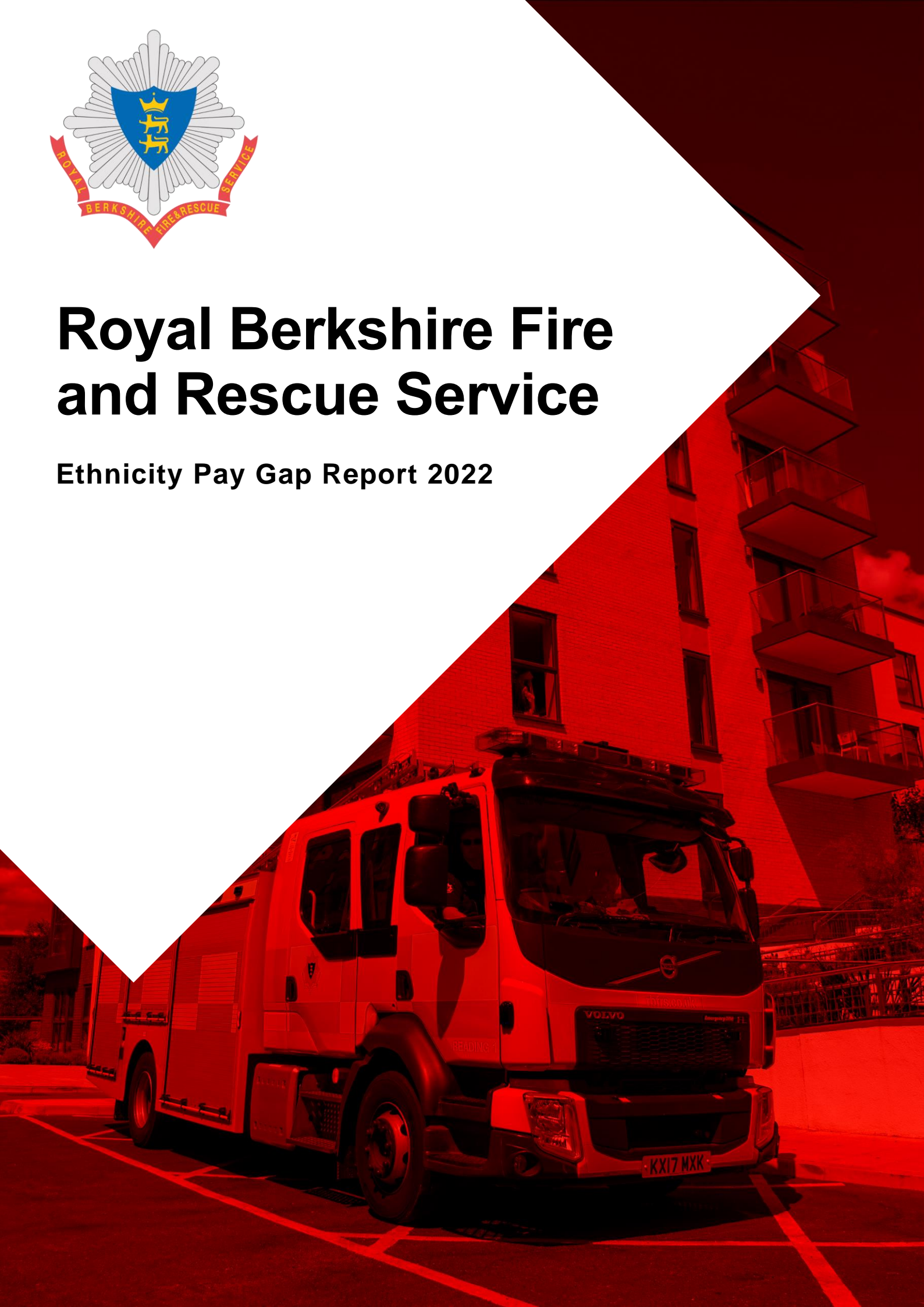




Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service

Ethnicity Pay Gap Report 2022





Executive Summary

The ethnicity pay gap report for Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) provides information on the pay gap that exists between white and ethnic minority staff within the Service. Currently there is no legislative requirement for organisations to publish their ethnicity pay gap but RBFRS has opted to publish this information voluntarily. The continued publication of this report is an important tool to help us achieve our ambition to fully embed a diverse and inclusive culture.

