



Gender Pay Gap 2020

Introduction

Employers of more than 250 employees are required to calculate and publish information about the gender pay gap in their organisation (Equality Act 2010). The gender pay gap shows the difference between the average earnings of men and women. As a concept it is different from “equal pay” which deals with any pay differences between men and women who carry out the same or similar jobs or jobs of equal value.

Calculating, analysing and reporting on the gender pay gap can provide a valuable measure of equality in the workplace. It varies by occupation, age group and working patterns. It highlights any difference in men’s and women’s participation in work of different types and levels and how effectively talent is being maximised.

The gender pay gap regulations require us to calculate a number of gender pay gap measures with reference to all employees. However, where it has been helpful to explain or further explore this pay gap, reference has been made to the pay between different groups of employees.

Our employees are our most valuable asset and in order to continue to deliver an excellent emergency service to our communities, we recognise that a Fair, Kind and Inclusive culture is imperative.

Being Inclusive is one of our Service priorities and we constantly strive to create an environment and a culture where all our people are able to thrive and achieve their full potential. In order to attract and retain great people who can make an impact, we also work hard to attract and retain a workforce that is reflective of our communities. This helps us establish strong relationships and enables us to engage positively with all our community groups and ensure that we help to keep the people that live, work and travel in Essex safe.

We recognise the benefits that diversity of thought within our workforce brings to our Service, and in the partnership and collaborative work that we undertake. We know that by bringing together a range of experience and perspectives, we will be more creative, innovative and make more inclusive decisions. We are committed to continuous improvement and ensuring that our policies and practices support our equality, diversity and inclusion principles and objectives.



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This year's report reflects the continued efforts to eliminate bias and ensure fairness. We know from previous years that our on-call data skews our gender pay gap given the irregular working hours that our on-call firefighters work and the different pay elements that the roles attract, not all of which are not related to working hours, for example the retainer payment which relates to hours of availability.

In 2017 & 2018, we calculated our gender pay gap internally, gathering data from our HR and payroll systems, timesheets, and range of pay data, using Microsoft Excel to calculate the gap. We then moved to commissioning an external independent specialist, for our 2019 and 2020 gender pay gap analysis and report. This resulted in enhanced data and reports that have helped us to improve our understanding and revise our approach.

In addition, this year we have researched the methodology that other fire and rescue services have used with regard to on-call firefighter data to address some of the factors that were contributing to the variable hourly rates that we were experiencing, our learning and new methodology has had a positive impact on the gender pay gap.

As part of the Grey Book, on-call firefighters, i.e. those who respond from home or primary employment or from the local vicinity of the fire station, are paid a 'retainer' fee, which is 10% of the equivalent wholetime firefighters salary and is pro-rated for those firefighters providing reduced availability. This retainer is paid for availability to attend emergency incidents occurring within agreed periods of the week. When attending emergency incidents or training, they are remunerated with an hourly rate of pay in accordance with the role they perform and at the same rate as wholetime firefighters that work a pre-defined shift pattern.

In terms of on-call employees, the Service does not hold data on the location from where the employee is providing availability from ie whether it is in their home. For this reason, the Service has not included the retainer as part of the calculation of on-call hourly pay. All other payments that on-call employees receive have been taken into account in the calculation of hourly pay.

While we recognise the need for consistency in gender pay gap reporting, we were keen to learn from others and identify any improvements that we could make prior to expanding our pay gap reporting to include ethnicity.



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It is imperative that we understand our pay data fully and the gender pay gap exercise presents us with a valuable opportunity to understand the payments we make to our employees, the reasons they are made, and any actions necessary to help us to close any pay gap we have identified.

The causes of our gender pay gap are mostly due to occupational segregation, defined as the distribution of workers across and within occupations, based upon demographic characteristics, most often gender, age and ethnic background. Other influences include different terms and conditions of service for our on-call firefighters, wholetime firefighters and support colleagues as well as the impact that length of service has, given the loyalty that many of our colleagues give to our Service.

This year's calculations are based on a total of 1295 full pay relevant employees. The breakdown of our employees is detailed in the following tables:

Total number of men	Total number of women	Total
1060	235	1295

Workforce category	% of men	% of women
Wholetime firefighters	93.6%	6.4%
On-call firefighters	98.6%	1.4%
Control	16.2%	83.8%
Support	47.2%	52.8%
Total workforce	83.5%	16.5%

This profile clearly demonstrates that there is a higher proportion of men overall employed by ECFRS than women.

With more men in the workforce at all levels, combined with the underrepresentation of women in our operational roles, it is inevitable that we have a gender pay gap. ECFRS will continue to take positive action in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate barriers for the attraction and progression of women to achieve greater gender balance in our Service.



