



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

STATISTICS, DOCUMENT

Fire and rescue incident statistics: April 2022 to March 2023 (summary)

A report which includes information on fires, location, cause, motive, casualties and false alarms attended for April 2022 to March 2023.

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Introduction

Analysis of all incidents attended by the three Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) in Wales. The most recent data relates to 2022-23 and is provisional as indicated in the charts and tables with a [p]. The statistics are sourced from the Home Office's Incident Recording System (IRS) and include statistics on all incidents, fire-related fatalities and non-fatal casualties from fires.

Main points

- Numbers of fires have seen a downward trend since 2001-02, falling by almost 70%, but over the last ten years numbers have been relatively stable staying around 10,000 to 13,000. The number of fire false alarms has also fallen but to a lesser extent, only decreasing by 18% since 2001-02. Numbers of Special Service Incidents have fluctuated throughout the time series, 2022-23 saw a 19% increase compared with the previous year.
- Compared with 2021-22, numbers of fires rose by 3% in 2022-23; numbers of primary fires fell by 1% whilst there was a 6% increase in the number of secondary fires.
- There were 14 fatal casualties from fires in Wales in 2022-23. This is 7 fewer than in 2021-22, primarily due to there being no fatalities in North Wales.
- There were 422 non-fatal casualties in 2022-23, a decrease of 12% compared with 2021-22.
- There were 1,805 deliberate grassland, woodland and crop fires in 2022-23, a decrease of 1% compared with 2021-22.

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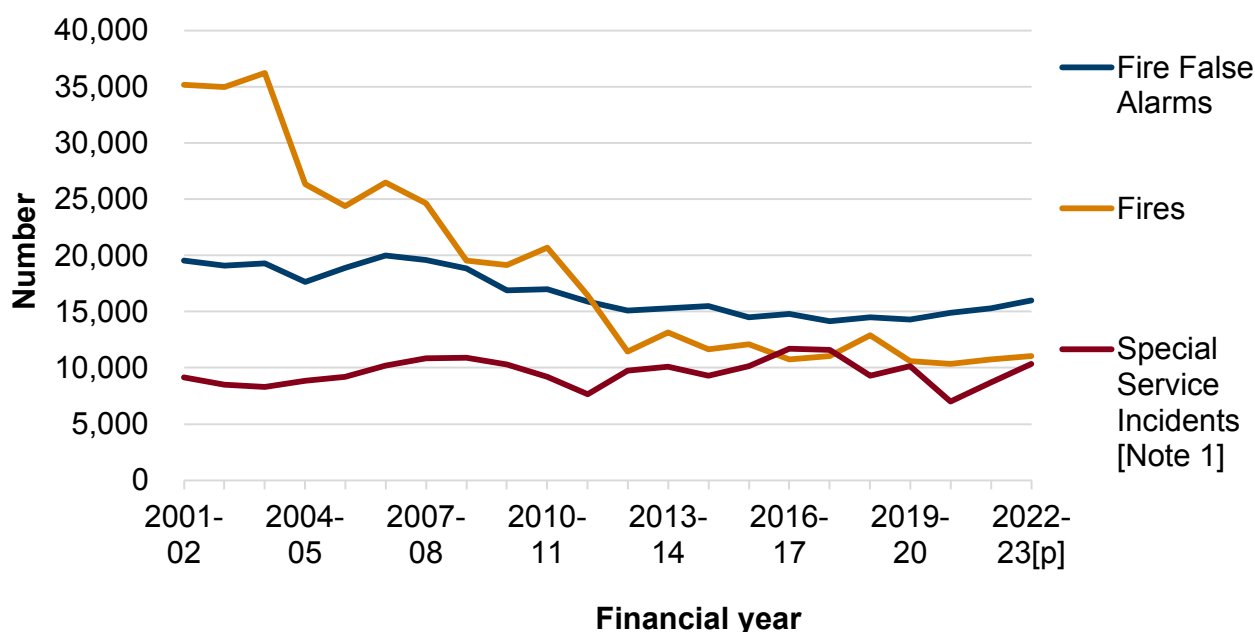
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All fire and rescue incidents attended

FRA's attended 37,427 incidents in the year ending March 2023. An increase of 8% compared with 2021-22. It is the highest figure since 2013-14 but not so dissimilar from the rest of the timeseries from 2013-14 onwards. The number of incidents attended by FRAs peaked in 2002/03 at nearly 64,000 incidents.

Figure 1: All attendances by Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales, 2001-02 to 2022-23 [p]



Description of Figure 1: Line chart showing a time series from 2001-02 for fires, fire false alarms and Special Service 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.

