



# Gender Pay Gap Report 2017

Date of publication: 28 March 2018

# Statement by Chair of Avon Fire Authority and Chief Fire Officer

Avon Fire Authority is committed to the principle of equal opportunities and fair treatment for all employees, regardless of the protected characteristics they share or their personal circumstances. This is the first time we have published our gender pay gap in line with the new legal requirement for all public sector bodies.

Inclusion and diversity are a key feature of our work and we are very pleased to see that Avon Fire & Rescue Service (AF&RS) has a gender pay gap which is lower than the current national average<sup>1</sup>, however we accept that there is more to do to achieve full gender pay parity.

We know that working on this will take time and there is no quick fix. However we are confident that our future plans for inclusion and diversity, recruitment and promotion and policy review will help to narrow this gap year upon year.

**Confirmed** that AF&RS has prepared this gender pay gap report based on 2017 pay data in line with mandatory requirements:

Signed:

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**Councillor Donald Davies**  
**Chair to the Fire Authority**

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**Mick Crennell**  
**Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive**

Dated: 28 March 2018

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<sup>1</sup> 9.1% in 2017. "Understanding the gender pay gap in the UK". Office for National Statistics. 17 January 2018

# Introduction

Avon Fire Authority as a public sector employer with more than 250 staff is required by law to carry out gender pay gap analysis and reporting under the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

Gender pay reporting is different to equal pay. Equal pay deals with the differences between men and women who carry out the same or similar jobs, or work of equal value. The gender pay gap shows the difference in the average pay between all men and women in a workforce. It compares **hourly rates of pay** and any bonuses staff may receive by gender, highlighting any areas of imbalance.

If a workforce has a particularly high gender pay gap this can indicate there may be a number of issues to deal with, and the individual calculations may help to identify what those issues are. Where gender pay imbalances are exposed, actions will be put into place to address these.

## AF&RS Employees

In terms of pay and conditions AF&RS employees are broadly split into two main groups, generally referred to as uniformed and non-uniformed.

Uniformed staff are wholetime (full time) firefighters, retained (on call) firefighters and Control staff. Wholetime firefighters and retained firefighters are classed as operational which means they respond to emergency incidents. Control staff are uniformed staff and they share the same conditions of service as their operational colleagues, but they do not respond to operational incidents. They are emergency call handlers who mobilise AF&RS resources. Pay and conditions for uniformed staff are negotiated nationally.

Non-uniformed staff are the support staff who provide the 'back office' service support functions, such as HR, Finance, Workshops and so on. They are non-operational, generally working a 37-hour week. Their conditions of service are negotiated locally and their salaries are determined through the Hay Job Evaluation System.

## Methodology

The data used to compile this report has been obtained from AF&RS employee payroll data and is based on the methodology and guidance set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 and other guidance issued by HM Government.

All employees who were employed on the snapshot date (31 March 2017) and were paid their usual full basic pay during the relevant pay period are classed as full pay relevant employees (FPREs) and have therefore been included in the calculations.

## Retained firefighters

The hourly rate for retained firefighters has been calculated based on their retainer fee. The retainer fee for a full cover retained firefighter is equivalent to 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a wholetime firefighter salary. Their hourly rate is equivalent to that of a wholetime firefighter. The retaining fee for a part cover retained firefighter is 75% of the full cover retaining fee.

# The calculations

Six formulas were used in the calculations:

## **The mean (average) pay gap:**

This is the difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male FPRES and that of female FPRES. A **mean** average involves adding up all the numbers and dividing the result by how many numbers were listed.

## **The median pay gap**

This is the difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male FPRES and that of female FPRES. Calculating a median involves listing all values (hourly rates of pay) in numerical order. If the list contains an odd number of values the median is the middle number. If there is an even number of values, the median will be the mean of the two central numbers.

## **The proportion of male and female employees in each salary quartile band**

The proportions of male and female FPRES in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands.

## **The mean bonus pay gap**

The bonus calculations not applicable as AF&RS does not pay bonuses to staff.

## **The median bonus pay gap**

The bonus calculations not applicable as AF&RS does not pay bonuses to staff.

## **The proportion of males and females receiving a bonus payment**

The bonus calculations not applicable as AF&RS does not pay bonuses to staff.

# AF&RS gender pay data on the snapshot date of 31 March 2017

## Workforce information – total number of staff

AF&RS All Staff		
Gender	Employees	%
Male	746	86.9%
Female	112	13.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>858</b>	

Table 1

The data in Table 1 shows that 86.9% of the workforce (uniformed and non-uniformed staff) is male and 13% female.

## Operational staff (\*Wholetime and Retained)

Table 2 looks at the gender balance of the operational workforce only. Although steps are being taken to address this, firefighting is a traditionally male occupation and Table 2 shows that AF&RS, in common with all other UK Fire and Rescue Services, is heavily male-dominated.

AF&RS Operational Staff *		
Gender	Employees	%
Male	621	95.2%
Female	31	4.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>652</b>	

Table 2

We have had little opportunity to make any significant impact on the gender balance of this area of the workforce due to a recruitment freeze which had been in place since 2011. However in the spring of 2017 we were able to commence wholetime firefighter recruitment once again and since then we have implemented a number of positive action initiatives designed to increase the number of applications from women.

At the time of writing this report recruitment is still ongoing so we are unable to say what the final impact of the positive action will be on the number of women who are successfully appointed as wholetime firefighters. That information will be included in our gender pay gap report for 2018 which will be published by 1 April 2019.

## Mean (average) and median calculations

	Female	Male	Gap £	Gap %
Average Hourly Rate	£13.99	£14.55	-£0.56	<b>3.9%</b>
Median Hourly Rate	£13.53	£13.53	£0.00	<b>0%</b>

Table 3

The average hourly rate calculation (Table 3) shows that female staff earn on average 3.9% less than male staff.

