



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

STATISTICS

Fire and rescue incident statistics: April 2021 to March 2022 (summary)

Data on fires, location, cause, motive, casualties and false alarms and Special Service Incidents attended for April 2021 to March 2022.

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Analysis of all incidents attended by the three Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) in Wales. The most recent data relates to 2020-21 and is provisional as indicated in the charts and tables with a (p).

Impact of COVID-19

This report covers the financial year from April 2021 to March 2022, and compares with April 2020 to March 2021 a period within the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Fire and rescue service incidents, and in particular Special Service Incidents (SSIs), are likely to have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and so any increases or decreases should be considered within this context.

Main points

Numbers of fires have seen a downward trend since 2001-02, falling by almost 70%, and by 35% over the last 10 years. Recent years have seen less variation with numbers staying around the 10,000 to 13,000 mark. The number of fire false alarms has also fallen but to a lesser extent, only decreasing by 22% since 2001-02. Numbers of Special Service Incidents SSIs have fluctuated throughout the time series, 2021-22 saw a 24% increase compared with the previous year.

Compared with 2020-21, numbers of fires rose by 4% in 2021-22; numbers of primary fires rose by 4% whilst there was a 5% increase in the number of secondary fires.

There were 21 fatal casualties from fires in Wales in 2021-22.

There were 479 non-fatal casualties in 2021-22, an increase of 17% compared

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with 2020-21. All types of casualty e.g. those sent to hospital or people receiving first aid etc. saw increases.

There were 1,820 deliberate grassland woodland and crop fires in 2021-22, an increase of 11% compared with 2020-21.

All fire and rescue incidents attended

FRA's attended 34,736 incidents in the year ending March 2022. An increase of 8% compared with 2020-21 but a similar number to that in 2019-20. This rise was driven by a 24% increase in the number of Special Service Incidents (SSIs). It is likely that the number of SSIs in 2020-21 was affected by COVID.

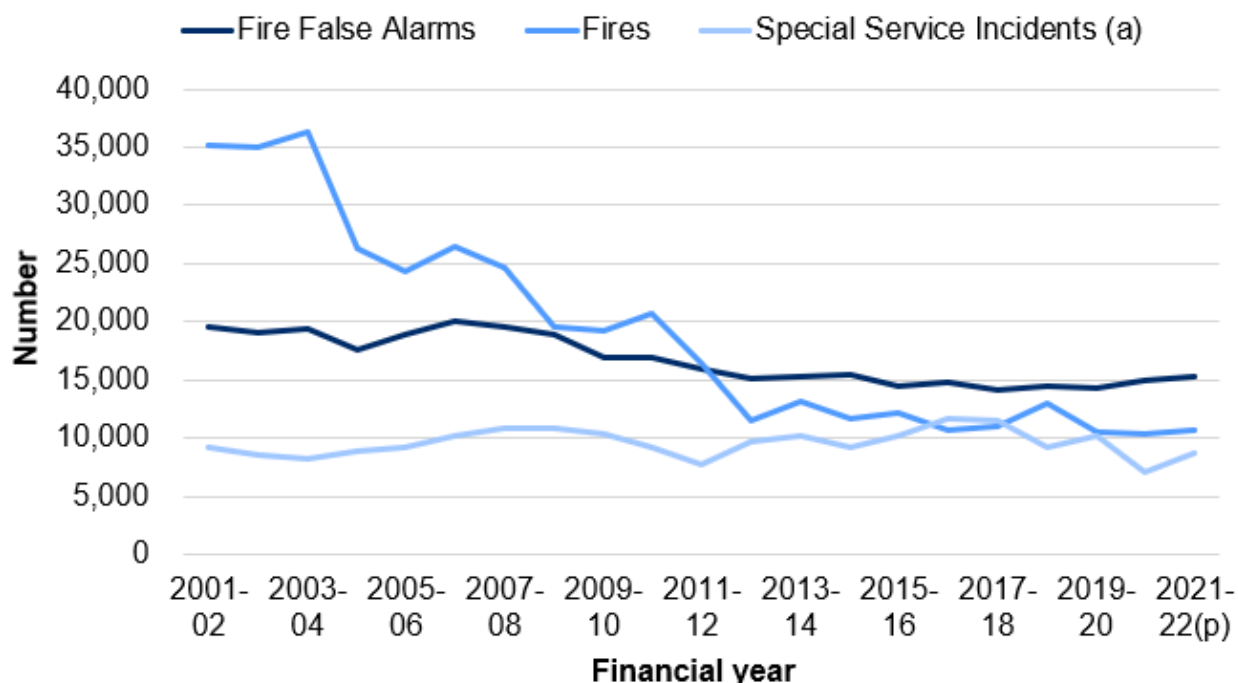
The number of incidents attended by FRAs peaked in 2002/03 at nearly 64,000 incidents.

