



# **Southern Rural Fire Health and Safety Update October 2015**



Southern Rural Fire Authority

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## Section 1 - Introduction

The Southern Rural Fire Authority (SRFA) is responsible for all types of fires in the rural area which occur within the District and is committed to taking all practicable steps to ensure the health and safety of all personnel when training or working for the Authority.

This Health and Safety (HSE) report is to update the SRFA Committee any other stakeholder(s) on progress and activities relating to HSE within the District.

### 1.1 Overview

During the period there has been two reported near miss incidents and one minor injury during September. The first near miss involved a VRFF that attended a woolshed fire within their first response area, supported by NZFS crews. During firefighting operations it was noted by a VRFF rural fire officer that a senior NZFS member was within the building without his helmet or wearing a breathing apparatus. This was quickly reported to the NZFS Chief Fire Officer on-site and the firefighter was removed from the building. Approximately one to two minutes after the individual left the building, the roof collapsed in the area the firefighter had been working. This near miss incident had the potential to become a serious accident.

The second near miss incident occurred at a vegetation fire that was attended by one NZFS volunteer brigade, one VRFF and the PRFO. During operations it was noted that a number of NZFS volunteers had responded to the incident in their "Level 2" (structural) firefighting PPE, had become hot and had removed most of their PPE exposing NZFS firefighters to undue risk due to not attending the incident in correct PPE and then removing the PPE they did have during firefighting operations.

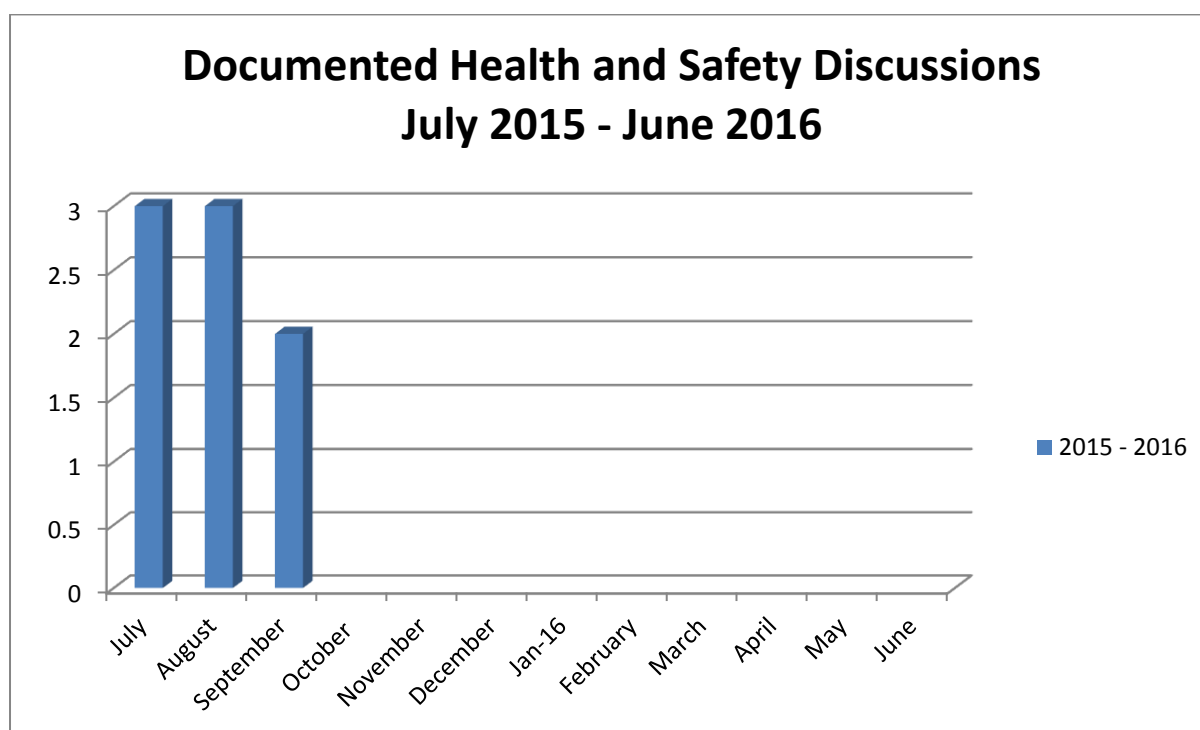
The minor injury reported occurred on 16 September during the later stages of a fire which occurred near Lumsden. A firefighter was removing the lid off a foam container which was particularly tight, causing slight wrenching of his left hand around his thumb. The injury was not noted initially at the time, however some pain and discomfort developed over the following days.