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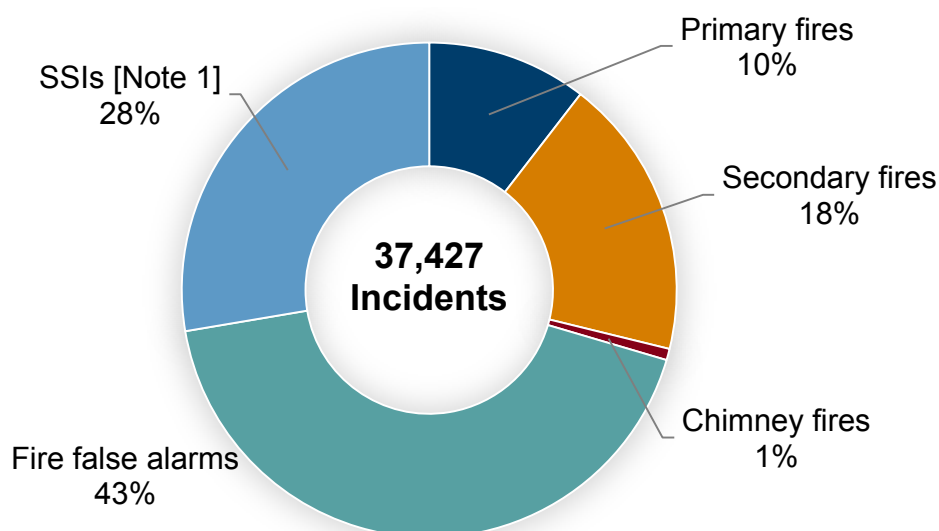
Numbers of false alarms have also seen a downward trend over the time series. Numbers of SSIs have varied since 2001-02; overall there has been an increase of 13% since 2001-02.

Source: [Fire incident data on StatsWales](#)

[Note 1] Including Special Service Incident false alarms.

[p] Provisional data

Figure 2: Attendances at fire and rescue Incidents, 2022-23 [p]



Description of Figure 2: A doughnut chart showing the percentage of attendances for different categories of incident in 2022-23. Of all attendances in 2022-23, 10% of attendances were primary fires (3,918 incidents), 18% were secondary fires (6,871 incidents) and 1% were chimney fires (277 incidents). There were also 16,008 fire false alarm incidents (43% of attendances) and 10,353 SSIs including SSI false alarms (28%).

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Source: [Fire incident data on StatsWales](#)

[Note 1] Including Special Service Incident false alarms.

[p] Provisional data

Fires attended

Primary 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.

In 2022-23 the number of primary fires decreased by 1% compared with the previous year, to 3,918. Only South Wales saw an increase in the number of primary fires (up 3% compared with 2021-22); numbers in North Wales fell by 3% and in Mid and West Wales there was a 5% decrease.

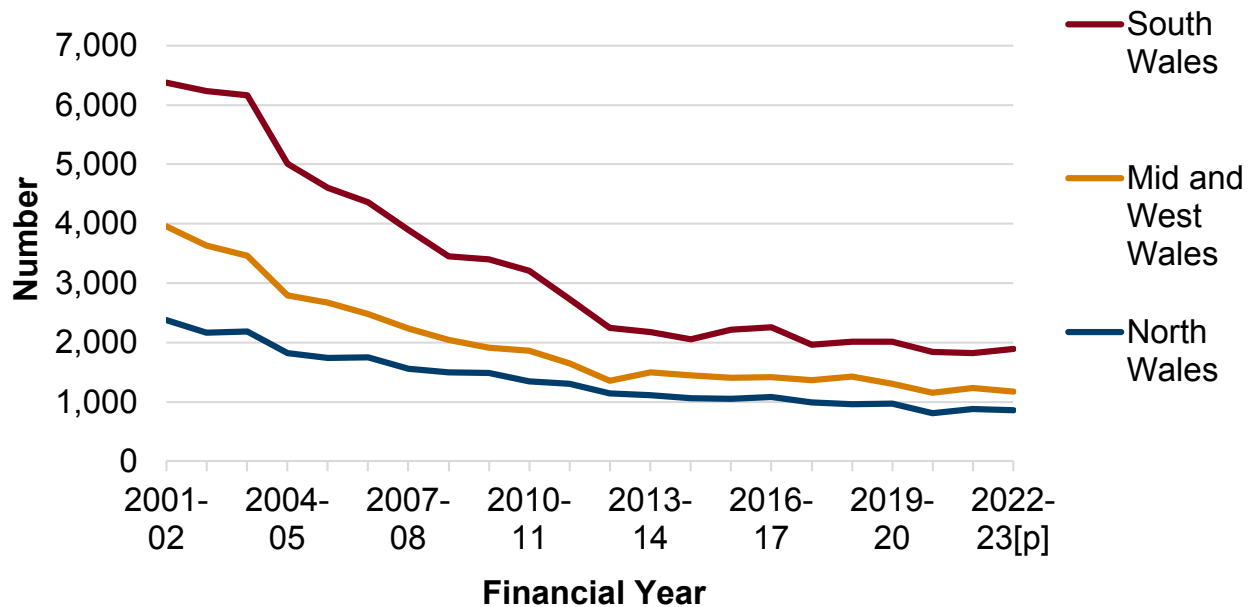
Since 2001-02 the number of primary fires has fallen by 70% in South Wales and in Mid and West Wales; in North Wales the number has fallen by 64%.