The number of fires attended has seen a 69% decrease since 2001-02, with the largest decreases occurring before 2012-13; in recent years the numbers have levelled out somewhat.

Numbers of false alarms have also seen a downward trend over the time series.

Numbers of Special Service Incidents (SSIs) have been prone to fluctuation; numbers in 2020-21 are likely to have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the periods of restrictions that occurred and in 2021-22 numbers of many SSI categories have seen increases.

Chart 1: All attendances by the Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales, 2001-02 to 2021-22(p)



Source: Incident Recording System
 (a) Including Special Service false alarms
 (p) Provisional data

Fire and rescue incidents data on StatsWales

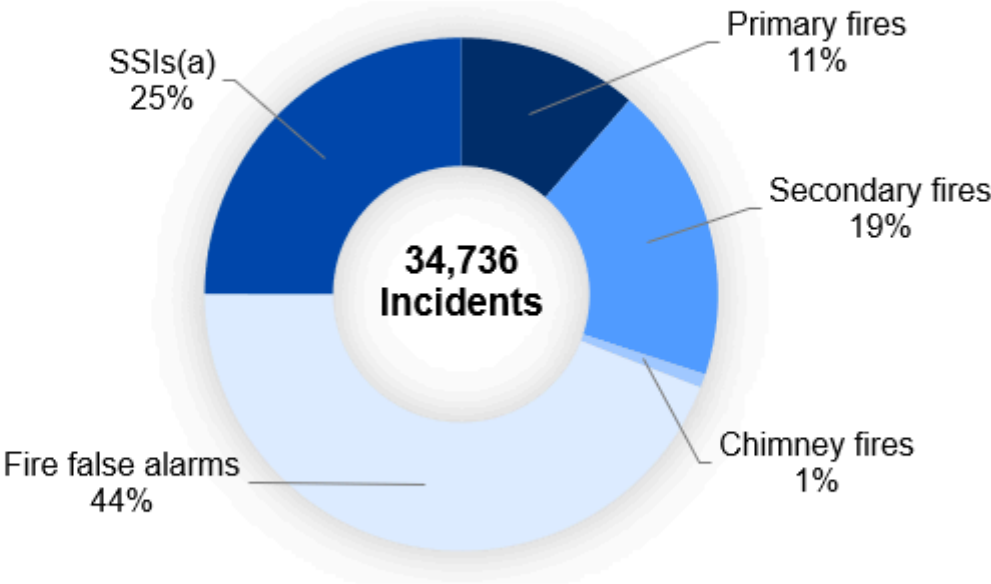
Of all attendances in 2021-22, 10,740 (31%) were at fires, of which 3,943 were primary fires (11%), 6,497 secondary fires (19%) and 300 chimney fires (1%). There were also 15,320 fire false alarm incidents (44% of attendances) and 8,676 SSIs including SSI false alarms (25%).

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Chart 2: Attendances at fire and rescue Incidents, 2021-22(p)



Source: Incident Recording System
(a) Including Special Service false alarms
(p) Provisional data

Fire and rescue incidents data on StatsWales

Fires attended

Fires are classed as primary, secondary or chimney fires.

Primary fires include all fires in non-derelict buildings and vehicles or in outdoor structures, or any fire involving casualties or rescues, or fires attended by five or more appliances.

Secondary fires are mainly outdoor fires including grassland and refuse fires unless they involve casualties or rescues, or are attended by five or more appliances.

Chimney fires are those in occupied buildings where the fire was confined within the chimney structure.

Numbers of fires have seen a downward trend since 2001-02, falling by 69%, and by 35% over the last 10 years. Recent years have seen less variation with numbers staying around the 10,000 to 13,000 mark.

In 2021-22 FRSs attended 10,740 fires, an increase of 4% compared with 2020-21.

In 2021-22 secondary fires accounted for 60% of all fires, primary fires accounted for 37% and chimney fires 3%.

Primary fires

In 2021-22 the number of primary fires increased by 4% compared with the previous year, to 3,943. Only South Wales saw a decrease in the number of primary fires (down 1% compared with 2020-21); numbers in North Wales rose by 9% and in Mid and West Wales there was a 7% increase.

