

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service

Gender Pay Gap Report

(as at 31 March 2024)



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Introduction

This report covers Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service’s (SFRS) obligations under the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 to publish an annual Gender Pay Gap report. These regulations complement the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Regulations came into force April 2017, and requires organisations with 250 employees or more to report on their gender pay gap by 31 March 2018 and annually thereafter. This document reports on the Service’s position as at 31 March 2024. Operational and non-operational employee data is aggregated for the purpose of the report calculation.

Purpose

The principle of the gender pay gap report is to show the difference between the average earnings of men and women within the organisation as a whole. If an organisation reports a gender pay gap, it does not mean women are paid less than men for doing the same job, but it does show that, on average, more men occupy higher paying roles than women.

Background

Employers must report on six different measures, based on a snapshot of pay data on a set date identified within Schedule 1 of the Equality Act 2010. The six measures are as follows:

Mean gender pay gap	The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male employees and that of female employees as a percentage
Median gender pay gap	The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male employees and that of female employees as a percentage
Mean bonus pay cap	The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male employees and that paid to female employees as a percentage
Median bonus gap	The difference between the median bonus pay paid to male employees and that paid to female employees as a percentage
Bonus Proportions	The proportions of male and female relevant employees who were paid a bonus during the relevant period
Quartile Pay Bands	The proportions of male and female employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service do not pay bonuses and therefore have no data to report on the 3 measures relating to bonus payments.

The data used within this report is based on employee pay on the 31 March 2024 and is based upon individual contracts of employment. The snapshot includes all employees who were on the SFRS payroll at that point in time, which includes; seconded employees and employees who may have a secondary contract e.g. on call firefighters.

Gender Pay Gap and Equal Pay

The Gender Pay Gap is a measure of the difference between the average earnings of men and women (irrespective of seniority). Equal Pay is our legal obligation as an employer to give men and women equal pay for work of equal value. An organisation can have a gender pay gap without breaching equal pay provisions.

The salaries of all operational staff are established within the Grey Book (terms and conditions) and are standard within any English and Welsh Fire and Rescue Service. Any annual pay awards are negotiated nationally by the National Joint Council (NJC). Hourly rates for Grey Book staff include the Flexible Duty System (FDS) allowance of 20% where this is applicable. Support staff (Green Book staff) banding is in line with the agreed pay structure and salary levels are based upon that approved for the role. All employees have the opportunity to have an existing role reviewed through the approved job evaluation procedure.

Annual Pay awards for both Grey and Green Book staff are negotiated nationally. The Service therefore has very limited scope to affect the individual rates of pay.

Gender Profile

	2024		2023	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Male employees	550	80.80%	529	80.40%
Female employees	131	19.20%	129	19.60%
Total no of employees	681		658	

Mean Gender Pay Gap

The mean hourly rate is the average hourly wage across the entire organisation, so the mean gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between women’s mean hourly wage and men’s mean hourly wage.

	2024			2023		
	Hourly Rate	Gap	%	Hourly Rate	Gap	%
Male employees	17.24	0.49	2.87%	16.41	0.84	5.07%
Female employees	16.75			15.57		

Overall the gap in terms of the mean has reduced in year, resulting in the Mean Gender Pay Gap percentage reducing by 2.2%. This is primarily related to the Green Book pay award for support staff which included a flat increase in pay of £1,290 per annum resulting in lower paid staff receiving a higher percentage pay award (lowest paid 5.8% increase, highest paid 2.5%).

This is despite a slightly higher percentage of women being reported in the lower quartile as can be seen from the data reporting on this measure later in the report.

Median Gender Pay Gap

The median hourly rate is calculated by ranking all employees from the highest paid to the lowest paid and taking the hourly wage of the person in the middle. The median gender pay gap is the difference between the middle paid woman and the middle paid man.