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Figure 3: Number of primary fires by Fire and Rescue Authority, 2001-02 to 2022-23 [p]

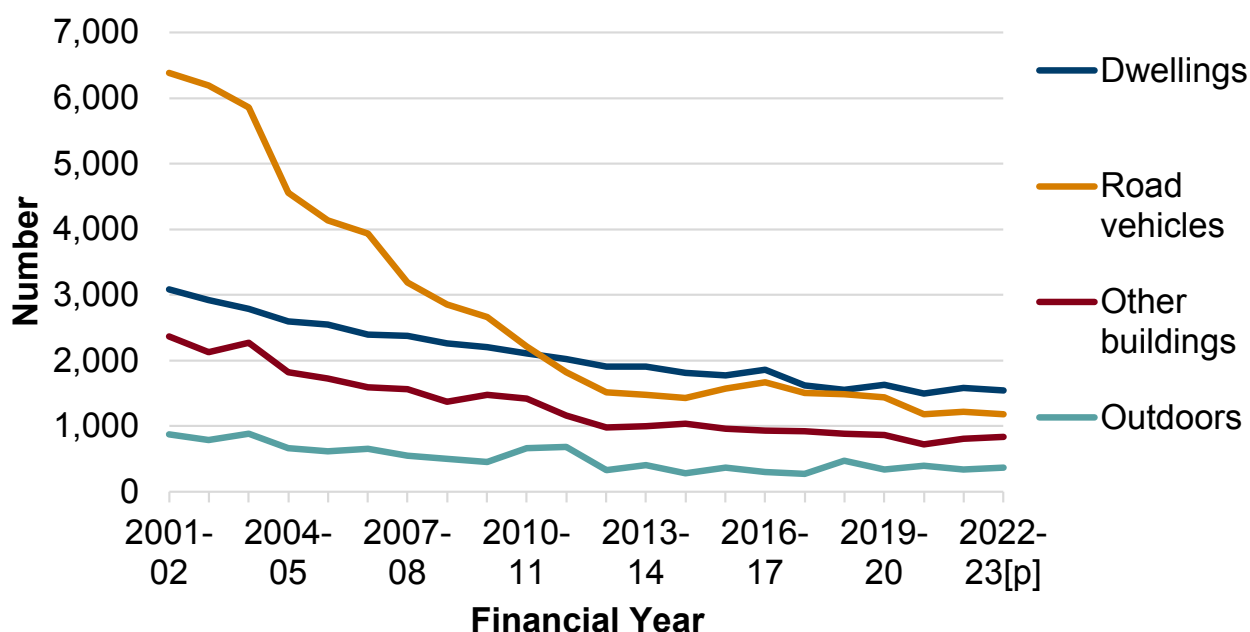


Description of Figure 3: A line chart showing the number of primary fires by fire and rescue authority since 2001-02. Numbers of fires in all three FRSs show a general downward trend. South Wales have consistently attended the most primary fires whilst North Wales the fewest.

Source: [Primary fires on StatsWales](#)

[p] Provisional data

Figure 4: Number of primary fires by location, 2001-02 to 2022-23 [p]



Description of Figure 4: A line chart showing the numbers of fires in dwellings, other buildings, road vehicles and other outdoor locations each year from 2001-02 to 2022-23. The general trend is downward for all categories, but this is most noticeable amongst road vehicles which saw a particularly steep decrease between 2002-02 and 2012-13.

Source: [Primary fires on StatsWales](#)

[p] Provisional data

In 2022-23, 39% of all primary fires were in dwellings, 30% in road vehicles, 21% in other buildings and 9% were outdoor fires. Fires in dwellings and road vehicles each fell by 3% compared with the previous year. Fires in other

buildings rose by 4% and primary outdoors fires increased by 9%.

In 2022-23 the number of dwelling fires was around half the figure seen in 2001-02.