**The mean average gender pay gap is 3.9%.**

**This is the gender pay gap within AF&RS on the snapshot date of 31 March 2017.**

The median gender pay gap is 0%. The median hourly rate shows a 0% gender pay gap, which means that the mid-point in the range of hourly pay rates is the same for both male and female employees. This is not unexpected given that the mean (average) gender pay gap is a relatively low 3.9% (when compared to the national UK gender pay gap which is currently 18% for all workers including part time, and 9% for full time workers<sup>2</sup>).

## Salary quartile bands

The quartile calculations show the proportions of male and female employees in four quartile pay bands, which is done by dividing the workforce into four equal parts.

Table 4 (overleaf) shows the salary quartile breakdown for all staff. It can be seen that the distribution of males and females in each quartile is heavily weighted in favour of males. This is because the calculation looks at the entire workforce, which includes the male-dominated operational workforce.

In Table 5 (overleaf) it can be seen that the distribution of males and females within each quartile is fairly even. In fact in Quartile 4 (high) it can be seen that women outnumber men on the highest hourly rate, and in Quartiles 1 and 3 there is a 50/50 distribution.

**This high number of women top earners within the support staff group has positively influenced and reduced the overall gender pay gap within AF&RS.**

<sup>2</sup> Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2016 provisional results Office for National Statistics. 17 January 2018.

## Salary quartile bands – all staff

Salary Quartile Bands – All Staff						
	Hourly Rate Range	Female	% Female	Male	% Male	Total
Quartile 4 (High)	£15.00 - £66.11	31	14.5%	183	85.5%	214
Quartile 3 (Mid-Upper)	£13.53 - £15.00	19	8.8%	196	91.2%	215
Quartile 2 (Mid-Lower)	£13.53 - £13.53	12	5.6%	203	94.4%	215
Quartile 1 (Low)	£8.45 - £13.53	50	23.4%	164	76.6%	214
<b>Total</b>		<b>112</b>		<b>746</b>		<b>858</b>

Table 4

## Salary quartile bands – support staff

Salary Quartile Bands – Support Staff						
	Hourly Rate Range	Female	% Female	Male	% Male	Total
Quartile 4 (High)	£16.22 - £48.80	18	58.1%	13	41.9%	31
Quartile 3 (Mid-Upper)	£12.01 - £15.80	15	50%	15	50%	30
Quartile 2 (Mid-Lower)	£10.33 - £11.27	14	45.2%	17	54.8%	31
Quartile 1 (Low)	£8.45 - £9.97	15	50%	15	50%	30
<b>Total</b>		<b>62</b>		<b>60</b>		<b>122</b>

Table 5

## Closing the gap

The mean and median gender pay gaps at AF&RS are relatively small which indicates that female employees at AF&RS are not significantly disadvantaged compared to their male colleagues. However a number of actions are already in progress and others are planned to further reduce the gender pay gap within AF&RS.

## Current measures

### Positive action

Recruitment, retention and progression of women, particularly in the operational workforce, continues to be a challenge for us and with women hugely under-represented in our workforce we have already begun to tackle this priority issue with the implementation of a sustained programme of positive action – including working with community groups and targeted recruitment events.

The impacts of positive action will not be seen immediately but one of the primary outcomes that we hope to see is an increase in the number of high quality applications from women who wish to become firefighters.

### An inclusive working environment

A secondary but equally important aim that we are working towards is to create a more inclusive workplace culture which should, in turn, help to ensure that the women we recruit will want to remain with us and will progress up the promotion ladder.

In March 2018 all members of staff were invited to complete a cultural survey, the results of which will help the service in achieving this objective.

### Dispelling the myths

The positive action includes a number of measures which are designed to raise awareness of AF&RS as a potential employer for women and dispel some of the myths and misconceptions about the type of person who can become a firefighter. For example, we know that the occupation is still perceived by many as a “male” occupation requiring exceptional physical abilities. Research points to a lack of awareness about the role and skills required to be a firefighter which in turn may create barriers for women in considering this as a career.

### Fitness workshops

To remove some of the mystery around the selection process and the levels of fitness required, we have recently run several fitness workshops specifically aimed at women who have expressed an interest in becoming firefighters. The workshops encouraged women to come along and try out the strength and fitness tests in a safe environment, under close supervision and with guidance and advice from our Service Fitness Instructors.

The fitness workshops do not form part of the selection process and they stop once recruitment starts. However women that attend the sessions will have a much clearer

idea of what is expected of them in terms of fitness and they will be able to work towards achieving the required standard by the time they enter the selection process. This is a great example of positive action working to address historical inequality.

## **Social media**

We have begun to make greater and more targeted use of social media to increase the effectiveness of the marketing and promotion of our recruitment campaigns amongst our target audience.

## **Collaboration**

Alongside the above measures we have been working hard to increase communications and collaboration with organisations who are in a position to help us reach and influence our target audience, for example, women's sports clubs and groups and local colleges running public service courses who have women students.

# **Planned actions**

In addition to the actions that are already in progress we will be putting in place a programme of measures to further reduce gender inequality over the next year such as:

- New Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) Strategy
- Appointment of new E&D staff
- Review of operational staff recruitment and selection policies and processes
- Review existing ED&I training for all staff
- Bullying and Harassment policy and procedures review
- Equality Policy review
- Investigate different options for flexible working
- Ensure managers are aware of gender pay gap and the types of behaviours that might disadvantage women in the workplace.

# **Future reporting**

This is AF&RS' first gender pay gap report. It is hoped that in future reports we will be able to explore the different pay elements within our workforce in greater depth and expand our reporting to include calculations relating to other elements of remuneration such as overtime payments, additional responsibility allowances, and so on.