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Gender Pay Gap Report

2024

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# Introduction

SYFR, as a public sector employer with over 250 staff, is required by lawto carry out Gender Pay Reporting under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities Regulations 2017). These Regulations came into force on 31st March 2017.

Gender pay reporting is a different requirement to carrying out an equal pay audit - it is not a review of equal pay for equal work, rather it compares hourly rates of pay and any bonuses staff may receive by gender, seeking to expose any imbalance.

We will use the results to assess levels of gender equality in our workplace and the balance of male and female employees at different levels. Suitable steps will be taken (where possible) to minimise/readdress any inequities going forward.

This document will be published on our service website www.syfire.gov.uk, and Gov.co.uk. Details of the calculations required can be found below. SYFR also provides this accompanying statement in an attempt to explain any underlying causes for pay gaps.

## Note on Non-Binary and Trans Employees

Current legislation on gender pay gap reporting requires using a binary approach to identify any inequalities between ‘men’ and ‘women’ in terms of their earnings. This is problematic in terms of reporting and raises a number of questions about the right way to approach recording and analysis of data for non – binary and trans employees.

For employees that identify as transgender ACAS and government guidance suggests using the employees HMRC or payroll records (which will match official identity documents). Where this information is considered no longer reliable it is recommended that employers try to confirm which gender the employee identifies with using indirect methods such as encouraging all staff to check and update their personal information to ensure it is accurate and up to date.

For employees who have transitioned, the earnings level achieved prior to transition would be relevant for this purpose. For example if an employee identified as male at the point of securing their current earnings level and then later transitioned it would not give an accurate representation of their earnings capacity as transgender or female to record them as such.

For employees who do not identify as either male or female the government guidance states that *‘you can exclude them from your calculations’*. This approach is not ideal as it excludes non-binary individuals and could be concealing a further gender pay gap between transgender and cis-gender employees.

For the purposes of addressing any potential inequalities any non-binary employees will be included within the female cohort. Creating a separate category would not be possible at present as the number of staff in this category would be small enough to identify individuals within the data.

# What is required?

By 30th March 2025, we must publish the following information (in relation to the relevant pay periods containing 31st March 2024):

1. The mean gender pay gap (in hourly pay) for full pay relevant employees.
2. The median gender pay gap (in hourly pay) for full pay relevant employees.
3. The mean bonus pay gap (as a percentage).
4. The median bonus pay gap (as a percentage).
5. The proportion of males and females receiving a bonus payment.
6. The proportion of males & females in each salary quartile for full pay relevant employees.

## The Snapshot Date for all data in this report is

31st March 2024

The figures found in the following report were calculated using the standard methodologies from the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities Regulations 2017) and Gender Pay Gap Reporting: Data you Must Gather published by GOV.UK.

The median gender pay gap in the UK, based on the Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings (ASHE) 2024, was **14.2%**

## Definitions

The calculations are based on two employee types:

1. All employees employed by our service on the snapshot date. These are referred to as **‘relevant employees’**. This includes anyone on any form of unpaid leave such as career break or unpaid special leave.

b. All employees who were paid their usual full pay in the pay period that included the snapshot date. These are referred to as **‘full-pay relevant employees’**.

The definition of an employee is anyone who is employed by the service under a contract of employment, a contract of apprenticeship or a contract to personally do work, for SYFR. This includes all employees under “Gold Book”, “Green Book” and “Grey Book” terms and conditions. This does not include any agency workers as they are directly employed by the recruitment agency.

## Note on establishing On-call firefighters average hours

For on call firefighters who work irregular hours each week we have followed the guidance set out in the January 2017 LGA Advisory Bulletin and Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities Regulations 2017) legislation and calculated their average pay over the 12 week period that ends with the last complete week of the pay period in question. However, as per the guidance, their ‘on-call’ hours or ‘contracted hours of availability’ are not included in working hours. By including the contracted hours of availability, it would skew the hourly rate to appear significantly smaller than it is. By only using, the hours worked rather than hours of availability this will increase the reported hourly rate of pay for on call firefighters.

During the data gathering stage this year some further issues were identified with the method used to calculate an hourly average rate of pay for on-call firefighters;

* As the retaining fee is paid based on the level of agreed on-call availability and is not connected to how many hours they actually work, including this pay element can skew the figures to show a disproportionately high hourly rate. Other Elements such as FF Plus retainer payments, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and Additional Responsibility Allowances would have the same effect and therefore are not included in the hourly rate figures.
* Training pay for Retained cannot currently be included as the amount of hours this is for is not currently captured within our payroll system which would incorrectly skew the average hourly rate of pay.

