known		2	9	11
Fire			2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>2897</b>	<b>3416</b>

Table 3: Injuries to police officers 1999/2000

Kind	Fatal	Major	Over-3-day	Total
Assault/violence		158	760	918
Trip		121	521	642
Handling/Sprains		28	506	534
Other kind		32	258	290
Struck by		49	188	237
Strike/Step on		36	136	172

Fall	1	48	140	189
Transport		13	77	90
Animal		6	60	66
Exposure/hot substance		11	47	58
Not known		2	12	14
Fire		1	13	14
Collapse/overturn			5	5
Volt		1		1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>2723</b>	<b>3230</b>

5 After consistent rises between 1998 and 2001, the provisional figures for 2001/2002 show falls in the major and over 3-day accident totals. There has been a notable reduction in the number of recordable injuries arising from assault.

6 The major causes of accidents to police officers have remained the same: assault, trips and manual handling, with body movement (not necessarily associated with a manual handling task) the leading cause of manual handling injury. [SIM 7/2002/15](#) MSDs in MoD, Police and Fire Services gives a detailed breakdown of strain injuries.

7 The fatality for the year 2000/2001 was Greater Manchester Police Officer Alison Armitage, who was hit by a stolen car as she attempted to stop it driving away.

8 The fatality for the year 2001/2002 was Essex Police Officer Gary Veal who was accidentally hit by a car as he was placing cones on a busy road to warn of an accident.

#### FIRE SERVICE ACCIDENT STATISTICS

9 The Fire Service figures given in Tables 4, 5 and 6 include injuries to non-uniformed staff.

**Table 4 Injuries in the fire service 2001/2002 Provisional**

Kind	Fatal	Major	Over-3-day	Total
Slip/Trip		67	409	476
Manual Handling (Object)		10	297	307
Other		20	166	186
Body movement		1	182	183
Struck by		9	104	113
Hit fixed object		8	78	86
Falls		13	46	59
Fire/explosion		3	26	29
Manual handling (person)		0	22	22
Physical Assault		1	13	14
Struck by vehicle		3	7	10
Drown/asphyx		3	5	8
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>138</b>	<b>1355</b>	<b>1493</b>

**Table 5 Injuries in the fire service 2000/2001**

Kind	Fatal	Major	Over-3-day	Total
Handling/Sprains		18	552	570
Trip		74	452	526
Other kind		16	147	163
Struck by		14	135	149
Falls		27	86	113
Strike/step on		9	67	76
Exposure/hot substance		11	33	44
Fire		1	29	30
Transport		2	11	13
Drowning/asphyx		8	0	8
Assault/violence			8	8
Not known		1	7	8
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>181</b>	<b>1527</b>	<b>1708</b>

**Table 6 Injuries in the fire service 1999/2000**

Kind	Fatal	Major	Over-3-day	Total
Handling		21	640	661
Slip/trip		60	482	542
Struck by		16	181	197
Other kind		17	150	167
Fall		27	104	131
Struck against		10	104	114
Exposure/hot substance		15	52	67
Fire			24	24
Transport		3	11	14
Explosion			7	7
Machinery		2	6	8
Animal			7	7
Volt		3	1	4
Assault		1	4	5
Drowning	1	2	1	4
Collapse/overturn			1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>1775</b>	<b>1953</b>

10 The categories causing the most injuries overall remain the same year on year; manual handling and slips/trips. Most major injuries are caused by trips. Further analysis of the figures shows that as many handling accidents are occurring during training as during operational activities.

11 The data for 2001/2002 has been broken down to show the main categories of 'manual handling' accident. If they were all added together, the total would be greater than that for slips/trips (512 c.f. 476). It is interesting to note that awkward body movement injuries far outweigh those caused during the manual handling of people.

12 Accident performance over the past few years has mirrored that of the police service; after a number of years of rising figures there is a fall in 2001/2002. It is difficult to identify any underlying reason for this. Manual handling accident figures and slips and trips figures have both been reduced, but injuries due to falls have been reduced by approximately 50%.

#### INCIDENCE RATES

13 Incidence figures (accidents per 100 000 employees) are presented for purposes of comparison.

Sector	Major	Over 3 Day
Manufacturing	192	990
Construction	378	835
Police	241	1263
Fire	212	2085

14 It should be noted that the employment figures for the Fire service include retained firefighters and support staff, but exclude volunteer firefighters. Employment totals for the Police service include Special Constables.

#### CANCELLATION OF INSTRUCTIONS

15 SIM 7/2001/40 - **cancel** and **destroy**.

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