Actions following the VRFF Health and Safety Representatives meeting are still being worked through with positive results and a further meeting will be scheduled in late November/early December. The Operations Coordinator has recently received information on a number of small hazards associated with the Hedgehope fire station which control actions will be formalised in the coming weeks.



## Section 2 - Documented Health and Safety Discussions

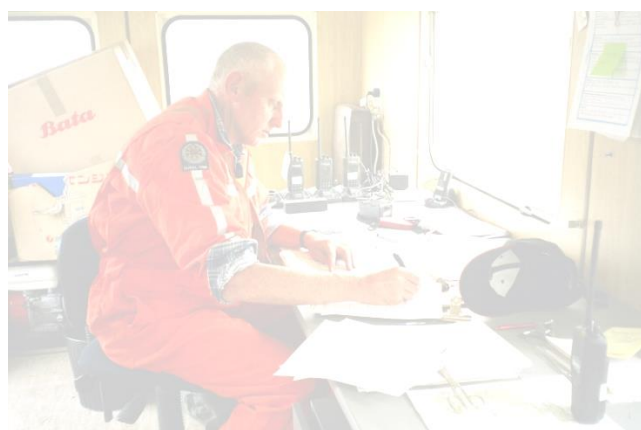
Since July there have been eight documented HSE discussions. These include SRFA staff meetings where identified hazards have required review, meetings relating to the HSE management system and training events where identified hazard controls contained in the HSE management system have been discussed and utilised.



## Section 3 - Reported Events

As detailed in the overview two near miss events and one minor injury has been reported during the period. The PRFO has followed up with NZFS management regarding the near miss incidents to ensure the correct PPE is worn at incidents.

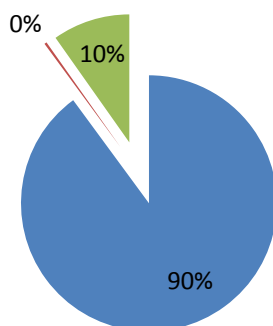
The minor injury has been recorded in the SRFA system with no further actions resulting.





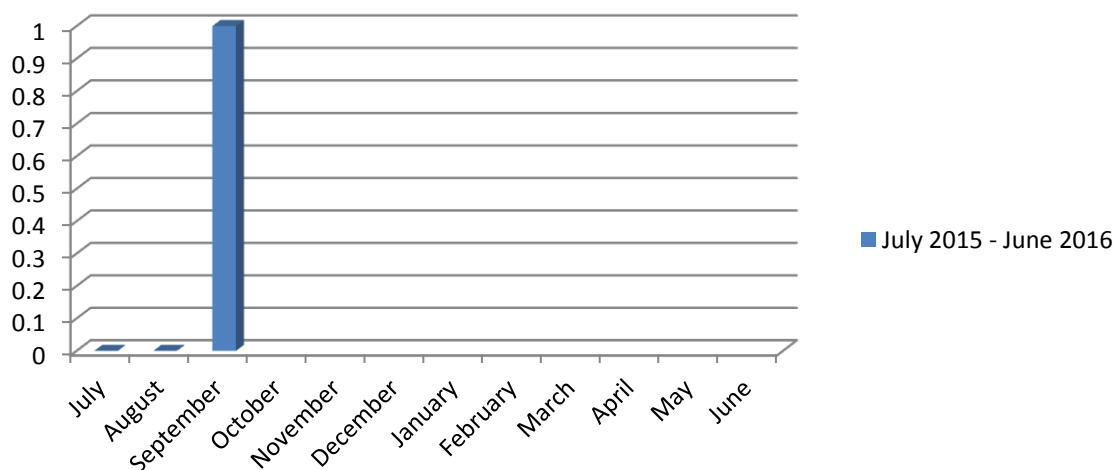
## Percentage of man-hours July 2015 - June 2016