Therefore due to the above issues the decision was taken for this year’s report to focus on pay related to actual work undertaken to provide a more accurate average earnings. This will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in line with any systems changes that can be made to improve data quality for this purpose.

# Workforce Information

**Table 1 - Workforce Breakdown Information**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Employee Group | Total Employees | Male/Female Split | |
| Corporate | 273 | Males | 118 |
| Females | 155 |
| Wholetime | 598 | Males | 547 |
| Females | 51 |
| On Call | 118 | Males | 103 |
| Females | 15 |
| Control | 32 | Males | 7 |
| Females | 25 |
| Contingency (workers - not employees) | 45 | Males | 44 |
| Females | 1 |
| All Staff Total | **1066** | **Males** | **819** |
| **Females** | **247** |

Table A shows the distribution of males and females across the different staff groups at SYFR. The corporate staff group as a whole is represented relatively equally by males and females compared with the wholetime, on call and contingency staff groups which are predominately male. Control staff conversely are predominantly female.

Looking at the overall staff figures you can see that females are underrepresented in the organisation as a whole (23% female vs 77% male) - this is due to them being significantly underrepresented in Operational roles. Whilst this is a reality for fire services in general, largely due to the biggest proportion of roles being operational, at face value it indicates that there is still much work to be done in breaking down the stereotype of the role of firefighter typically being viewed as a male role.

## Breakdown of ‘Relevant’ & ‘Full Pay Relevant’ Employees

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Employee Category | Male | Female | Total Employees |
| Full Pay Relevant Employees  *Staff who received full pay in the period in question* | 759 | 235 | **994** |
| Relevant Employees  *Staff who did not receive full pay in the period in question* | 60 | 12 | **72** |
| **All SYFR Staff** | **819** | **247** | **1066** |

For the purposes of calculating the mean and median hourly gender pay gap and analysing the pay quartiles we must exclude any employee that did not receive their normal full pay in the pay period in question.

This may be due to factors such as being on long term sick, career break, maternity leave, unpaid leave, starting or leaving mid-way through the pay period or receiving any deductions or back pay relating to another pay period. (See break down below)

### Relevant Employees - Breakdown of Reasons

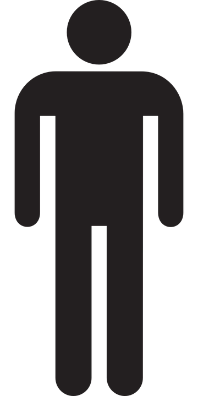
We also had to class our contingency crew as Relevant Employees this time as the contingency crew are on zero hours contracts and have not been required to work any hours due to their being no industrial action to cover during the snapshot period.

The contingency crew are required to attend occasional training sessions, however none fell within the snapshot period.

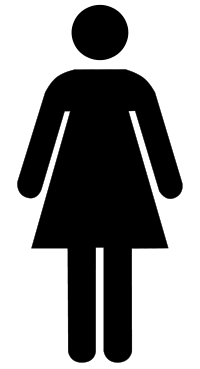
# A-B) Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap

#### For Full Pay Relevant Employees

T**he “mean” hourly rate pay gap illustrated here shows that female staff earn on average 3.9% less than male staff.**



**£17.66**



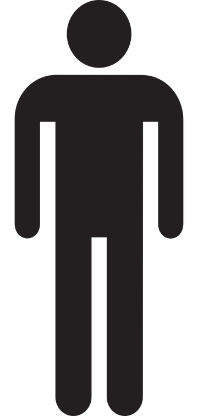
**£16.97**

**3.9%**

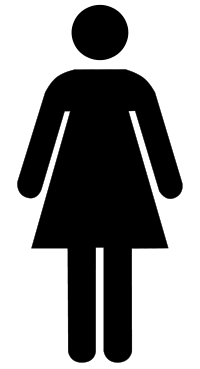
**Mean (average) Pay Gap**

**This equates to £0.69 an hour less.**

T**he median hourly rate pay gap illustrated here shows that female staff earn on average 5.7% less than male staff.**



**£16.93**



**£15.96**

**5.7%**

**Median Pay Gap**

**This equates to £0.97 an hour less.**

The pay gaps in both calculations favour males. This may be explained by the disproportionate number of male staff to female in higher paid operational (“Gold” and “Grey Book” roles), and the large number of males in senior management positions and thus within the mid and high bands of pay (see overleaf). Also when looking at females alone a disproportionate amount of females are in lower paid roles.

