

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY



REPORT REFERENCE NO.	HRMDC/09/1
MEETING	HRMD COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	22 JANUARY 2009
SUBJECT OF REPORT	ABSENCE MANAGEMENT
LEAD OFFICER	Head of Human Resources Management and Development
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The progress with Absence Management has been included as a standing item within the HRMD agenda. This report includes an update of the Service performance for absence levels and also the long term absence levels.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	
APPENDICES	
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	

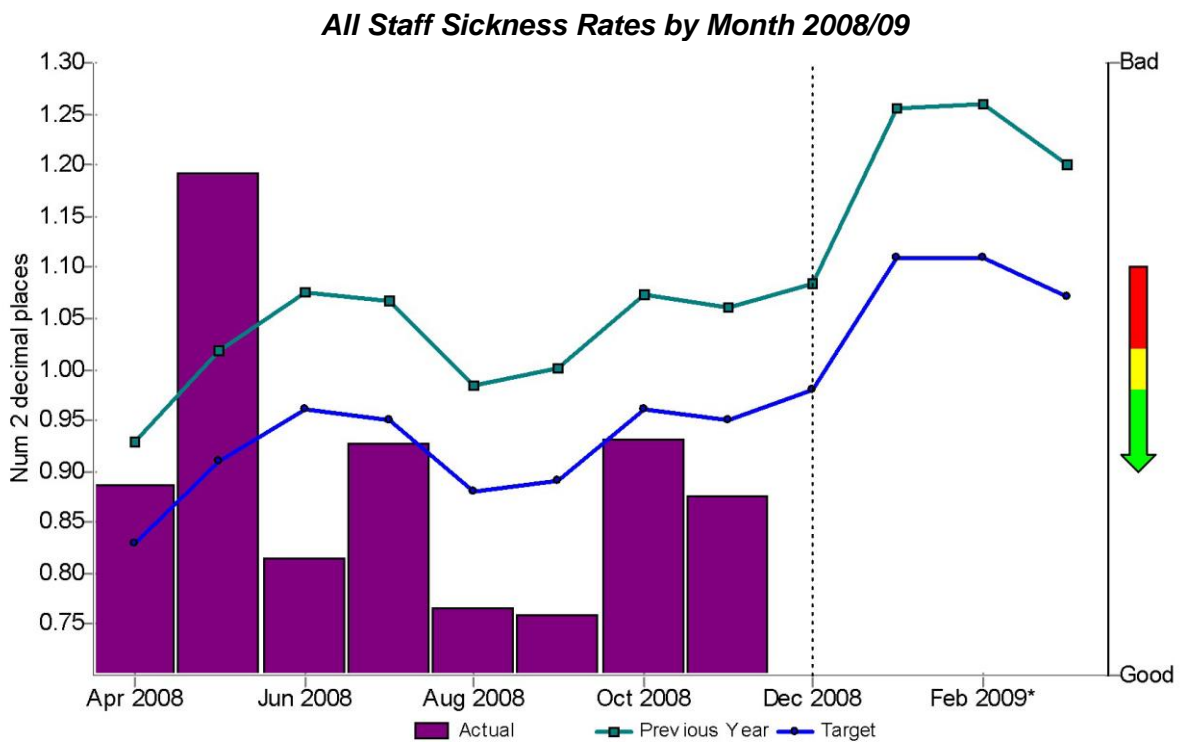
1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Absence Management continues to be within target levels and is therefore coded 'green' within the Service Performance Report. Absence management therefore remains outside of the Service exception reporting but continues as an area of focus as the Service works to reduce levels of absence in accordance with our 3 year target level.

2. **CURRENT PERFORMANCE**

2.1 The Service has a corporate target to reduce the levels of sickness absence to the regional average rate of 9.0 days/shifts lost per person by 2010/11.

The target absence level was not achieved in 2007/8 but we continue to see a good improvement through Q1 to November of Q3 of 2008/9 in which we have seen a 12.9% decrease in absence for all staff compared with the same period last year. At this point the previous year was 8.21 days absence compared with a target of 7.33 for 2008/9 and the actual level being at 7.15 days.