	2024			2023		
	Hourly Rate	Gap	%	Hourly Rate	Gap	%
Male employees	16.541	0.00	0.01%	15.75	0.12	0.78%
Female employees	16.54			15.63		

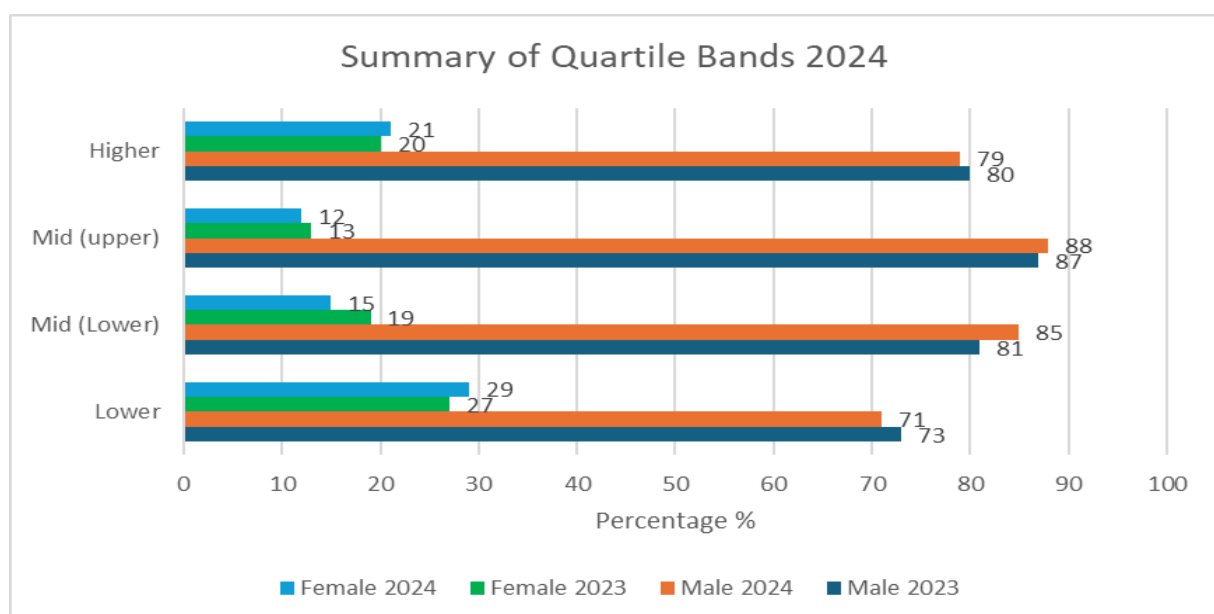
The difference in the median pay gap in 2024 is also lower than last year. This demonstrates that the proportion of women on lower salaries has decreased (or the proportion on higher salaries has increased). The pay award for Green Book staff has again improved this measure.

This is demonstrated more clearly in the comparison chart in the section below which shows actual numbers in each quartile.

Quartiles

Pay quartiles are calculated by splitting all employees in an organisation into four even groups according to their level of pay. Looking at the proportion of employees in each quartiles gives an indication of the gender representation at different levels within the organisation.

Salary Quartile Band Summary				
	High	Mid (Upper)	Mid (Lower)	Low
Male employees	79%	88%	85%	71%
Female employees	21%	12%	15%	29%



The chart above illustrates that the proportionate number of women in the lower quartile has increased over the reporting period with a reduction in the mid (lower) and mid (upper) quartiles. There is an overall improvement in the pay gap reported despite an increase in the number of men in the upper quartiles and a small increase in those falling into the low quartile. This can be seen more clearly when comparing the actual numbers in the comparison chart below.

Salary Quartile Band Analysis 2024						
	Hourly Rate	Male	Male %	Female	Female %	Total
High	Over £18.34	134	79	36	21	170
Mid (upper)	£16.55 – £18.34	150	88	20	12	170
Mid (low)	£14.92 - £16.54	144	85	26	15	170
Lower	Up to £14.91	122	71	49	29	171
		550		131		681

Comparison of numbers in each quartile 2024 vs 2023				
	2024	2023	2024	2023
	Male	Male	Female	Female
*High	144	131	26	33
*Mid (upper)	150	143	20	21
*Mid (low)	144	134	26	31
*Lower	122	120	49	44

*It should be noted that the actual hourly rates against each quartile change annually, to reflect the annual pay increments, hence why this shows as a separate table as the rates used in 2023 are different to those reported on in 2022. Therefore, the figures would not be a true reflection of the rates.

Summary

The Service data shows a favourable trend with the mean pay gap and median pay gap reducing in year.

Although positive action work is an on-going project for the Service (and has been for many years), it is a known fact that the number of men in operational roles is significantly more than those that are filled by women. Operational staff make up a large proportion of the workforce and this will present an unfavourable data report for the gender pay gap.