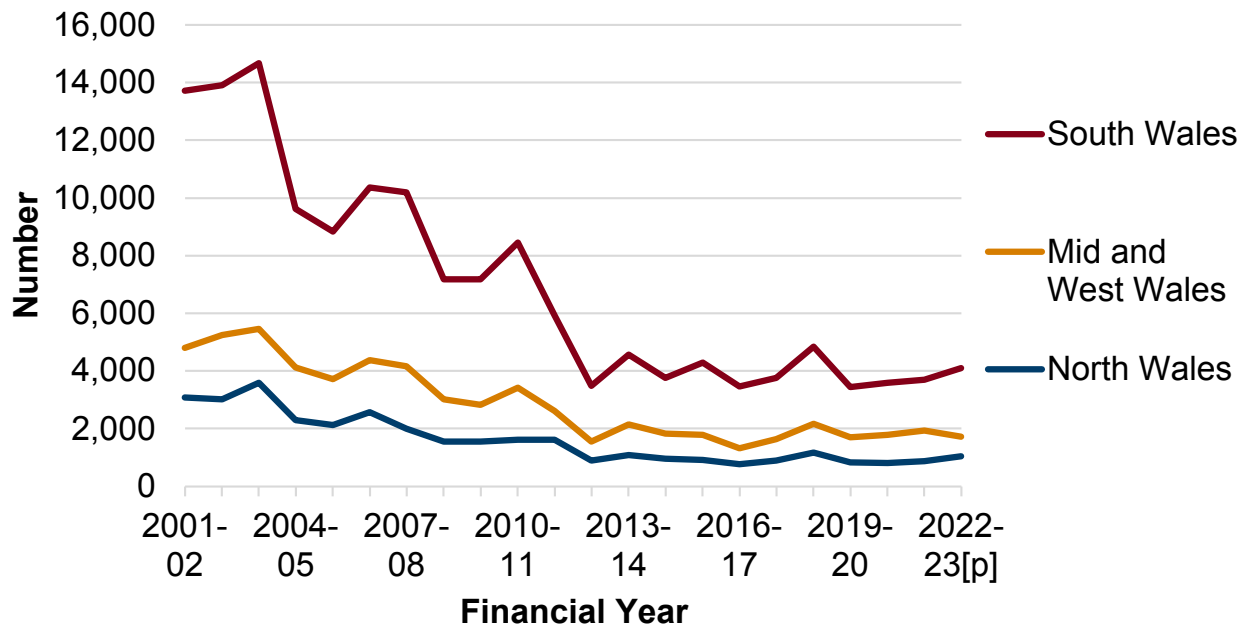
Numbers of primary fires in road vehicles in Wales have fallen by 82% since 2001-02.

Secondary fires

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.

Secondary fires are the most common category of fire attended by Welsh FRAs, accounting for 61% of all fires since 2001-02 and 62% of those attended in 2022-23. In 2022-23 numbers of secondary fires increased by 6% compared with 2021-22, to 6,871. Compared with the previous year, only Mid and West Wales saw a decrease in secondary fires (down 10%). Numbers in North Wales rose by 18% and in South Wales they went up by 11%.

Figure 5: Number of secondary fires by Fire and Rescue Authority, 2001-02 to 2022-23 [p]



Description of Figure 5: A line chart showing the number of secondary fires for each FRA in Wales from 2001-02. Numbers of secondary fires in all 3 Welsh FRAs have seen substantial falls since 2001-02; 70% in South Wales, 66% in North Wales and 64% in Mid and West Wales.

Source: [Secondary fires on StatsWales](#)

[p] Provisional data

In 2022-23, 2,439 (35% of) secondary fires occurred on grassland, woodland, and/or cropland, an increase by 5% compared with 2021-22.

In 2022-23, 55% of secondary fires were classed as refuse fires. The number of these fires rose by 5% from 3,574 in 2021-22 to 3,753 in 2022-23. Overall, there

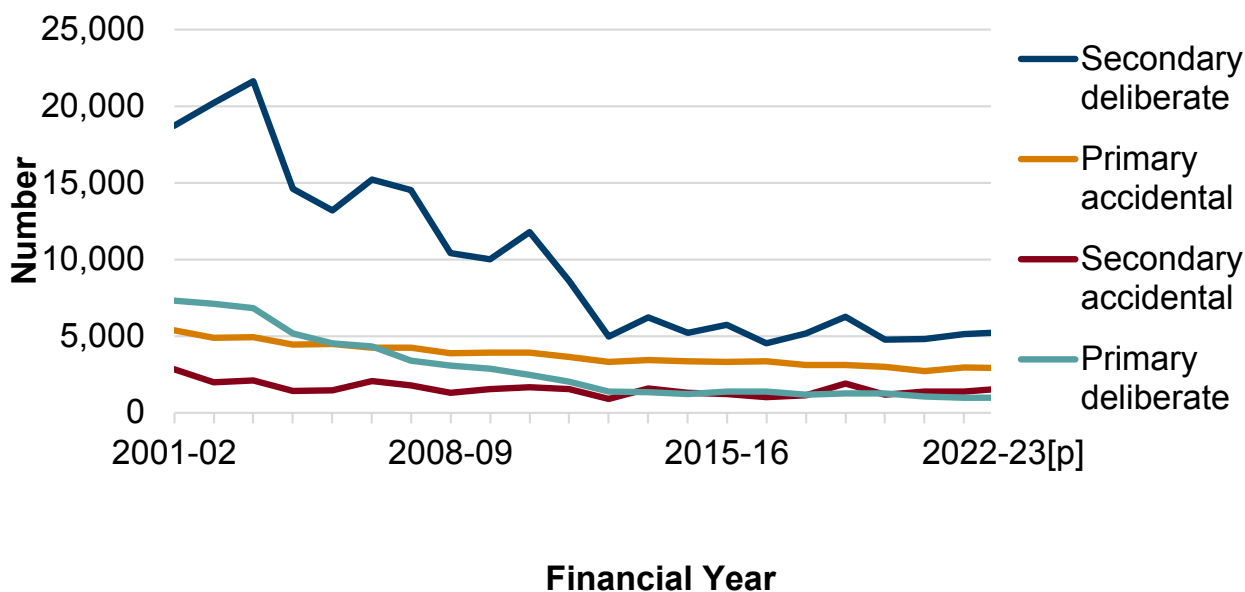
has been a downward trend in refuse fires, falling by 14% over the last 10 years.