■ Training ■ Prescribed burning ■ Fires & Emergencies

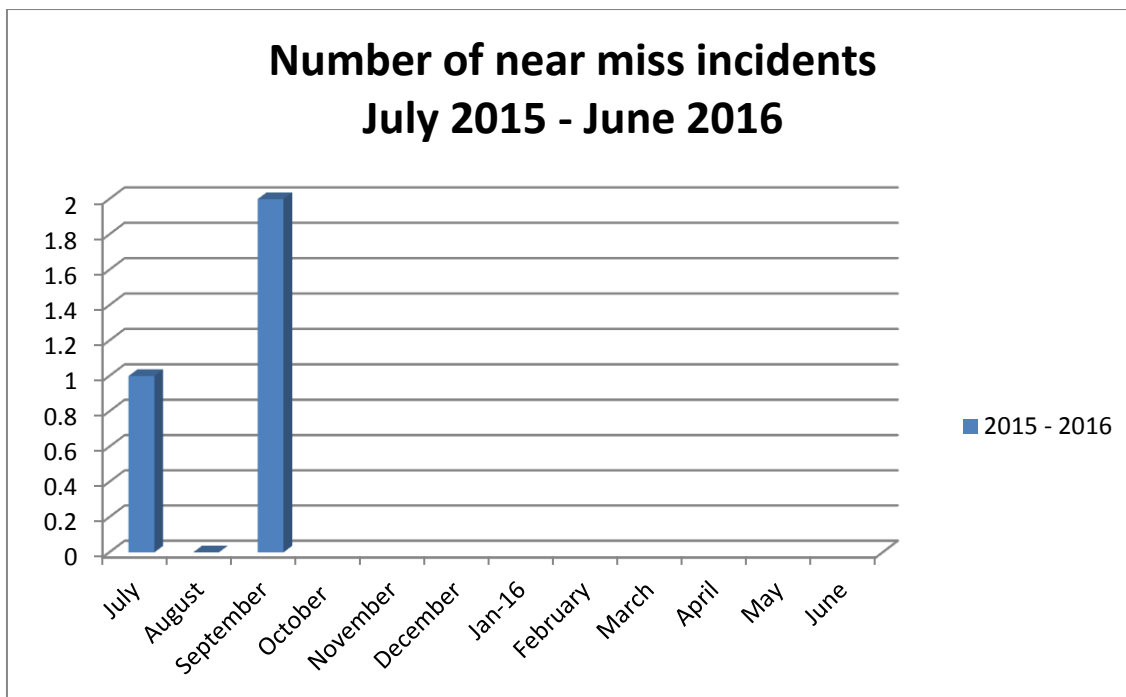


Approximately 1,308 man hours have been undertaken at training, prescribed burns and responding to fires and other emergencies since July 2015

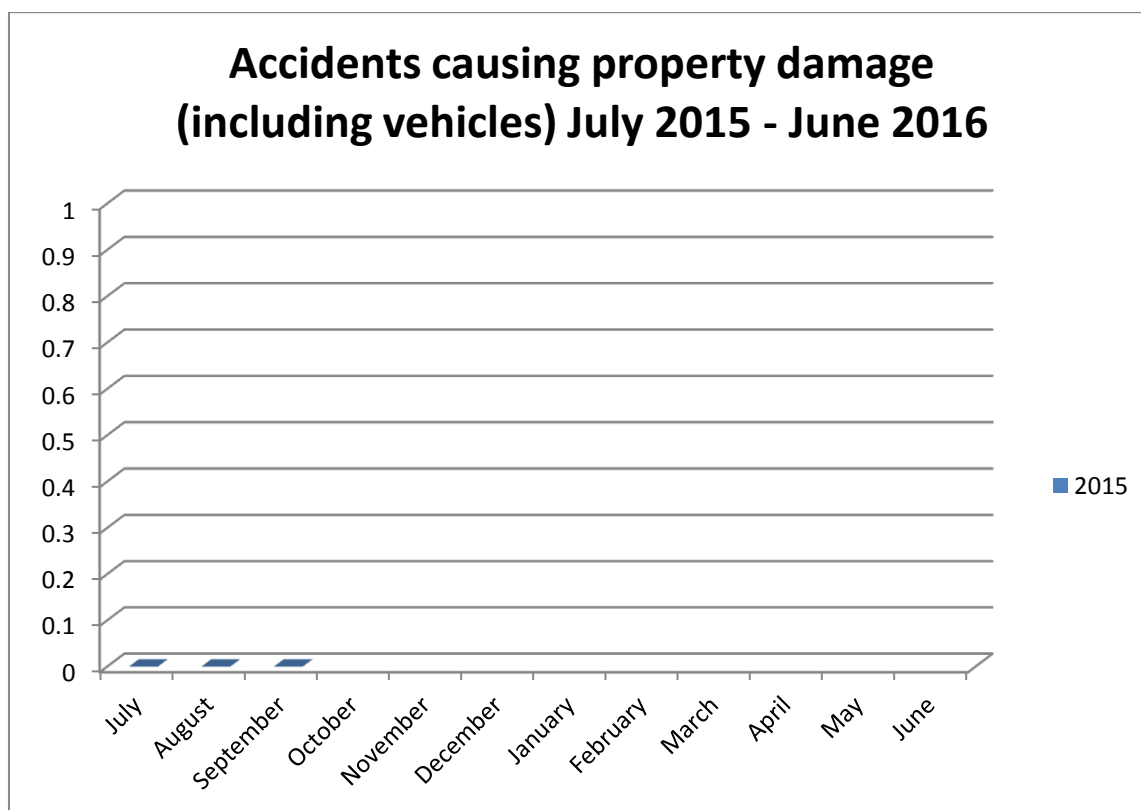
## Number of injury accidents reported July 2015 - June 2016