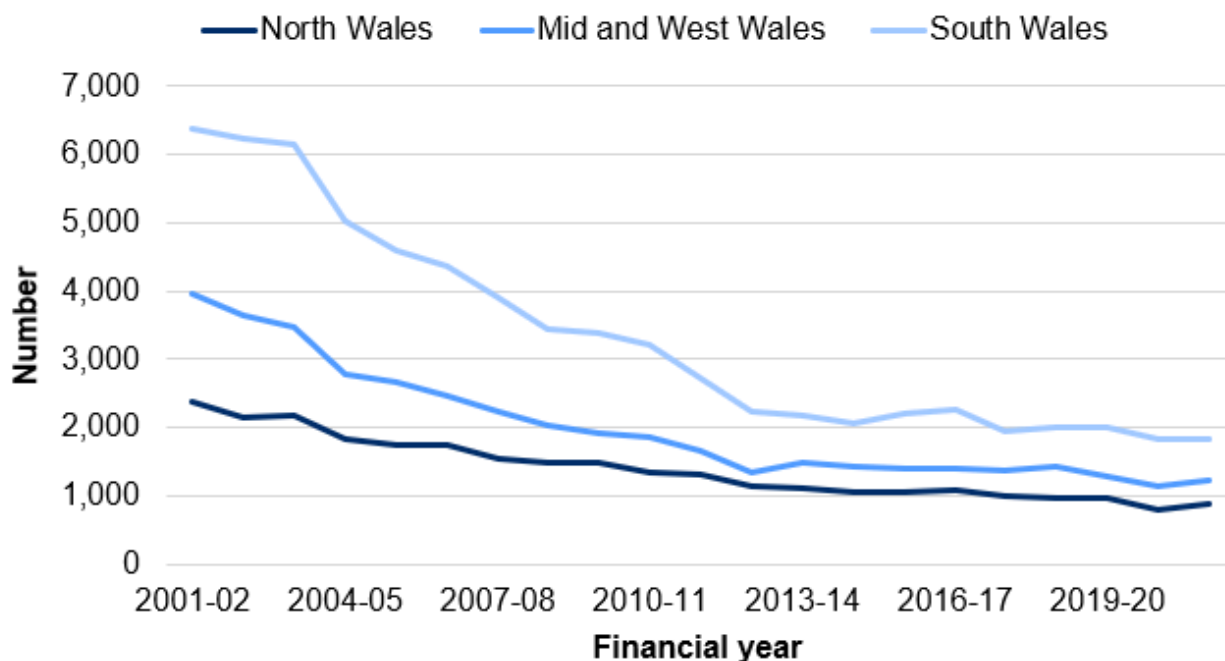
Since 2001-02 the number of primary fires has fallen by 71% in South Wales, by 69% in Mid and West Wales and by 63% in North Wales.

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Chart 3: Number of primary fires by Fire and Rescue Authority, 2001-02 to 2021-22(p)



Source: Incident Recording System

(p) Provisional data

The chart shows the number of primary fires by fire and rescue authority since 2001-02. Numbers of fires in all three FRSs show a general downward trend.

Fire and rescue incidents data on StatsWales

In 2021-22, 40% of all primary fires were in dwellings, 31% in road vehicles, 20% in other buildings and 8% were outdoor fires. All location types except outdoors saw increases in the number of primary fires since 2020-21, with fire in dwellings up by 6%, in other buildings up 11% and road vehicle fires up 3%. Numbers of primary outdoors fires decreased by 15%.

In 2021-22 the number of dwelling fires was around half the figure seen in 2001-02.

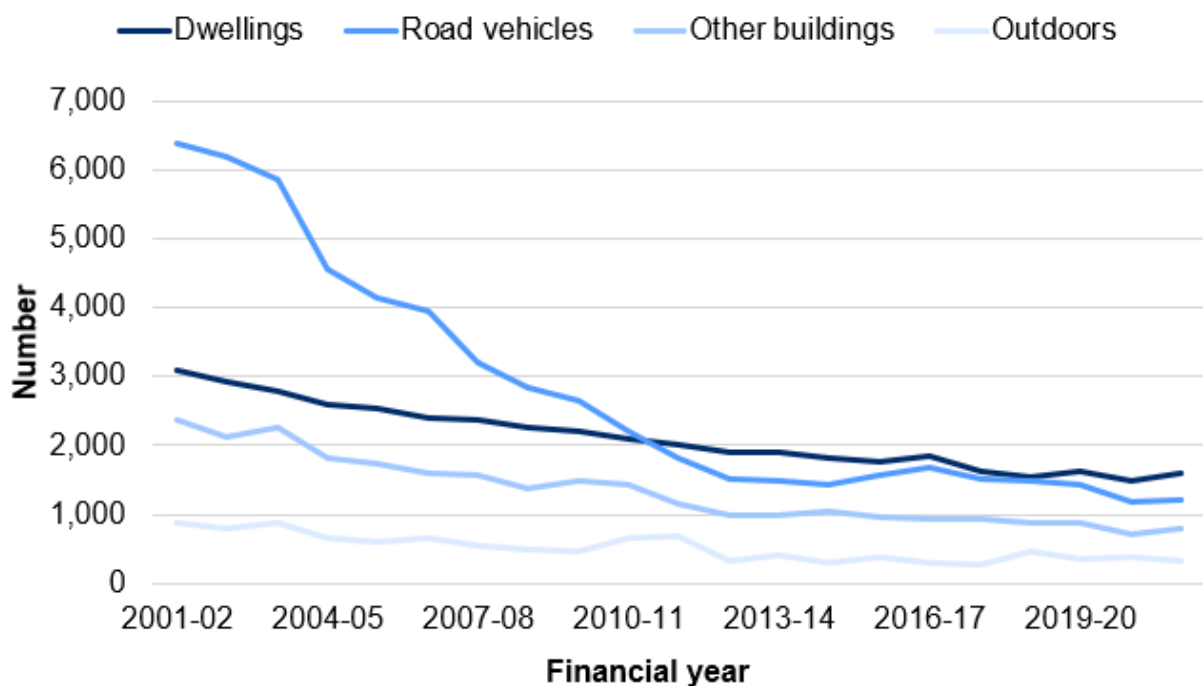
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Numbers of primary fires in road vehicles in Wales have fallen by 81% since 2001-02.