Fires by motive

In 2022-23, there were 4,800 accidental fires (including accidental chimney fires). The number rose by 4% compared to the previous year, and since 2001-02 the number has fallen by almost 50%. Accidental fires accounted for 75% of all primary fires and 23% of secondary fires.

There were 6,266 deliberate fires a rise of 42; 84% deliberate fires in 2022-23 were secondary fires.

Figure 6: Number of fires by type and motive, 2001-02 to 2022-23 [p]



Description of Figure 6: A line chart showing numbers of primary and secondary

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fires by motive (accidental or deliberate) in a time series from 2001-02. The chart shows that numbers of deliberate secondary fires saw an obvious downward trend between 2001-02 and 2012-13 and have since been prone to fluctuation. The other categories shown are less volatile but also show a downward trend.

Source: [Fires by motive on StatsWales](#)

[p] Provisional data

In 2022-23 the number of accidental primary fires decreased by 1% whilst the number of accidental secondary fires increased by 16% (compared with 2021-22).

Numbers of primary deliberate fires fell by 1%, whilst secondary deliberate fires increased 3%.

Fire-related fatalities and casualties

Fire fatalities

A fatal casualty is defined as a person whose death is the direct or indirect result of injuries caused by a fire incident, even if the death occurred weeks or months later. This includes any fatal casualty.

There were 14 fatal casualties during 2022-23. This is 7 fewer than in the previous year and the lowest number since in the timeseries, primarily due to there being no fatalities in North Wales in 2022-23. The overall trend since 2001-02 (when there were 38 fatalities) has been downward, however numbers are small and prone to fluctuation.

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Table 1: Number of fatal casualties from fires, 2013-14 to 2022 23 [p]

| Year | North Wales | Mid and West Wales | South Wales | Wales |
|------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|-------|
| 2013-14 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 17 |
| 2014-15 | 5 | 8 | 7 | 20 |
| 2015-16 | 6 | 4 | 9 | 19 |
| 2016-17 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 19 |
| 2017-18 | 2 | 11 | 2 | 15 |
| 2018-19 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 20 |
| 2019-20 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 16 |
| 2020-21 | 7 | 4 | 10 | 21 |
| 2021-22 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 21 |
| 2022-23[p] | 0 | 8 | 6 | 14 |

Description of Table 1: a data table showing the number of fatalities from fire by FRA. There were no fatalities in North Wales in 2022-23, 8 in Mid and West Wales and 6 in South Wales.

Source: [Fire related fatalities on StatsWales](#)

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Since 2001-02, 77% of fatal casualties have occurred in dwelling fires, equating to a total of 370 out of 478 fatalities. In 2022-23 86% of fatalities were the result of dwelling fires; there were 4 fewer dwelling fatalities than in the previous year.

Non-fatal fire casualties

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

(i) Victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be serious

(ii) Victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be slight

(iii) First aid given at scene

(iv) 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 2022-23 there were 422 non-fatal casualties (a fall of 12% compared with 2021-22). The overall trend over the last ten years has been downward, although in recent years the numbers have fluctuated.

Table 2: Number of non-fatal casualties from fires, 2013-14 to 2022-23 [p]

| Year | North Wales | Mid and West Wales | South Wales | Wales |
|---------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|-------|
| 2013-14 | 276 | 167 | 183 | 626 |

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| Year | North Wales | Mid and West Wales | South Wales | Wales |
|------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|-------|
| 2014-15 | 194 | 194 | 155 | 543 |
| 2015-16 | 213 | 177 | 202 | 592 |
| 2016-17 | 194 | 153 | 274 | 621 |
| 2017-18 | 156 | 144 | 226 | 526 |
| 2018-19 | 117 | 118 | 161 | 396 |
| 2019-20 | 139 | 104 | 266 | 509 |
| 2020-21 | 125 | 70 | 213 | 408 |
| 2021-22 | 141 | 79 | 259 | 479 |
| 2022-23[p] | 105 | 64 | 253 | 422 |

Description of Table 2: a data table showing the number of non-fatal casualties from fire by FRA. There were 105 in North Wales in 2022-23, 64 in Mid and West Wales and 253 in South Wales.