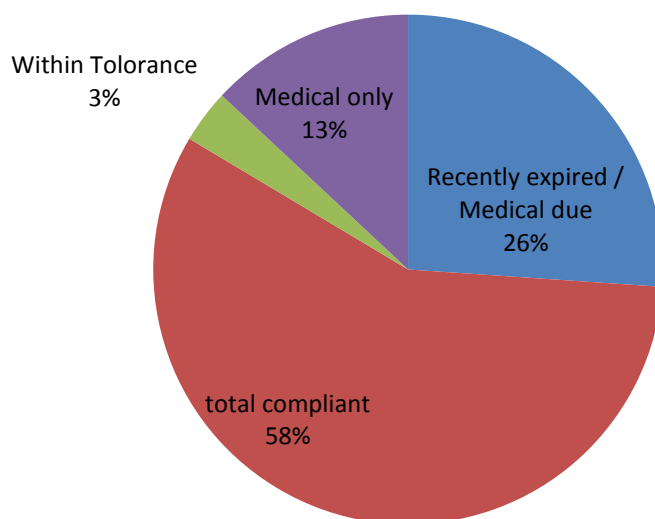
The injury reported was a minor injury as detailed in the overview and occurred during the later stages of a fire near Lumsden during September.



Two near miss incidents occurred during September as detailed in the overview. In both cases this involved volunteer NZFS personnel, one at a structure fire, the other a vegetation fire.

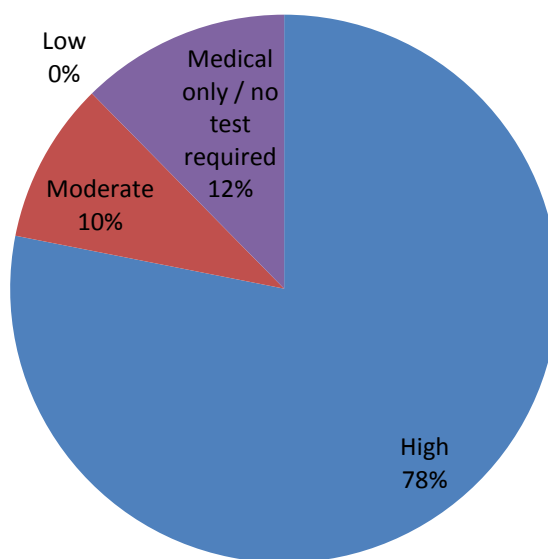


### Current Pack Test Status



*Note: Subject to consistent change. "Within tolerance" relates to personnel who have gone overtime in their pack test but within tolerance set in SRFA Health and Fitness Policy.*

### Type of pack test personnel require



*Note: Data above provides an overview of the total pack test requirements for all personnel involved with SRFA and is subject to change.*





## Section 4 - Safety Alert

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Safety Alert



There has been a number of incidents where correct PPE has not been worn at operational incidents recently which has had the potential to cause serious harm.

Please remember that all fire services personnel (rural and urban) attending vegetation incidents should be wearing minimum of:

- Helmet
- Gloves
- Overalls
- Boots

All personnel must ensure all fire services (rural and urban) are wearing the appropriate PPE for the incident type being attended. If structural PPE is worn at a vegetation fire this must be worn for the duration of the incident without removing portions of this PPE.



**Incidents where portions of PPE are removed or not present during firefighting operations must be reported to SRFA as a “near miss”**