

A State of the Nation Report

Arson

Lee Howell, Independent Chairman

About the Arson Prevention Forum

- Formed by merging the Arson Control Forum, set up by Government in 1991 and the ABIs Arson Prevention Bureau.
- Representatives from Government, Emergency Services, Insurers, the Fire Protection Association and the ABI – now includes Crimestoppers.
- Strategic Forum to share good practice, drive innovation and engender awareness and action to reduce arson.
- Independent Chairman.
- Website www.Stoparsonuk.org

State of the Nation Report (Sept 2014)

Arson: a call to action

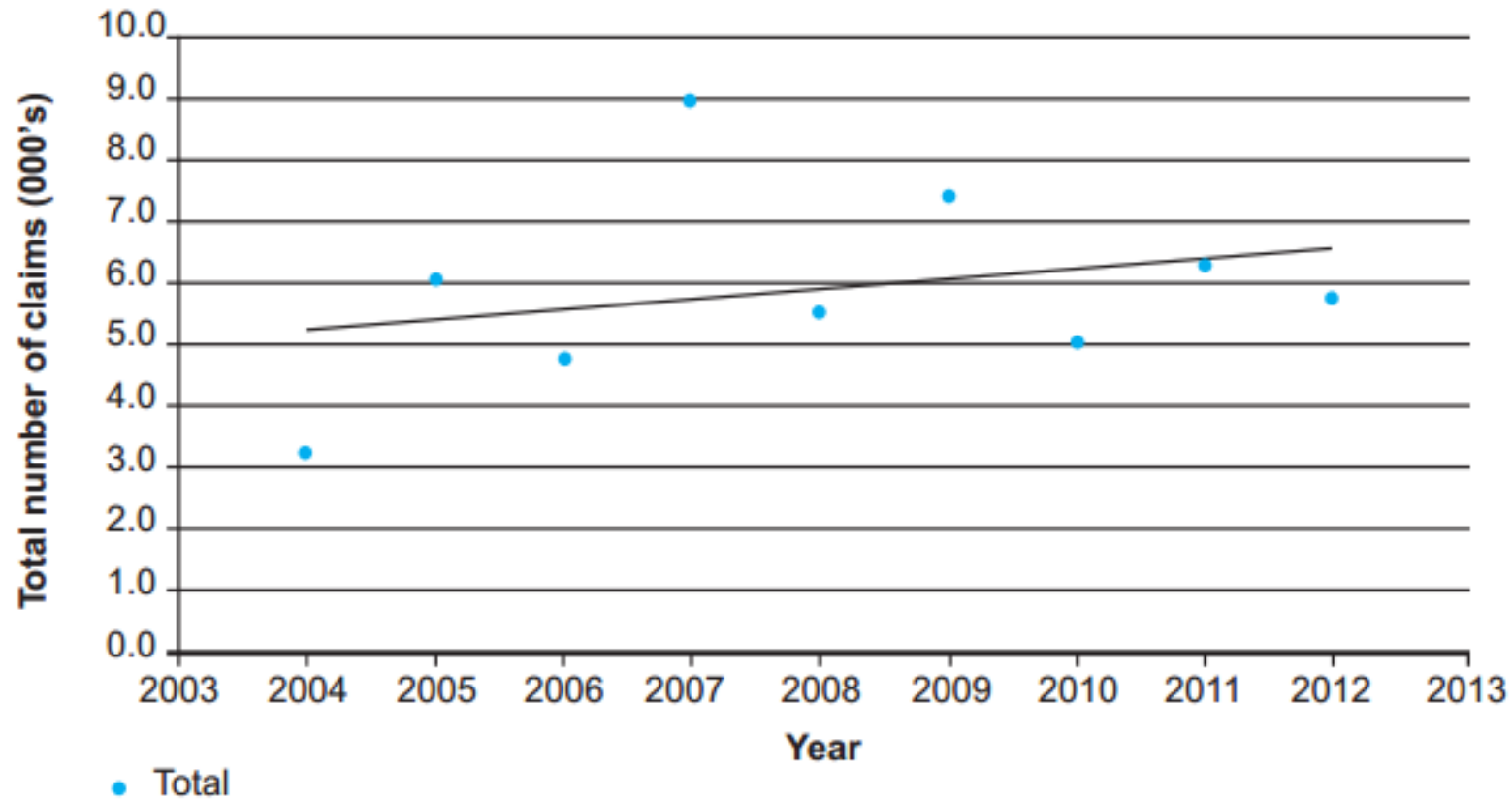
A 'State of the Nation' Report

Arson Prevention Forum

September 2014

Context & Scale of the Problem

Figure 4 – Total number of fire related insurance claims made by members of the Association of British Insurers from 2004–2012