Source: [Non-fatal casualties from fires on StatsWales](#)

[p] Provisional data

Most classes of severity saw a decrease compared with 2021-22 (the exception being a 29% rise in those sent to hospital with severe injuries). Those receiving first aid or sent for precautionary checks fell by 15% whilst those sent to hospital

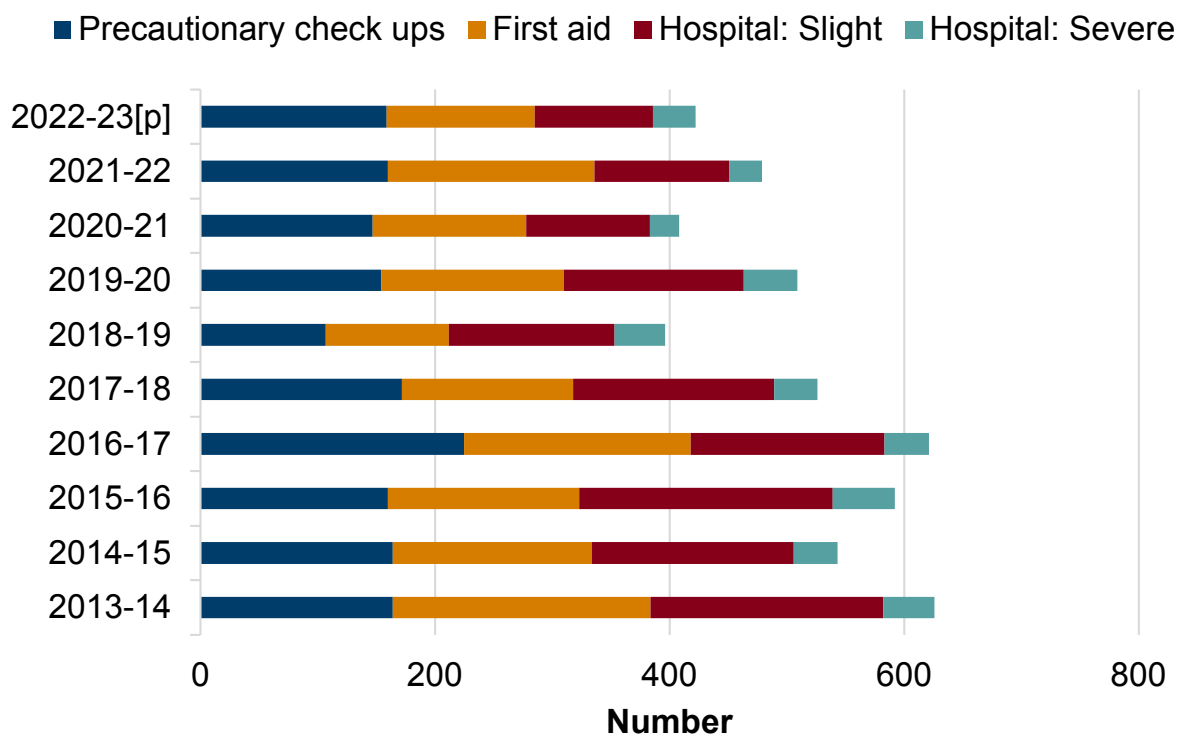
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with slight injuries fell by 12%. In 2022-23, 68% of non-fatal casualties received first aid or were advised to have a precautionary check-up. A further 24% of non-fatal casualties were taken to hospital with slight injuries and the remaining 9% were taken to hospital with severe injuries.

Figure 7: Number of non-fatal casualties from fires by severity of injury, 2013-14 to 2022-23 [p]



Description of Figure 7: A bar chart showing the number of non-fatal casualties from fires by severity of injury. Data relates to 2013-14 to 2022-23. The chart shows a general downward trend, most noticeably in the number of those going to hospital with slight injuries.

Source: [Non-fatal casualties from fires on StatsWales](#)

[p] Provisional data

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.

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

In 2022-23 there were 16,008 fire false alarms in Wales, up from 15,319 in 2021-22, an increase of 4%. This is the third consecutive annual rise; the figure is the highest since 2010-11. However, this number is still 18% lower than that in 2001-02.

Only numbers of good intent fire false alarms fell in 2022-23 compared with 2021-22 (down 7%). False alarms those due to apparatus rose by 12% whilst numbers of malicious fire false alarms increased by 17%.