However, the Service has shown a reduction in Gender Pay Gap again for 2024 which is positive news and is now reporting a very small pay gap for both mean and median measures.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications that arise from this report. A grading structure exists within the Service for operational and support staff, this standard grading approach ensures that there is full transparency of job roles resulting in men and women in comparable jobs, undertaking work of equal value, being fully entitled to the same pay. There should therefore be no unfair pay claims resulting from this Gender Pay Gap Report as they would not be relevant in this context specifically for operational roles. Positive action is on-going and aims to attract under-represented groups into the Service, this work will continue. The team leading on this are already in place so this will not lead to any additional financial burden. The Service is also committed to ensuring positive action activity is a principle within progression, promotion and development opportunities.

Risk Implications

The overall Gender Pay Gap in the Service is identified within this report. A high Gender Pay Gap would indicate that the payment systems in operation might disadvantage women. It should be noted that the presence of a Gender Pay Gap is not an indication that unlawful discrimination exists within the Service. Due to nationally agreed terms and conditions, as is the case for SFRS employees, the relatively low Gap is a demonstration of equality of opportunity being at the centre of the Service culture.

Procurement and Social Value Implications

The nature of this report results in there being no procurement or Social Value implications associated with the information that will be published with regard to the Gender Pay Gap Reporting requirements.

Protective Security Implications

Protective security implications are fully considered as part of the protection of individual pay data. This report is based upon a snap shot of the payroll system as at 31 March 2024 and not personal data about individuals members of staff are published or referred to apart from the reference to men and woman. There are no publication restrictions for this paper and the document has been marked as official.

Initiatives to address the Gender Pay Gap

In addition to the team promoting positive action, the Service has a number of policies that endeavour to support and attract under-represented such as:

- Flexible working policy
- Job Share
- Work Life Balance Policy

- A Period Dignity Employer
- HeForShe signatory
- Annual joint Conference with Staffordshire Police in celebration of the women
- Specific reference to 'Sex' Characteristic in relation to mitigation action in the Grievance Procedure and Dignity at Work Anti-harassment and Anti- Bullying Policy demonstration of Due Regard People Impact Assessments
- Development of Women Network
- Development of Menopause Network

In addition, the Service has a 'best' practice maternity policy which gives mothers the opportunity to spend time after childbirth with their new family without financial pressure.

This report does not account for shared service arrangements with Staffordshire Police, where staff from Human Resources, Finance, Communications, Property Services, and Commercial Services are all employed by the Chief Constable and reported by Staffordshire Police. This factor likely contributed positively to the reported gender pay gap for Staffordshire Police.

Legal Implications

The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 came into force in April of that year, which requires organisations with 250 employees or more must report on their Gender Pay Gap by 31 March 2018 and annually thereafter. This Report articulates SRFS Gender Pay Gap as at 31 March 2023. The Government Equalities Office has indicated that a demonstration of specific action, and monitoring, to achieve a reduction in the Gender Pay Gap as demonstrated above. There are some overlapping legal obligations for an employer to take care of workers' safety and may have differing impacts on women, which the Service is cognisant of are:

- Personal injury protection and duties to take care of workers arising out of Tort law
- Health and Safety at work etc Act 1974
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Whistleblower protections
- Human Rights Act 1998

Equality and Diversity

This report is a requirement under the Equality Act 2010 and is specific to the Services responsibilities thereof. The Service is committed to understanding the impact of inequality within our purpose and function, including that of equal pay for work of equal value, an indicator of which may be indicated by the gender pay gap. The Service will remain conscious of the Gap which may infer further analysis, and narrative, of the calculation to assure equality of opportunity for all. Therefore, the Service will continue to ensure that there is equal pay for work of equal value by being conscious of its gender pay gap analysis.

Consultation and Engagement undertaken

This report has been produced in line with published guidance on www.gov.uk and ACAS. Published reports from the Government Equalities Office and Senior Employment Law Advisers for the Local Government Association have also been referenced, for information. The first reporting year 2017 the Service chose to have their methodology and calculations checked independently by Capsticks Solicitors LLP as a leading national law firm specializing in public and emergency service legislation.

Next Steps

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service are satisfied with the overall results that show a lower mean and median gender pay gap which reflects a continuing positive direction of travel. The historic trend of increasing the number of females in the higher quartile pay rates is favourable and the Service will continue to focus on taking positive steps to improve this gap on a year on year basis. These will include the continuation of Positive Action as a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim in progression, promotion and recruitment.

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