Occupancy	Number of deliberate fires	Total cost	Average cost per deliberate fire
Retail	59	£49.2m	£833,102
Dwellings	58	£16.0m	£275,845
Non-residential misc	52	£36.8m	£707,750
Food and drink	42	£18.7m	£445,619
Industrial processing	41	£37.4m	£912,293
Warehouse	26	£23.5m	£904,692
Entertainment and culture	24	£10.4m	£434,333
Education	22	£12.6m	£572,318
Sport	17	£6.5m	£380,941
Other residential	14	£9.3m	£665,857
Permanent agriculture	5	£1.5m	£297,200
Medical	5	£10.6m	£2,122,000
Unassigned	4	£1.6m	£410,250
Religious	4	£0.5m	£130,20
Outdoor equipment etc	3	£0.9m	£296,667
Other outdoors	3	£0.5m	£157,667
Transport	2	£2.1m	£1,042,500
Car parks	2	£0.3m	£135,000

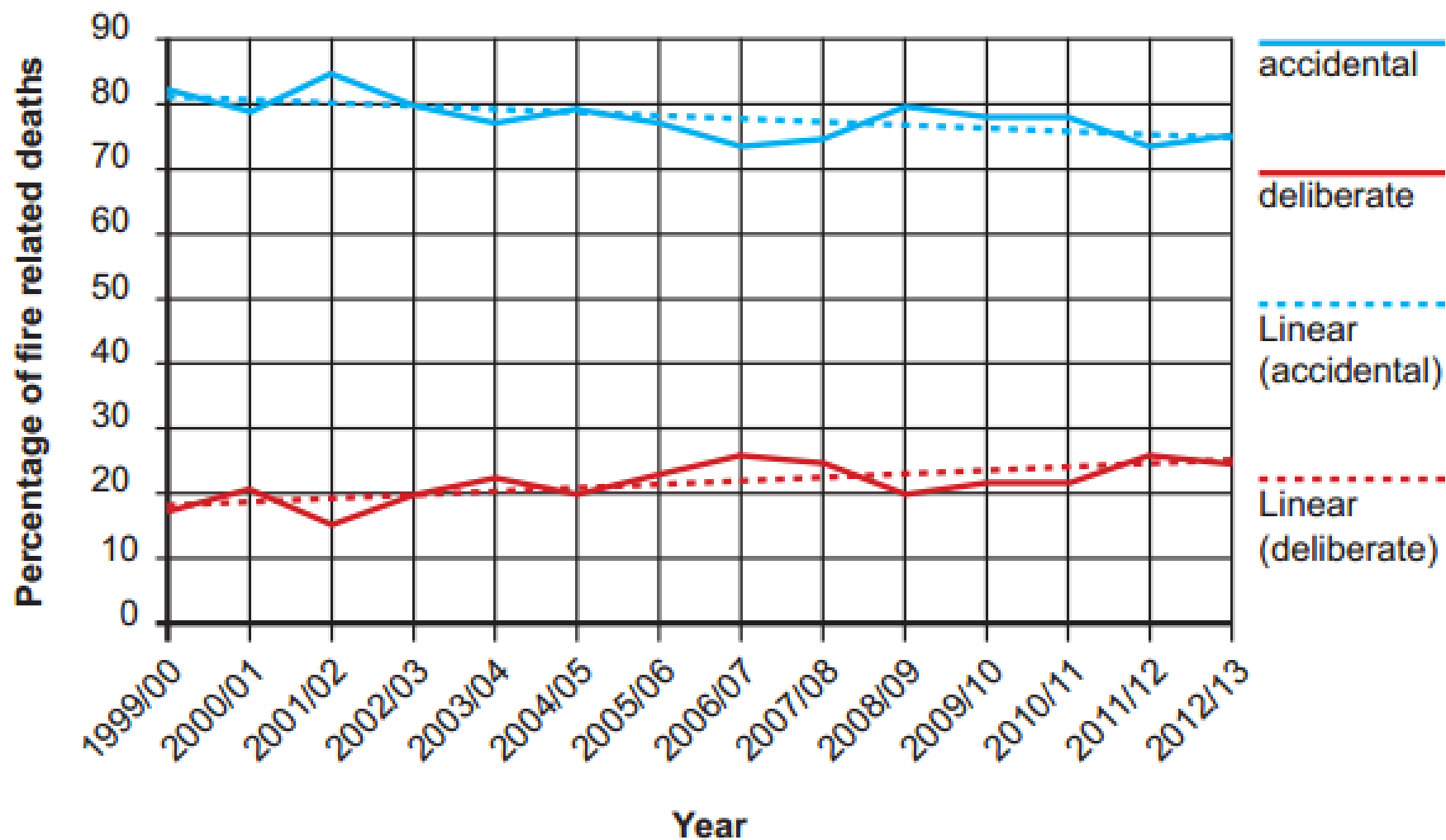
Fires in the retail sector result in the highest overall cost, but medical sector fires, although just five over the five year period,