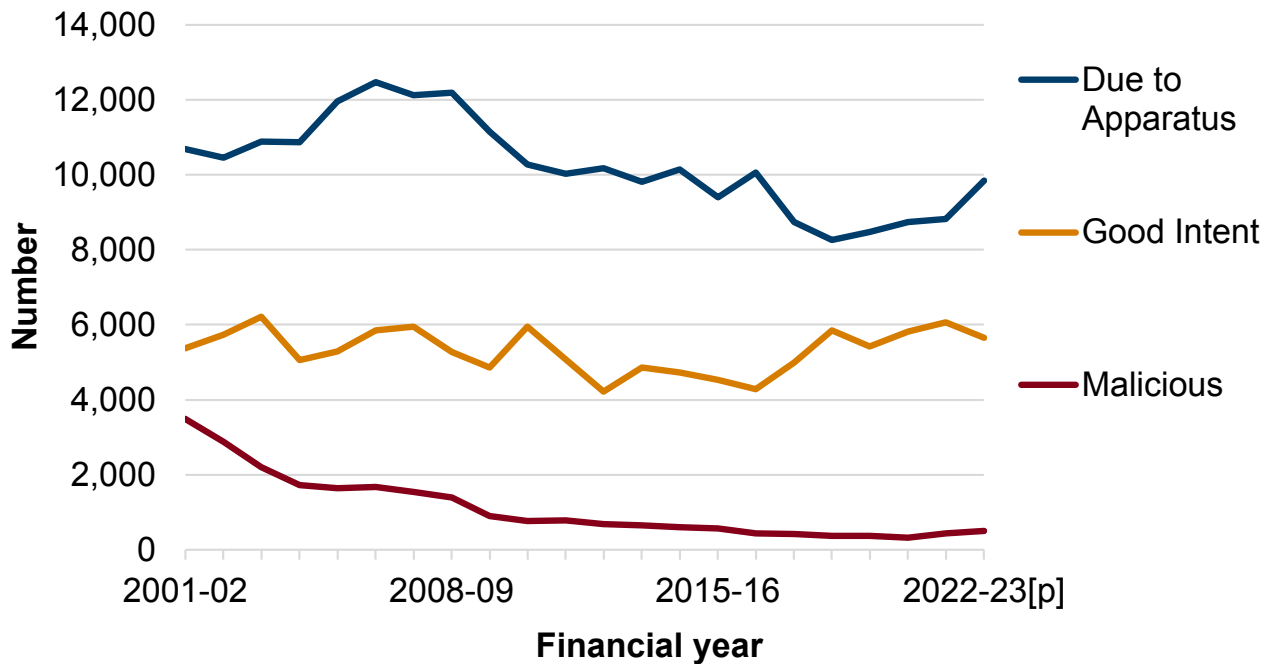
Overall, there has been a downward trend in the number of malicious fire false alarms, falling by 86% since 2001-02. However, in 2022-23 there was a 17% increase compared with 2021-22 and this follows a 33% increase in the previous year. This is the first time there have been consecutive years showing an increase in numbers of malicious false alarms.

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Figure 8: Number of fire false alarms by reason, 2001-02 to 2022-23 [p]



Description of Figure 8: A line chart showing numbers of false alarms, by type (malicious, due to apparatus or due to good intent). The chart shows most fire false alarms are due to apparatus. Numbers of these false alarms had seen a general downward trend since 2010-11 but in recent years have started to rise again. Numbers of malicious fire false alarms have seen a more obvious downward trend.

Source: [Fire false alarms on StatsWales](#)

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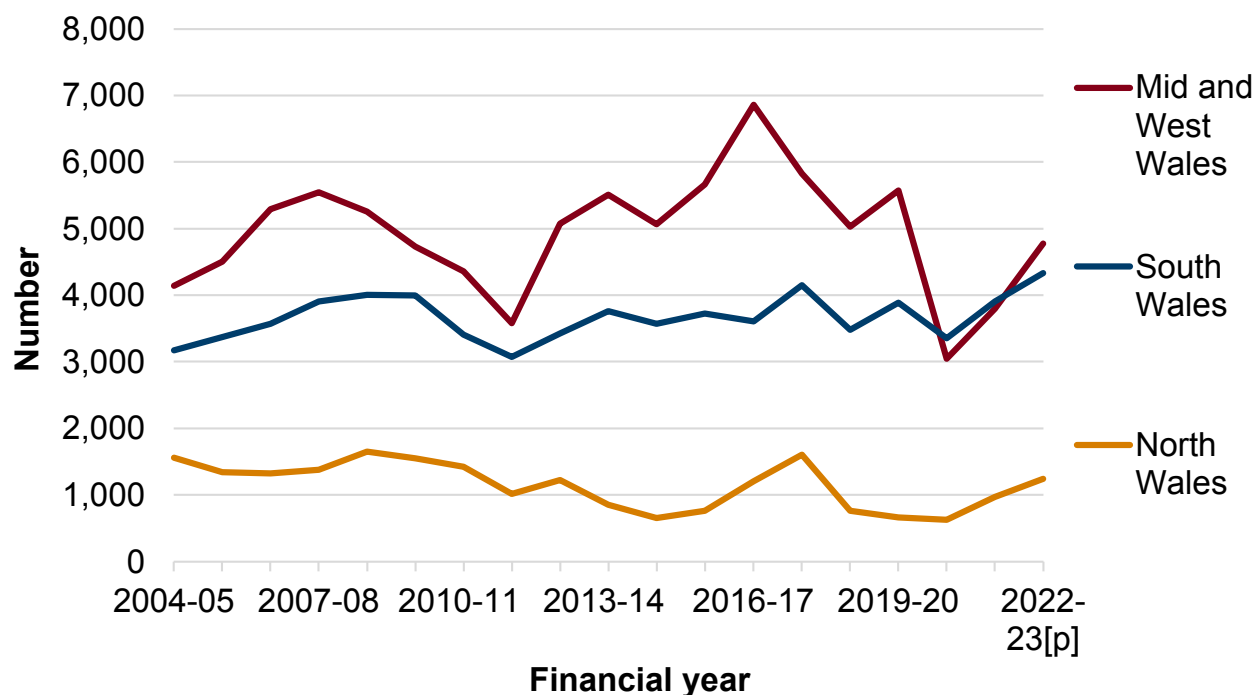
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Special service incidents