All Staff – Sickness Rates per Person – by Month

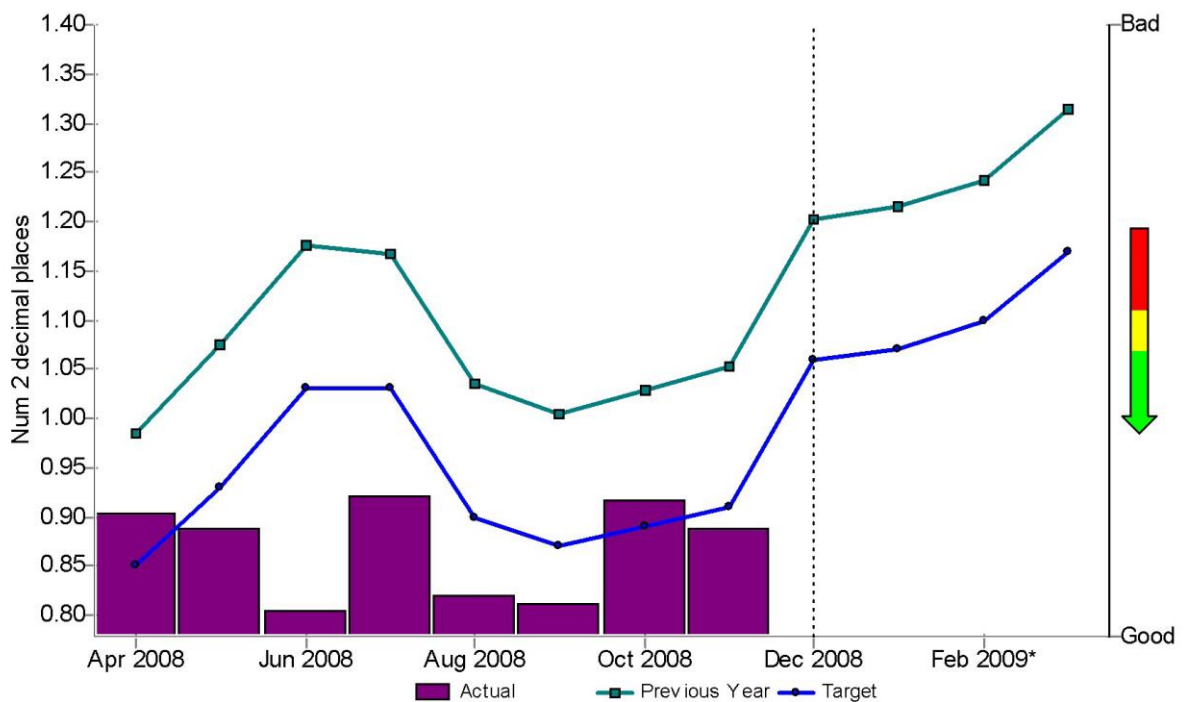
	YTD Actual 08/09	YTD Target	YTD Previous Year 07/08	YTD % variance on previous yr
Apr 2008	0.89	0.83	0.93	4.4%
May 2008	2.08	1.74	1.95	-6.8%
Jun 2008	2.89	2.7	3.02	4.3%
Jul 2008	3.82	3.65	4.09	6.6%
Aug 2008	4.59	4.53	5.07	9.6%
Sept 2008	5.34	5.42	6.07	12%
Oct 2008	6.28	6.38	7.15	12.2%
Nov 2008	7.15	7.33	8.21	12.9%

2.2

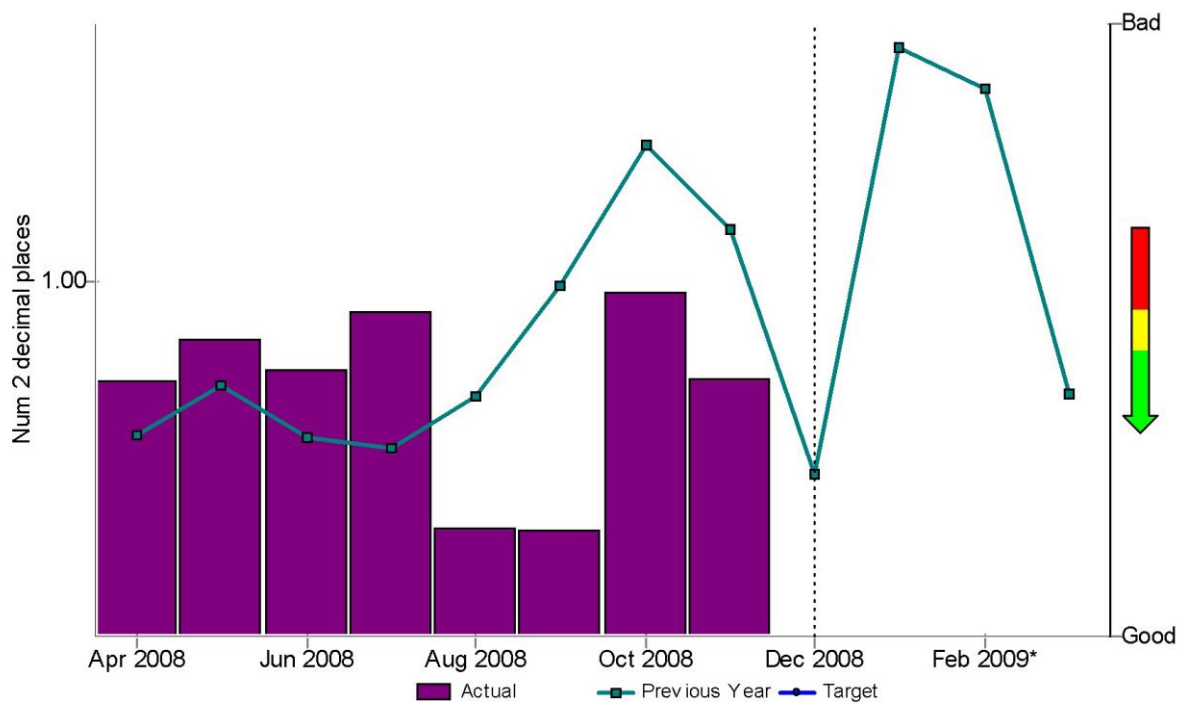
Although the overall level has improved, as previously when we analyse the results by staff category there are variations in performance. The breakdown for uniformed, control and non-uniformed are shown below. The uniformed levels remain below the previous year consistently within 2008/9 with a performance variance of 18.5% less than the previous year. For non-uniformed we have seen an improvement in Q2 over the previous year. There is not a target for non-uniformed alone, however, if we use the 'all staff' target level then it is below the target level of 7.33 days YTD. The Control Rooms continues to be over target and over the previous year.