The gap is also affected by the fact that bonus pay is included in the hourly rate calculations. Bonus pay is only currently offered to operational staff and operational roles are predominately occupied by males.

The hourly rate for on call staff is made up of a retaining fee plus their hourly rate for work undertaken. As certain elements of their pay are fixed (Such as CPD and ARA’s) regardless of actual hours worked each period, this means that the hourly rate appears high where the employee has worked a small number of hours in the pay periods in question. This will have an effect on the overall hourly pay gap calculation as the on call fire fighter staff group are predominantly male (11 females out of 99 full pay relevant on call staff).

# C-D) The Mean and Median Bonus Pay Gap

#### For all Relevant Employees.

## Definition of Bonus Pay at SYFR

The main payment that fire services offers which comes under the Regulations definition of bonus pay is Continuous Professional Development (CPD*).* CPD is based upon demonstrating commitment to the role and it takes into account performance, attendance and conduct as part of the eligibility criteria, therefore we count this as Bonus Pay.

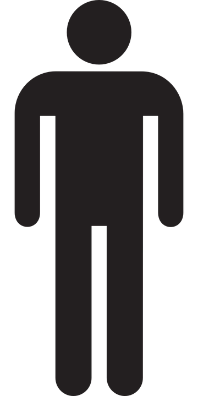
*Bonus Pay 4. (b) relates to profit sharing, productivity, performance, incentive or commission’.*

In addition to CPD at this time, the service offers incentive payments to employees joining the day staffing duty system of £1,000 per annum for the first 3 years whilst they are working that duty system.

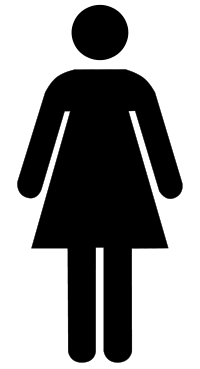
Our contingency fire crew members receive a four weekly bonus payment of £200 as an incentive for remaining a member of the contingency fire crew.

No bonus pay is currently offered to corporate employees.

## Bonus Pay Gap Figures



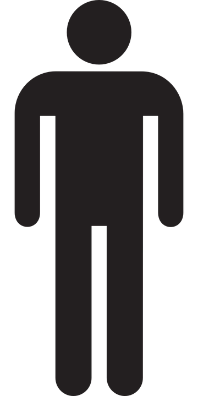
**£1,184.20**



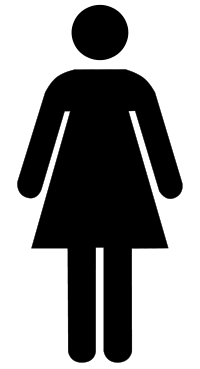
**£1,184.20**

**0%**

**Median Bonus Pay Gap**



**£1,230.68**



**£1,012.48**

**17.77%**

**Mean (average) Bonus Pay Gap**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 6 | Female | Male | Gap | % |
| Average (Mean) Annual Bonus Pay | £1012.48 | £1,230.68 | £218.20 | 14.55% |
| Median | £1184.20 | £1184.20 | 0 | 0 |

## Comments on the Average (Mean) Annual Bonus Pay Gap

In terms of the 17.77% difference in the average amount of bonus pay received by males and females, this will be affected by a few factors.

Firstly the calculations require us to include all ‘relevant employees’ (which includes those who did not receive full pay in the period in question) and look at all bonus pay received in the 12 months prior to the snapshot date. Therefore any females who have been on maternity leave in this period who will have had their pay reduced as a result will affect the difference in the amount received by females overall in comparison to males.

Our contingency fire crew only contained one female member at the time of the snapshot. As the contingency crew receive £200 per month (£2,400 per annum) for remaining a member of the crew, which is the largest bonus payment paid by SYFR, this has the effect of increasing the male average bonus pay amount. As the crew contained two females last year this may explain in part why the percentage gap has increased this year (17.77% from 14.55%).

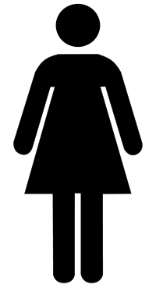
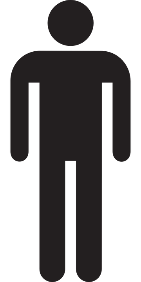
Whilst the recruitment drives for the contingency crew do include targeted positive action initiatives the numbers indicate that there is still much work to be done for this group of staff. One contributing factor, other than the stereotype of firefighting being viewed as a typically male role, is the fact that the role requires a level of flexibility in terms of being able to provide cover at short notice. This can be more of a challenge for those with caring responsibilities who cannot easily change their routine without much warning.