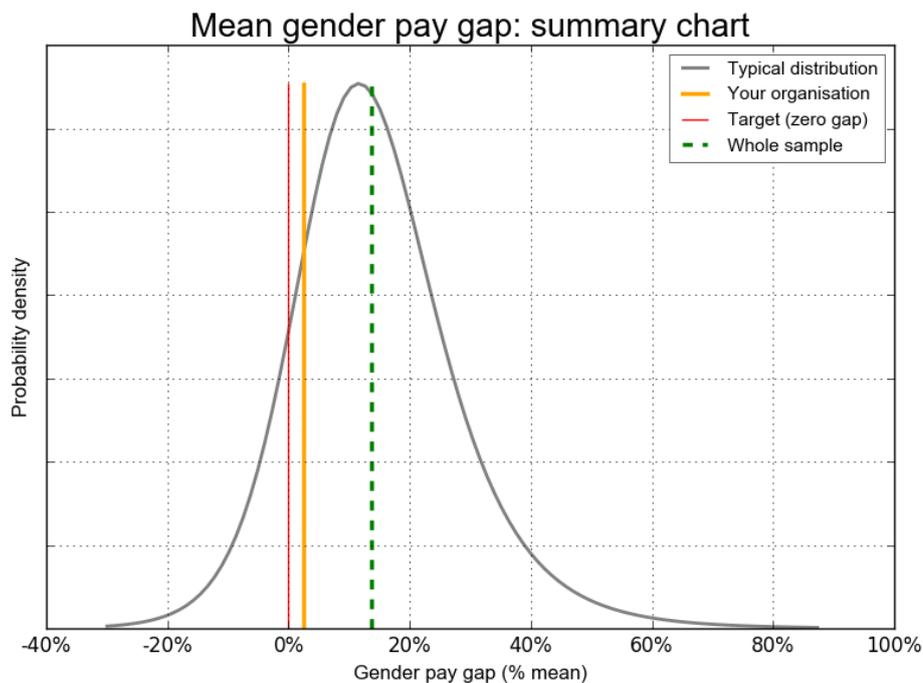
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Based on a snapshot of data available as at 31st March 2020 in relation to earnings of all employees, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's (ECFRS) calculations for the purposes of gender pay gap reporting are as follows:

The mean gender pay gap for ECFRS is **2.4%**.

The monetary amounts behind this figure are:

- A mean male hourly rate of £17.33
- A mean female hourly rate of £16.92
- Or an absolute difference of £0.41 per hour



The median gender pay gap for ECFRS is **7.7%**.

The monetary amounts behind this figure are:

- A median male hourly rate of £16.16
- A median female hourly rate of £14.91
- Or an absolute difference of £1.25 per hour

The Mean Gender Pay Gap is below the national average and has decreased from 7.3% last year. The Median gap is slightly higher than the mean gap but has



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decreased from the median gap of 10.6% last year. Adjustments to hourly rates over the past year include the agreed annual pay increase in line with the relevant terms of conditions for all roles.

Our pay policy is based on a nationally negotiated pay scheme which applies to local government employees. For Grey Book terms and conditions employees, there are 6 progressive role levels. Within the scales for support employees, there are between 4 and 5 different spinal column points or increments.

