

Five-fold rise in firefighting staff signed off with stress

- [Home](#)
- [All News](#)
- Five-fold rise in firefighting staff signed off with stress

11 Oct 2017



The number of fire and rescue staff signed off with stress has increased by five times in the past two years, new figures have shown.

In 2016, 137 employees of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service were recorded as taking sick leave due to stress.

That compares to 77 the previous year, and just 27 in 2014, the year after the Scotland-wide organisation was formed.

And up until mid-September this year, 123 workers had been signed off, meaning 2017 is well on course to be a record year.

The statistics were revealed following a Freedom of Information request by the Scottish Conservatives, and the figures include not just frontline firefighters, but control room and support staff too.

In the summer, it was revealed that around 1000 posts had been lost in the fire service since 2010, with unions warning that reduction would jeopardise public safety and place more strain on those left working for the brigade.

Scottish Conservative shadow justice secretary Liam Kerr said:

“This is an extraordinary and hugely concerning increase in the number of firefighting staff who’ve been signed off with stress.

“Being a firefighter is among the most brave and stressful jobs anyone could do.

“But this recent spike must be attributable to something more.

“And of course there’s far more to the organisation than just those on the frontline, and those crucial administrative workers will have been under huge pressure too.

“We know the fire service has been subjected to savage cuts from the Scottish Government, and the organisation – much like Police Scotland – is suffering from a lack of resources.

“These figures must be a wake-up call for the SNP government, which clearly

needs to do more to look after hardworking firefighters who do so much and give so much of themselves to ensure public safety.”

Notes to editors:

To see a copy of the FoI response, visit:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Fire-service-stress.pdf>

Fire brigade unions have warned of cuts in recent years:

http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15392685.Claim_of__quot_unsustainable_quot__cuts_to_Scottish_fire_service/