result in the highest average cost per deliberate fire – over £2m each.

**Table 2 – Breakdown of the estimates
for the cost of arson in England 2008**

Breakdown of costs	Cost
Costs of non-detected arson	£158m
Charge/summons	£119m
Caution	£5.3m
Taken into consideration	£0.8m
Penalty notice for disorder	£2.2m
Non-sanction detection	£1.3m
Costs to the prison service	£58m
Total cost to police and prison service	£345m
Total cost of fatal and non-fatal casualties	£279m
Property damage	£543m
Lost business	£11.02m
Response costs	£524m
Total	£1.701bn

Figure 1 – Graph showing the number of fire deaths from accidental and deliberate fires in England as a percentage of total fires (1999–2013)



What is being done?

- **Insurers** – undertake site specific surveys (high risk premises) to include some arson risk reduction measures but also include wording in general policies to support good practice. Some specific historical focus on schools but scope for more effort perhaps is needed given the cost of arson and need for competitive pricing in a soft market.
- **ABI** –use RISC Authority (Fire Protection Association) to inform policy and advice for members. APF have offered to assist inform this information.

What is being done?

- **Fire Services** – some good work. However, the work is not coordinated or always evaluated. No FRS spends more than £50k on specific arson actions (excluding staff).
- **Police** – limited responses received to the survey but some good work from those who did respond but not always seen as a priority. Issues associated with coding arson, seeing arson as a crime and a visible commitment to drive arson down further arise.
- **CPS** – difficult to get engagement and involvement. Learning from successful and unsuccessful prosecutions is not being communicated.

What is being done?

- **Home Office** – arson appears to be a low priority with a policy focus on encouraging collaboration at a local level which will only get so far. Highlighting a political intent and aspiration for greater protection of the public rather than direction may be helpful. Role for Police and Crime Commissioners.
- **DCLG** – supportive and engaged in a non directive way. Localism drives much of DCLG public policy but there are opportunities to highlight Government expectations (in outcome terms) through the National Framework for Fire Services.

Recommendations from the report

- The insurance industry to play a leading role in arson reduction interventions.
- The police (incl Home Office and PCCs) should extend greater visibility, commitment and drive to reduce this crime.
- Build on partnership working, especially between fire and rescue services and the police.
- The APF to coordinate learning from local arson reduction programmes.
- The CPS to share lessons learnt from prosecutions.
- Central Government to place greater emphasis on local arson reduction arrangements.

What we need from you

1. Recognise the cost of arson is significant in financial and human terms
2. Highlight the problem to Government colleagues and Ministers to ensure strategic level awareness and support
3. Invite the Arson Prevention Forum to advise your formal and informal networks to raise awareness of the issue