Chart 4: Number of primary fires by location, 2001-02 to 2021-22(p)



Source: Incident Recording System
(p) Provisional data

Fire and rescue incidents data on StatsWales

Secondary fires

Secondary fires are the most common category of fire attended by Welsh FRAs, accounting for 61% of all fires since 2001-02 and 60% of those attended in 2021-22. In 2021-22 numbers of secondary fires increased by 5% compared with 2020-21, to 6,497. Compared with the previous year, all 3 FRSs saw

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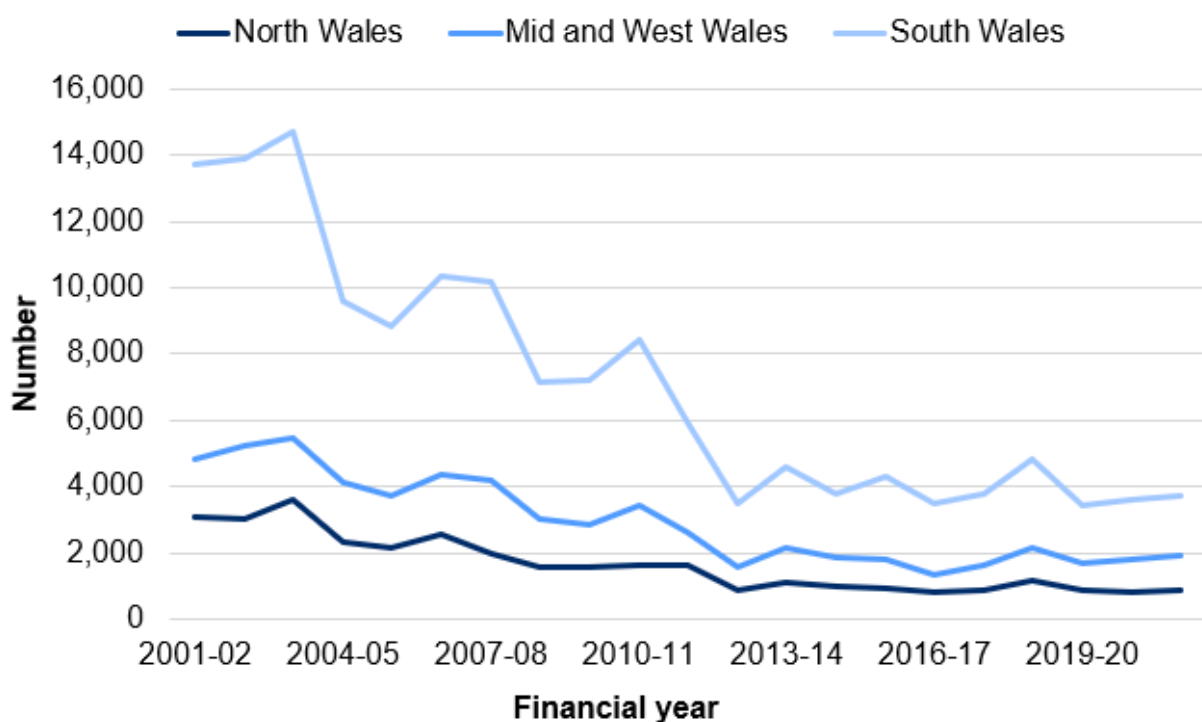
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increases, in North Wales by 9%, in Mid and West Wales by 8% and in South Wales by 3%.

Numbers of secondary fires in all 3 Welsh FRAs have seen substantial falls since 2001-02; 73% in South Wales, 71% in North Wales and 60% in Mid and West Wales.

Chart 5: Number of secondary fires by Fire and Rescue Authority, 2001-02 to 2021-22(p)



Source: Incident Recording System
(p) Provisional data

Fire and rescue incidents data on StatsWales

In 2021-22, 2,319 (36% of) secondary fires occurred on grassland, woodland, cropland, an increase by 13% compared with 2020-21.

