

NWIFCA Quarterly Meeting: 25th September 2025

**REPORT NO.
5**

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING (HS&W) QUARTERLY REPORT

14TH JUNE – 10TH SEPTEMBER 2025

Purpose: For members' information.

Recommendations: The report is received.

1. Training

The following formal external HS&W-related training was undertaken in Q1 2025/26:

Training Course	Type	Duration (days)	No. Officers Attended
Day Skipper Theory	CPD	5	2

Total number of officer days on formal external HS&W related training: 10 days

Our newly developed Training Matrix is now routinely reviewed by the SMT in our monthly management meetings to ensure training, qualifications, medicals etc. are in-date and relevant to the duties being undertaken across the Authority.

Three ML5 seafarer medicals were renewed during this period.

2. Policy Development

Following the finalisation of updated Standing Operating Procedures and Risk Assessments for North Western Protector (NWP), I shared these with an external maritime safety consultant who subsequently provided me with some detailed feedback on areas for improvement. Relevant officers and I have a meeting with the consultant in mid-October to discuss his findings further and identify a plan of action for improving this further. Much of this work is likely to form part of the implementation of a new vessel safety management system for NWP, as will be required under the new Workboat Code Edition 3.

Further HS&W policy development work has been undertaken during this period, including the publishing of a new general overarching HS&W Policy, which sets out the responsibilities at different levels of the Executive, as well as amongst members. As there is reference to members within this policy, it is shared as an appendix to this report for members' awareness and consideration.

3. H&S Statistics

Statistics relating to H&S are reported on a financial quarterly basis for the most recently completed quarter, in this case Q1 2025/26:

- Near Misses = 4
- Incidents = 1
- Accidents = 4
 - (of which RIDDOR reportable) = 0
- First Aid administered = 0

Near Misses

The first Near Miss concerned an engine alarm going off onboard NWP whilst at sea, causing the vessel to have to return to port in 'limp mode'. No specific engine defect could be identified and the crew continued to monitor for any potential fault, which did not materialise.

The next Near Miss involved a jockey wheel on a trailer working itself loose; the wheel was replaced.

Another Near Miss occurred when officers attended an intertidal shellfish survey. There had been an assumption amongst the survey team that low tide was at a certain time, but it turned earlier than they realised, meaning they had to cut short their survey. Reminders were given in meetings and via email to all staff involved in any fieldwork, whether at sea, coastal or in intertidal areas, to check and double-check details for the day's work, and to have colleagues check also. For surveys specifically, a second officer is now assigned to double-check details beforehand, including tide times.

The final Near Miss for this quarter concerned officers on a quadbike patrol encountering several large holes dug on a beach by beachgoing members of the public. The holes were avoided but were communicated to other relevant officers for awareness and included in future risk assessments as a potential hazard for the area in question.

Incidents

The one Incident in Q1 involved an officer mistakenly adding AdBlue to the diesel tank of one of our pick-up trucks. The vehicle was booked in for a full replacement fuel system and the issue was communicated to colleagues for awareness. It was communicated that, if this mistake were to happen in future, officers are advised to not run the engine.

Accidents

The first accident involved an officer catching the offside of the Science Team's crew van on the runner for the shutter at Carnforth lock-up. This was due to the shutter door being modified with the new runners being slightly wider than the previous ones, giving less space for manoeuvring in and out. There was only superficial damage to the vehicle and none to the runner.

The second accident was very similar and involved an officer catching the nearside door handle of a van on the shutter runner at Carnforth lock-up. Discussions were had between Carnforth officers to ensure everyone was aware they needed to take care when moving vehicles in and out of the lock-up,

particularly given the slight reduction in available width at the entrance. No such accidents have occurred since.

The third accident involved NWP crew attempting to life out a jet drive from the vessel when it was in dry dock. One of the officers hurt his back. Although the pain only came on a short time after the lifting, it was deduced that it was a result of the activity. The officer self-medicated the pain. Reminders were given to those involved, plus their line manager, about their manual handling training and the requirement to conduct a manual handling assessment for new activities. Given the jet drive being lifted is approximately 150kg in weight, they were advised that lifting equipment should have been used. Further developments on manual handling training for staff are provided in the following section.

The final accident for the quarter involved an officer sustaining blisters after walking a long distance in steel toe-capped waders. The provision of PPE footwear was reviewed by the Senior Management Team, along with our new Health and Safety Competent Person, and provision was found to be suitable.

4. Health and Safety Competent Person

Our newly appointed Health and Safety Competent Person, Robin Love, has made a very good start to his role, which he is fulfilling as a dual role alongside his pre-existing role as a Science Officer. Robin has progressed various initiatives in the past few months, including working with one of our IFCOs, Alex Schweizer, to develop a new online Safety Observation portal, which will allow staff to record observations of good and bad practice around health and safety, as well as be the new means by which staff report near misses, incidents and accidents. He has also reviewed our manual handling training, which has resulted in our moving to a 'train the trainer' approach, whereby Robin will undergo in-depth manual handling training that he will then use to refresh train all staff on a regular basis, as well as having a more detailed training session for new starters. Robin has recently undertaken a NEBOSH Risk Assessment Course and is progressing with inventorising and reviewing the plethora of risk assessments that we have. He has also developed a more robust process for checking on officers who return to work after sustaining an injury, whether that injury be work-related or otherwise.

Finally, Robin is currently in the process of performing a detailed organisation health and safety gap analysis for the Authority, that, once completed, we will be discussing as to how best to proceed with.

Mark Taylor, North Western IFCA CEO, 10th September 2025.