A total of 4 Females received a bonus payment in relation to the day staffing duty system. As this payment is the lowest annual bonus of £1000 it will have lowered the overall average amount of Bonus pay paid to females contributing to the increase in the gap this year as no females received this last year.

## Comments on the Median Bonus Pay Gap

As you can see from table 6 there is currently no median bonus pay gap between men and women. This can be explained due to the most common bonus pay being CPD, which is a set amount per year for wholetime staff (£1,184.20).

# E) The proportion of males and females receiving a bonus payment



## Comments on the proportion of males and females receiving a bonus payment

As shown by the above diagrams there is a significant disparity in the percentage of women who receive bonus pay in comparison to the percentage of males who receive bonus pay. 19.4% of Females (48 out of 247) are in receipt of bonus pay in comparison to 54.6% of Males (447 out of 819).

When analysing the proportion of males vs females who receive bonus pay the figures are affected by the proportions of males and females within the operational and corporate staff groups. When looking at females in isolation 63% of female employees are in the corporate staff group (155 out 247) which are not eligible for any bonus pay. In comparison when looking at males in isolation only 14% are in the corporate staff group (118 out of 819).

Only 9% of operational employees (including wholetime, on call, and contingency) are female (67 females vs 694 males). There are therefore fewer female employees to receive the CPD payments and day staffing payments that are payable to eligible grey book staff.

As control staff come under grey book terms and conditions they also receive CPD. As this group is mostly female this will help raise the average number of females in receipt of bonus pay a little but as the group is relatively small (25 females vs 7 males employees) the effect will be minimal.

Whilst there is significant positive action work taking place at SYFR, that aims to encourage a greater number of female firefighter applications, it will be some time before we see the effects of this work reflected in the figures for the proportion of females receiving bonus pay. This is because CPD is the main bonus that SYFR offers and this is based upon length of service based eligibility criteria (5 years competence in role or 8 years’ service, whichever comes first).

# F) The proportion of males & females in each salary quartile

#### For Full Pay Relevant Employees

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Salary Quartile Bands – Breakdown | | | | |
|  | **Hourly Rate Range** | **Female** | **Male** | **Total** |
| Upper Quartile | £19.54 - £80.64 | 51 | 197 | 248 |
| Upper Middle Quartile | £16.81 - £19.54 | 45 | 204 | 249 |
| Lower Middle Quartile | £13.46 – £16.80 | 63 | 185 | 248 |
| Lower Quartile | £4.35 – £13.45 | 76 | 173 | 249 |
| Total |  | 235 | 759 | 994 |

## Comments on the Pay Quartile Distribution of Males and Females

The “upper” quartile is dominated by male staff (79.44% male), meaning they are the highest earners in the organisation. In contrast, a larger proportion of female staff are found in the lower middle and lower quartile salary bands compared to the upper bandings. However it can be noted that the percentage of females in the upper quartile increased from 18.80% to 20.56% and the percentage of females in the lower quartile reduced from 34.04% to 30.52% which does show progress in the right direction.

The ongoing disparity can be explained to some extent by the fact that the majority of females employed within SYFRS are corporate staff, on “Green Book” terms and conditions, which generally offer lower rates of pay. In contrast, operational, “Grey Book” posts remain dominated by male staff that are paid at a higher rate from entry (firefighter) level through to Exec level.

There is a disproportionate number of males in the middle and upper quartiles due to the overrepresentation of men in the organisation as a whole, and particularly on zero hour contracts or in the On-call firefighter cohort.

# Comparison to last year (2023)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 0.69% | 0.79% | 3.22% |
| **Mean (Average) Pay Gap** | **Median Pay Gap** | **Mean Bonus Pay Gap** |

SYFR’s mean (average) hourly gender pay gap has decreased from 4.59% last year to 3.9% this year.

The median pay gap however, has increased from 4.91% last year to 5.7% this year.

The bonus pay gap, has also increased from 14.55% last year to 17.77% this year.

## Comments on our Pay Gap changes since the 2023 Snapshot Date

* There have been pay awards applied at varying percentages across the staff groups since the 2023 snap shot.