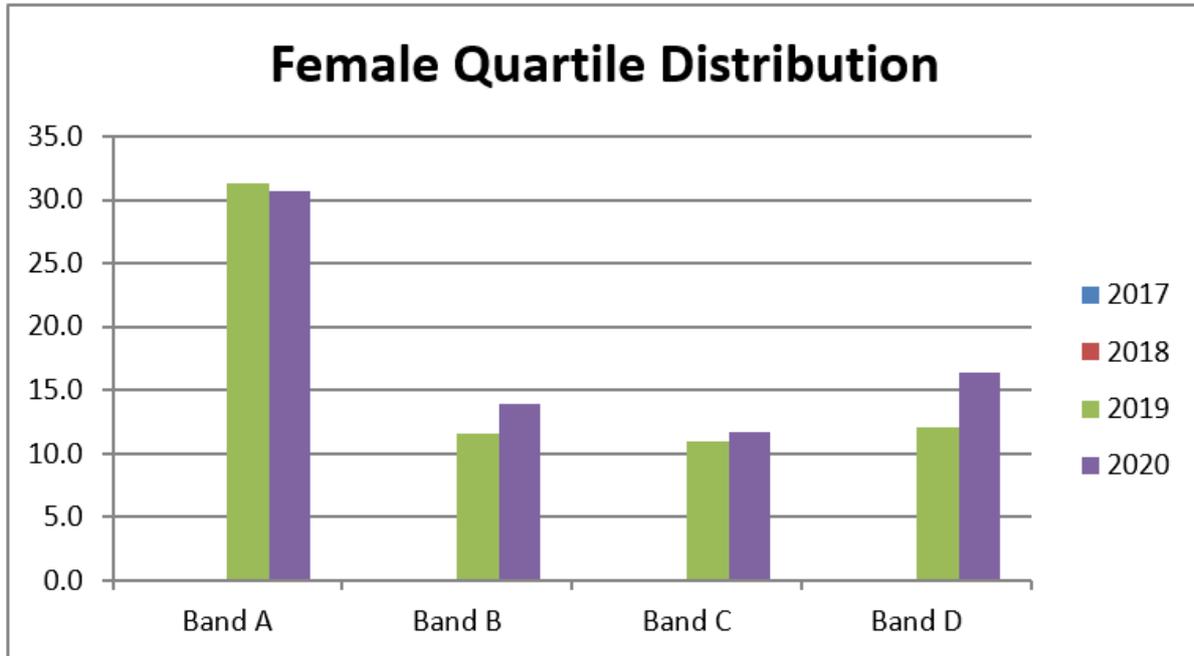
It is important to note, that as employees in different types of roles are employed on different terms and conditions it is difficult to make like for like comparisons.

Quartiles

Band	Description	Males	Females
A	Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them at or below the lower quartile	69.3% (224)	30.7% (99)
B	Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them above the lower quartile but at or below the median	86.1% (279)	13.9% (45)
C	Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them above the median but at or below the upper quartile	88.3% (286)	11.7% (38)
D	Includes all employees whose standard rate places them above the upper quartile	83.6% (271)	16.4% (53)
All Bands	All employees	81.9% (1060)	18.1% (235)



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These quartile graphs show that the lower quartile which is made up of lower pay rates, is heavily populated by women but that representation level changes significantly in the middle and upper quartiles where the pay rates are higher. We have however seen an increase in the representation of women in the middle and upper quartiles over the past 12 months which has contributed to the reduction in our pay gap.

Closing the gender pay gap

We are committed to positive action to achieve a more diverse workforce and improve the gender balance in our Service so that we can reduce our gender pay gap.

We continue to focus on the achievement of our [Public Sector Equality Duty objectives](#) and will take the following specific actions to improve our gender pay gap further:



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Attracting and retaining a more diverse workforce

- We will continue with a programme of positive action work which will be underpinned by a bold communications campaign that showcases the Service's commitment to achieving a workforce that is more reflective of our communities
- continue to engage with and support community groups, local sports teams, schools and colleges to showcase careers within the service
- use social media to demonstrate that we are an Inclusive employer that values diversity
- continue to ensure that our policies are family friendly and that the Service makes continual improvement to be an inclusive employer
- continue to offer a range of apprenticeships to bring new talent into our Service
- introduce internships, this work was delayed due to Covid-19 but remains within our People Strategy action plan
- promote our vacancies to the widest possible audience in accordance with our positive action approach.

Tackling the barriers to progression

- We will continue to work with our employee networks and forums to gain feedback and understand how we can bring about positive change based on feedback from colleagues
- continue to develop and expand our Women's Forum so that it can continue to empower our colleagues and support professional and personal development via a range of learning and development opportunities, coaching and mentoring
- continue to work in collaboration with Essex Police and East of England Ambulance Service to host an annual event for International Women's Day
- introduce an Inclusion & Diversity development plan that will include suggestions made by our networks and forums
- develop a diverse range of interview assessors to minimise the risk of bias and blindspots
- have representation from our Women's Forum in our Inclusion & Diversity Action Group with other Networks and Forums to inform the strategic direction of our People Strategy and supporting Inclusion and Diversity activity to consider intersectionality and support women in a range of ways
- continue to explore collaborative opportunities with partners in our county and region that will enable us to achieve our aim for gender balance, equality of opportunity and to improve our gender pay gap.



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Supporting Fair, Kind and Inclusive culture

- We will embed our Service values in our policies and processes
- increase emphasis on reward and recognition via our internal awards programme to recognise exceptional performance from all parts of the Service
- continue to deliver Dignity in our Workplace training to promote a fair, kind and inclusive culture
- undertake People Impact Assessments on our policies, selection processes and progression and development opportunities
- provide dedicated Inclusion and Diversity awareness for new colleagues in their induction and for all colleagues via regular communication utilising all of our internal channels
- introduce the concept of Allies to all colleagues and provide a range of learning resources to educate and inform.