	Working Days/shifts 2007/8	Working Days/Shifts 2008/9	% Variance on previous year.
All Staff	8.21	7.15	12.90%
Uniformed	8.52	6.95	18.50%
Non-uniformed	7.13	6.51	8.80%
Control	8.86	14.97	-69%

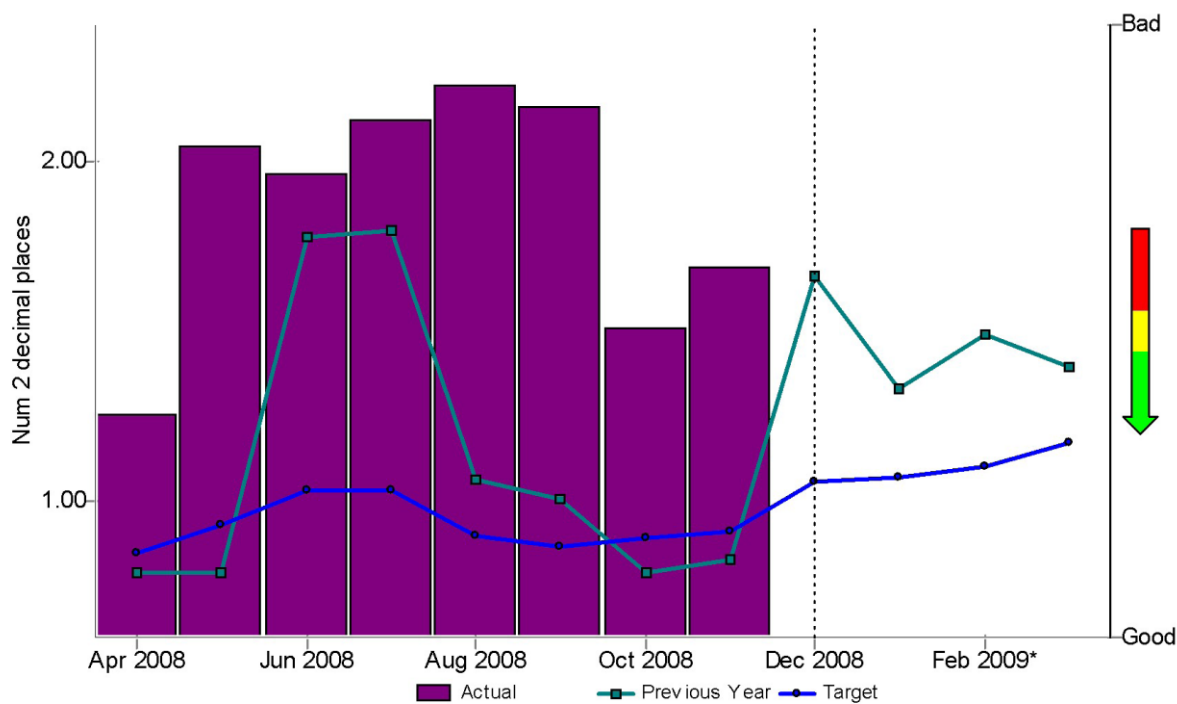
Uniformed Staff Sickness Rates by Month 2008/09



Non-uniformed Staff Sickiness Rates by Month 2008/09



Control Staff Sickiness Rates by Month 2008/09



3. **DETAILED BREAKDOWN OF LONG TERM SICKNESS**

3.1 The monitoring of long term sickness ie those over 28 days is reported on a monthly basis and includes those who are long term sick and those on restricted duties.

3.2 The number of long term sick over the last 10 months has been as follows:

Number of staff	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
Uniformed	27	28	23	23	19	19	20	23	17	20
Retained	14	17	10	10	8	10	8	9	12	14
Non-uniformed	3	6	6	7	6	2	4	2	3	6
Total	44	51	39	40	33	31	32	34	32	40

3.3 **Progress with Absence Management Policy**

The first draft of the absence management policy went out for consultation but feedback was not received from the Representative Bodies. This policy will be a cornerstone to the continued successful reduction in absence levels and therefore the Service has sought to discuss this policy with the RBs. It has been raised at the IRC meetings and a further informal meeting has taken place with the FBU. These discussions will be continued on the 29 January 2009. On the 2 February 2009 the Policy working party will meet to update the policy following receipt of the feedback.

4. **CONCLUSION**

4.1 The Service has seen a significant improvement during 2008/9 on the previous year and is continuing to progress with a sustained reduction to meet our overall targets.

Jane Sherlock
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