Gold Book staff (Brigade managers) received a 10% increase since the 2023 snapshot. Grey Book staff (Uniformed, On-Call and Control) received a 12% increase on all salaries compared with a flat rate increase of £1925 on all pay points for Green Book staff (Corporate) which for illustrative purposes equates to 4% for Grade 11, 6% for Grade 7 and 10% for Grade 2. A rate of 3.88% was applied to salaries above Grade 11.

As women are still under-represented in Gold and Grey Book roles the fact that these staff received higher percentage pay increases would explain the increase in the median pay gap this year. As most women fall under the Green Book terms and conditions it follows that the most common or middle salary level would be negatively affected by the above in comparison to the same measure for males.

* Looking at the distribution of females across the earnings quartiles there has been a slight shift in amounts with slightly more found in the upper quartiles and slightly less than last year in the lower. This shift may account for why, despite the effect of the pay awards, we have still seen a slight decrease in the mean hourly gender pay gap.
* Since last year’s snapshot there has been one additional female director appointment, and three high level re-grades for females (increasing from Grade 11 to Grade Manager B’s) increasing the number of female high earners which again will have assisted in raising the mean average earnings for females.
* We have also gained some female operational employee’s which is testament to the ongoing positive action efforts made for each recruitment drive.
* Whilst we have had a number of female leavers from mid to high level paid roles the intake of female operational staff and mid-high level corporate staff will have had a positive impact on improving the average hourly pay gap.

### Summary of Female Staff Changes since the 2023 Snapshot date

## Comparison to National Gender Pay Gap Data

The median gender pay gap in the UK based on the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2024 was 14.2% and therefore our median gender pay gap of 5.7% is significantly under this figure.

The fact that we are consistently under the national average is positive, particularly in the face of the significant challenge we face of overcoming the deeply embedded stereotype of firefighting being viewed as a typically male role.

## Comparison to other Fire & Rescue Services

*Data is only available up until 2023 for this metric, as it is based on published snapshot data (Source: ONS), which is not available for 2024 at the time of writing.*

Although we compare well to the national average for all occupations, our median gender pay gap has generally remained slightly above the averaged median pay gaps in the Fire and Rescue sector.

This is something that is actively being considered within SYFR when planning positive action programmes for recruitment and promotion of females within our service.

When looking at comparisons with other Fire and Rescue Services it should be noted that there is a difference of interpretation of the government guidance across brigades which may bring into question the meaningfulness of such a comparison. For example some brigades have chosen to not class CPD as Bonus Pay and have therefore not included this in their calculations.

# Conclusion and Recommendations

### Some reasons for the gender pay gap in SYFR are:

* Occupational segregation remains a feature of the fire and rescue labour market
* Women are under-represented in management and senior positions
* Women are under-represented in operational roles

SYFR uses a job evaluation system to assess job roles to ensure a fair and appropriate salary is allocated to each corporate role.

Operational pay is governed by the NJC in respect of the set national agreed roles or levels. SYFR is therefore confident that its gender pay gap does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work. Rather its gender pay gap is the result of the roles in which men and women work within the organisation and the salaries that these roles attract.

## Actions taken by SYFR to increase gender diversity in all areas of its workforce to date

### Creating an evidence base

Workforce Profile Data is published annually which demonstrates:

* The numbers of male and female staff as a whole in the organisation
* The numbers of male and female staff within each work group of the organisation
* The numbers of male and female staff across the different pay levels within the organisation

SYFR also record and analyse:

* The proportion of men and women applying for jobs and being recruited in relation to our operational roles, which are the most underrepresented by females. Focused work continues to improve the intake of female operational employees via positive action initiatives.
* The proportions of men and women applying for and obtaining promotions.

### Positive Action in Recruitment

In terms of attracting females, SYFR endeavours to reflect the communities we serve in the composition of our workforce, across workforce groups and in top management layers. Where the profile of SYFR or a particular team or work area shows significant under representation in comparison to groups in the community, SYFR uses positive action and fair recruitment and selection on merit, to increase workforce diversity. This focus applies to all selection processes including re-structure and promotion.

Current operational recruitment processes look at wider positive action programmes and events aimed at building fitness and confidence for female and BME candidates considering applying for firefighter roles.

Some of our ongoing work to improve gender diversity includes:

## Going Forward…

SYFR will be working with staff to develop further targeted interventions and programmes to support both female staff wishing to join the service in operational roles and in relation to the opportunities available to women in relation to promotion and wider development.

# Chief Fire Officer’s Statement of Accuracy

**I, Chris Kirby, Chief Fire Officer, confirm that the information in this statement is accurate.**

**Date:**