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In 2021-22, 55% of secondary fires were classed as refuse fires. The number of these fires fell by 1% from 3,605 in 2020-21 to 3,574 in 2021-22. Overall there has been a downward trend in refuse fires, falling by 30% since 2009-10.

Fires by motive

In 2021-22, there were 4,618 accidental fires, the third lowest number in the available time series (since 2001-02). The number rose by 4% compared to the previous year, and since 2001-02 the number has fallen by 50%. Accidental fires accounted for 75% of all primary fires and 21% of secondary fires.

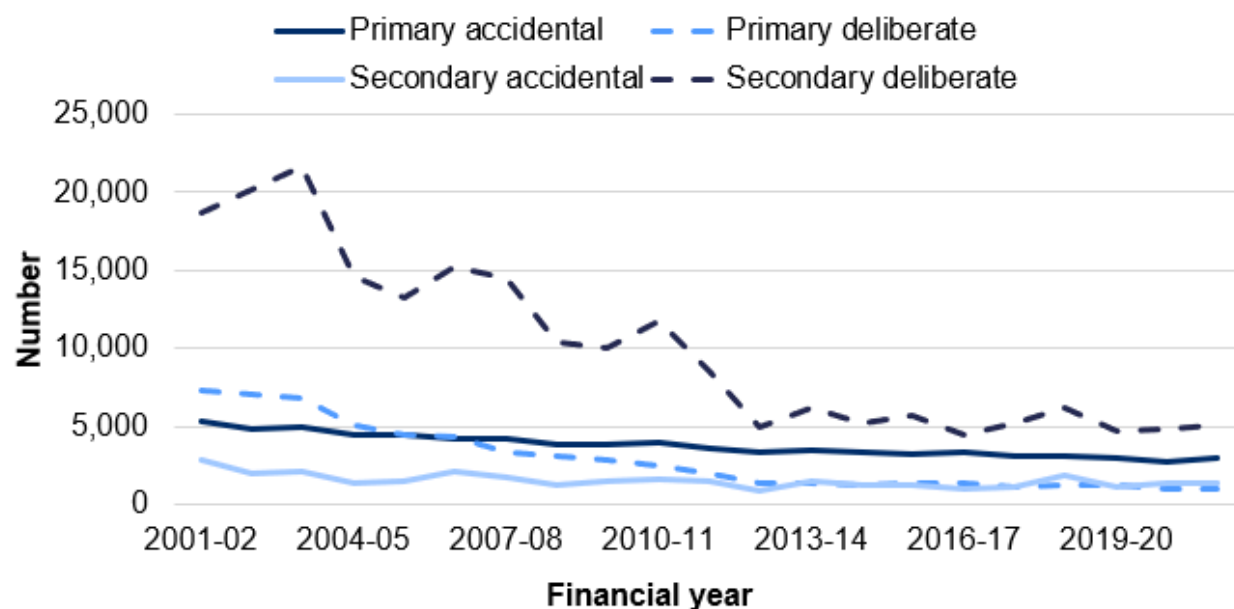
There were 6,122 deliberate fires a rise of 4% compared with 2020-21; 84% deliberate fires in 2021-22 were secondary fires.

The chart below shows that numbers of deliberate secondary fires have been prone to fluctuation, whilst the other categories shown are less volatile.

In 2021-22 the number of accidental primary fires increased by 8% whilst the number of accidental secondary fires stayed the same (compared with 2020-21).

Numbers of primary deliberate fires fell by 6%, whilst secondary deliberate fires increased 6%.

Chart 6: Number of fires by type and motive, 2001-02 to 2021-22(p)



Source: Incident Recording System
(p) Provisional data

Fire and rescue incidents data on StatsWales

Fire false alarms

A fire false alarm is defined as an event in which the FRA was called to a reported fire which turned out not to exist. Fire false alarms are categorised as follows:

- malicious: Where the call is deliberately for a non-existent fire-related event
- good intent: in which the call was made in good faith in the belief that there was a fire to attend