In 2022-23, 28% 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 (see table 3). 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 have had an impact on the numbers of SSIs in 2020-21 and into 2021-22.

Figure 9: Number of SSIs attended by Fire and Rescue Authority, 2004-05 to 2022-23 [p]



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Description of Figure 9: A line chart showing numbers of special service incidents, by fire and rescue authority from 2004-05. The chart shows the number of incidents has fluctuated for all three FRAS, particularly Mid and West Wales. For most years in the time series Mid and West Wales have attended most SSIs, with North Wales attending the least.

Source: [Special Service Incidents on StatsWales](#)

[p] Provisional data

Overall attendance at SSIs increased by 19% in 2022-23; all 3 FRAs saw increases in attendances at SSIs rising by 28% in North Wales, 26% in Mid and West Wales and 11% in South Wales. The increase in SSIs in Mid and West Wales is mainly due to a rise in the number of attendances at incidents attended as medical first or co-responders. Increased numbers in North Wales and South Wales are largely due to an increase in assisting other agencies.

Road Traffic Collisions accounted for around a fifth of SSIs and attendance at these incidents rose by 6% compared to 2021-22. This may be due to an increase in road traffic activity as suggested by road traffic data for Wales (published by the Department for Transport) for year ending Dec 2022 showed a 10% increase compared with 2021 and is nearing the figures seen in 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic. [Road traffic estimates in Great Britain: 2022 \(Department for Transport\)](#)

Numbers of attendances at medical incidents more than doubled compared with 2021-22.

Flooding incidents increased by 34% and made up 7% of SSI attendances in 2022-23.

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Table 3: Number of SSIs by type, 2020-21 to 2022 23 [p]

| | 2020-21 | 2021-22[r] | 2022-23[p] |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------|------------|------------|
| Road traffic collision | 1,278 | 1,759 | 1,856 |
| Flooding | 876 | 490 | 658 |
| Rescue or evacuation from water | 147 | 120 | 127 |
| Other rescue/release of people | 256 | 429 | 480 |
| Animal assistance incidents | 261 | 306 | 337 |
| Making Safe | 235 | 531 | 194 |
| Lift release | 217 | 290 | 285 |
| Effecting entry | 469 | 678 | 830 |
| Removal of objects from people | 337 | 451 | 472 |
| Medical incident - Co-responder/First responder | 390 | 624 | 1,539 |
| Assist other agencies | 954 | 1,339 | 1,732 |
| Other | 1,023 | 1,177 | 1,270 |
| All Special Service Incidents | 6,443 | 8,194 | 9,780 |

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| | 2020-21 | 2021-22[r] | 2022-23[p] |
|-----------------------------------------|---------|------------|------------|
| All Special Service False Alarms | 577 | 482 | 573 |

Description of Table 3: A table showing the number of special service incidents attended by fire and rescue services in Wales, by type of incident (e.g. road traffic collision, flooding etc).

Source: Incident Recording System

[p] Provisional data

Quality and methodology information

The analysis in this report relates to fire and rescue service incidents between April 2022 and end March 2023 and makes comparison with incidents which occurred in 2021-22 (a period within the COVID-19 pandemic)

The [Fire and Rescue Incident report](#) provides further detail of quality and methodology information.

National Statistics status

The [United Kingdom Statistics Authority](#) has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

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All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

The continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in 2021 following a **compliance check** by the Office for Statistics Regulation. These statistics last underwent **a full assessment** against the Code of Practice in 2012.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. The Act puts in place seven wellbeing goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators ("national indicators") that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the wellbeing goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before Senedd Cymru. Under section 10(8) of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, where the Welsh Ministers revise the national indicators, they must as soon as reasonably practicable (a) publish the indicators as revised and (b) lay a copy of them before the Senedd. These national indicators were laid before the

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Senedd in 2021. The indicators laid on 14 December 2021 replace the set laid on 16 March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the wellbeing goals and associated technical information is available in the [Wellbeing of Wales report](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local wellbeing assessments and local wellbeing plans.

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SB 35/2023



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