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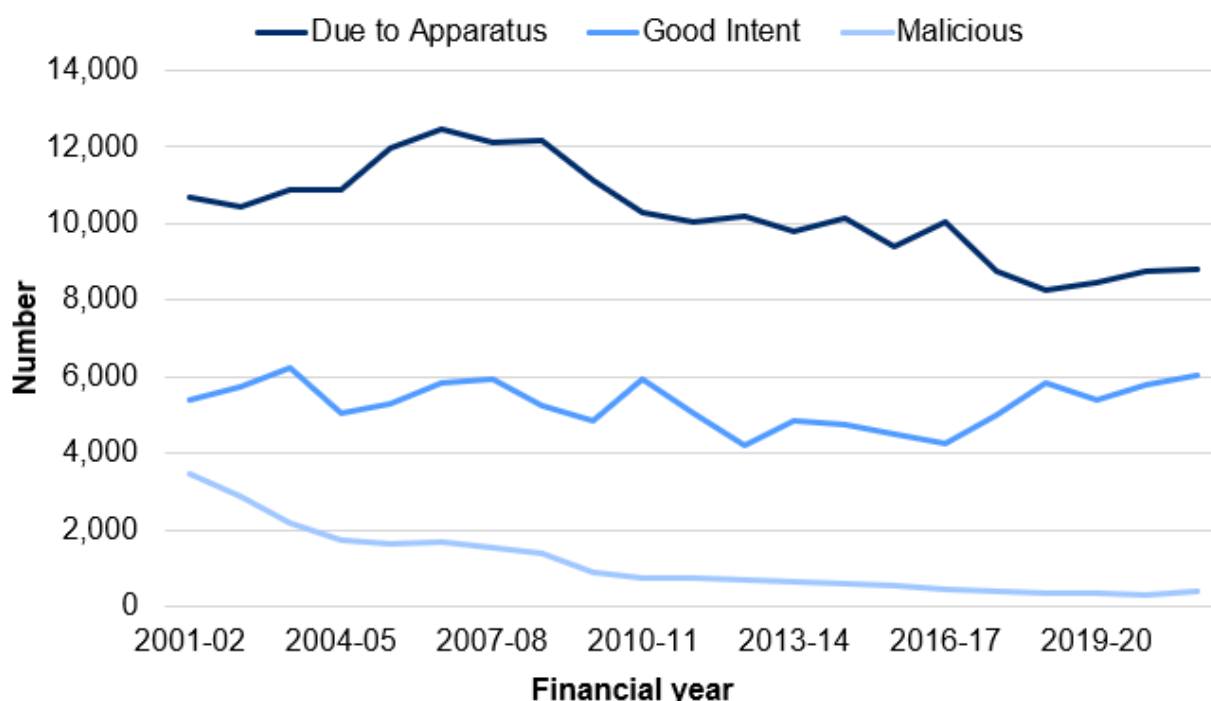
- due to apparatus: in which the call was initiated by the operation of fire alarm and fire-fighting equipment

In 2021-22 there were 15,320 fire false alarms in Wales, up from 14,879 in 2020-21, an increase of 3%. Since 2001-02 the number of fire false alarms attended has fallen by 22%.

Numbers of all categories of false alarms rose in 2021-22 compared with 2020-21; numbers of good intent fire false alarms rose by 4%, those due to apparatus rose by 1% whilst numbers of malicious fire false alarms increased by 33%.

Overall there has been a downward trend in the number of malicious fire false alarms, falling by 88% since 2001-02.

Chart 7: Number of fire false alarms by reason, 2001-02 to 2021-22(p)



Source: Incident Recording System
(p) Provisional data

Fire and rescue incidents data on StatsWales

Special service incidents

In 2021-22, 25% of all incidents attended by FRAs in Wales were Special Service Incidents (SSIs). These incidents include road traffic collisions (RTCs), flooding incidents, medical incidents etc. Unlike other incident types overall numbers of SSIs haven't seen a consistent downward trend and are prone to fluctuation. It is likely that the COVID-19 pandemic and periods of lockdown

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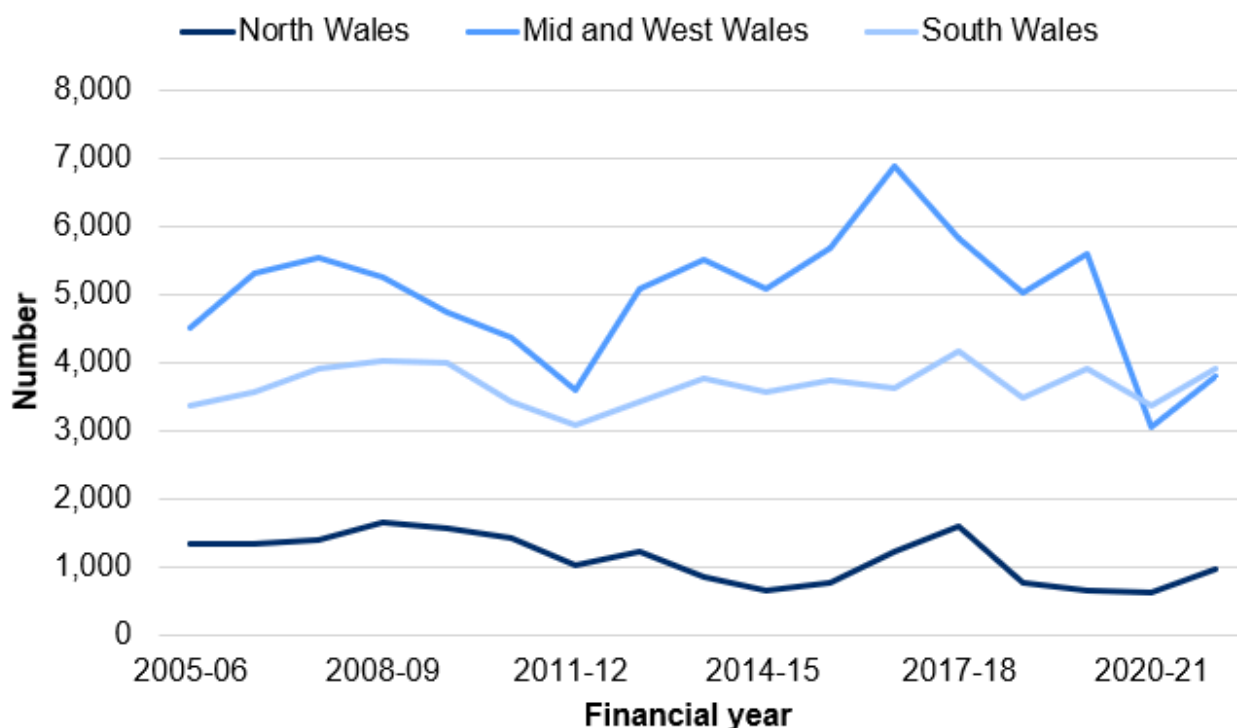
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have had an impact on the numbers of SSIs in 2020-21.

Overall attendance at SSIs increased by 24% in 2021-22; all 3 FRAs saw increases in attendances at SSIs rising by 55% in North Wales, 25% in Mid and West Wales and 16% in South Wales. The increase in SSIs in Mid and West Wales is mainly due to a rise in the number of attendances at RTCs and assisting other agencies.

Chart 8: Number of SSIs attended by Fire and Rescue Authority, 2001-02 to 2021-22(p)



Source: Incident Recording System
(p) Provisional data

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RTCs accounted for around a fifth of SSIs and attendance at these incidents

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rose by 38%. Road traffic statistics show that road traffic volume decreased considerably during year 2020 in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions introduced at times during the year (a decrease of 23.4% compared to 2019). **Road traffic: 2020** Road Traffic data for year ending Dec 2021 is not yet available but the ending of travel restrictions and lockdown measures is likely to have resulted in increased traffic volume compared with 2020. However there is evidence to suggest many employees are continuing to work from home and so traffic volumes may not be as high as in previous years. **Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (Office for National Statistics)**

Numbers of attendances at medical incidents rose by 60%.

Flooding incidents decreased by 44% following the large numbers seen in 2019-20 and 2020-21.

Table 1: Number of Special Service Incidents by type, 2019-20 to 2021-22

Type of incident	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22(p)
Road traffic collision	2,122	1,278	1,759
Flooding	993	876	490
Rescue or evacuation from water	214	147	121
Other rescue/release of people	322	256	428
Animal assistance incidents	329	261	306
Making Safe	346	235	531

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Type of incident	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22(p)
Lift release	359	217	290
Effecting entry	572	469	678
Removal of objects from people	276	337	449
Medical incident - Co-responder/First responder	2,117	390	624
Assist other agencies	1,034	954	1,343
Other	968	1,023	1,176
All Special Service Incidents	9,652	6,443	8,195
All Special Service False Alarms	473	577	481

Source: Incident Recording System
(p) Provisional data

Fire-related fatalities and casualties

Fire fatalities

A fatal casualty is defined as a person whose death is attributed to a fire, even if the death occurred weeks or months later.

There were 21 fatal casualties during 2021-22. This is the same number as in

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the previous year and the joint highest number since 2011-12. The overall trend since 2001-02 (when there were 38 fatalities) has been downward, however numbers are small and prone to fluctuation.

Table 2: Number and rate of fatal casualties from fires, 2012-13 to 2021 22

Financial year	Number	Per million population (a)
2012-13	17	5.5
2013-14	17	5.5
2014-15	20	6.5
2015-16	19	6.1
2016-17	19	6.1
2017-18	15	4.8
2018-19	20	6.4
2019-20	16	5.1
2020-21	21	6.6
2020-21(p)	21	6.8

Source: Incident Recording System

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- (a) Population data are taken from ONS Mid-Year Estimates.
(p) Provisional data.

Since 2001-02, 77% of fatal casualties occurred in dwelling fires, equating to a total of 358 out of 464 fatalities. In 2021-22 76% of fatalities were the result of dwelling fires; there were 3 fewer dwelling fatalities than in the previous year.

In 2021-22 13 of the 21 fatalities were aged 60 or over. For most of the available time series the age group '60 or over' had the highest fatality rate, and in 2021-22 the fatality rate for this group is more than 3 times the next highest rate (for 30-59 year olds).

Non-fatal fire casualties

From April 2009 non-fatal casualties are recorded as being in one of four classes of severity as follows.

1. Victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be serious.
2. Victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be slight.
3. First aid given at scene.
4. Precautionary check recommended, this is when an individual is sent to hospital or advised to see a doctor as a precaution, having no obvious injury or distress.

In 2021-22 there were 479 non-fatal casualties (a rise of 17% compared with 2020-21). The overall trend over the last ten years has been downward, although in recent years the numbers and associated rates have fluctuated.

Table 3: Number and rate of non fatal casualties from fires, 2012-13 to 2021-22

Financial year	Number	Per million population (a)
2012-13	541	176.0
2013-14	626	203.1
2014-15	543	175.6
2015-16	592	191.0
2016-17	621	199.5
2017-18	526	169.0
2018-19	396	126.2
2019-20	509	161.4
2020-21	408	128.7
2021-22(p)	479	151.1

Source: Incident Recording System

(a) Population data are taken from ONS Mid-Year Estimates.

(p) Provisional data.

Although all casualty groups saw an increase, the overall rise was driven by

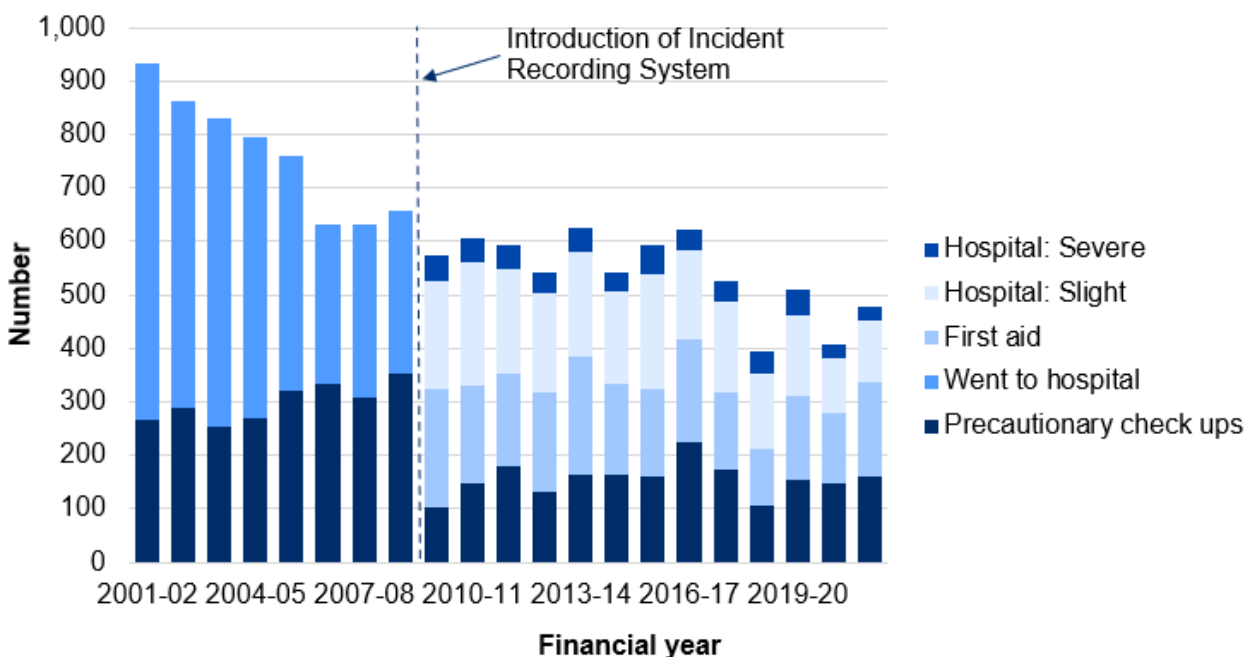
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increased numbers of those receiving first aid or sent for precautionary checks, up 20% compared with 2020-21. In 2021-22, 70% of non fatal casualties received first aid or were advised to have a precautionary check up. A further 24% of non-fatal casualties were taken to hospital with slight injuries and the remaining 6% were taken to hospital with severe injuries.

Chart 9: Number of non-fatal casualties from fires by severity of injury, 2001-02 to 2021-22(p)



Source: Incident Recording System
(p) Provisional data

Fire and rescue incidents data on StatsWales

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Quality and methodology information

Context

The analysis in this report relates to fire and rescue service incidents between April 2021 and end March 2022 whilst making comparisons with April 2020 to March 2021 a period largely effected by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and therefore the public health restrictions that were in place during the course of the pandemic. Whilst restrictions were eased during 2021-22 there were some periods during the year when restrictions remained in place and patterns of behaviour may not have returned to that occurring prior to the pandemic.

The **Fire and Rescue Incident report** provides further detail of quality and methodology information.

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