RBFRS follows the CIPD and Race Disparity Audit's recommendations in this report, referring to ethnic minority groups rather than BME/BAME (black and minority ethnic/black, Asian and minority ethnic) which highlights some groups and omits others.

The ethnicity pay gap is calculated using the mean and median average rates of hourly pay for white and ethnic minority staff, and this is also split into four quartile pay bands. A positive pay gap shows that white staff are paid more than ethnic minority staff.

Our mean pay gap is 3.61% and our median pay gap is 9.91%. This shows on average for each £1 earned by white staff, ethnic minority staff earn 97p according to the mean ethnicity pay gap and 90p for the median. The median gap is a more accurate measure of an ethnicity pay gap as it discounts very high or very low rates of pay that can skew the overall average.

The mean and median pay gap is also calculated for each of the quartile pay bands (lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper). Due to the various elements making up pay within the Fire Service, including allowances and payments for additional responsibilities, pay gaps across the quartiles can appear different from the overall pay gap.

While the overall proportion and number of staff from ethnic minority groups across each of the quartiles is broadly consistent, it is recognised that ethnic minority groups are underrepresented in the workforce. RBFRS is taking action to address this including the development of an Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan, positive action activities and developing community engagement activities through our Local Safety Plans.



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Background

Currently organisations with more than 250 employees are required to publish their gender pay gap by law, but there is no requirement to publish their ethnicity pay gap. RBFRS has opted for the second year to publish these figures voluntarily. The method for calculating the ethnicity pay gap mirrors that of gender pay gap reporting and show how large the pay gap is between their white and Ethnic Minority employees.

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) report on the following:

Mean ethnicity pay gap	The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of white employees and that of ethnic minority employees as a percentage.
Median ethnicity pay gap	The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of white employees and that of ethnic minority employees as a percentage.
Mean bonus gap	The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to white employees and that paid to ethnic minority employees as a percentage.
Median bonus gap	The difference between the median bonus pay paid to white employees and that paid to ethnic minority employees as a percentage.
Bonus proportions	The proportions of white and ethnic minority relevant employees who were paid a bonus during the relevant period
Quartile pay bands	The proportions of white and ethnic minority employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands.

This is the second year that RBFRS has reported the ethnicity pay gap, and due to the reporting of ethnicity pay gap figures being voluntary rather than a legal requirement, there are no national average figures reported to benchmark RBFRS ethnicity pay gap.

Research undertaken by the CIPD suggests that when analysing available national data for 2021, the average mean ethnicity pay gap was 8.1% and the average median ethnicity pay gap was 12.9%.

RBFRS' Pay and Bonus Ethnicity Pay Gap

This ethnicity pay gap report is based on data as at 31 March 2022. RBFRS employed 650 staff with 623 (95%) declared ethnicity is white and 23 (4%) declaring they are from an ethnic minority. Four staff (1%) have not declared their ethnicity.



Due to the reporting requirements and provisions, RBFRS can only report the ethnicity pay gap for staff who declare their ethnicity.

RBFRS follows the CIPD and Race Disparity Audit’s recommendations in this report, referring to ethnic minority groups rather than BME/BAME (black and minority ethnic/black, Asian and minority ethnic) which highlights some groups and omits others.

The overall ethnicity pay gap for RBFRS is as follows:

	Mean		Median	
Year	2021	2022	2021	2022
Pay Gap	1.74%	3.61%	9.63%	9.91%
Bonus*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

* RBFRS does not offer a bonus scheme therefore this measure has not been calculated. Additional Responsibility Allowances (ARAs) and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) payments are included in ordinary pay. For clarity, ordinary pay is defined as basic pay, shift premium pay, pay for piecework, pay for leave and allowances.

A **positive** pay gap shows that white staff earn 3.61% more than staff declaring they are from an ethnic minority based on a **mean** hourly rate of pay and 9.91% more than staff declaring they are from an ethnic minority based on **median** hourly rates of pay.

What do the mean and median ethnicity pay gap figures tell us?

The mean gives an overall indication of the size of the ethnicity pay gap in RBFRS. A high mean ethnicity pay gap would indicate a payment system that disadvantages ethnic minority groups – specifically when comparing the mean hourly rates for the workforce as a whole, staff identifying their ethnicity as white (white British, white Irish or white other) earn more on average than staff from ethnic minority groups.

The median is typically a more representative figure as the mean can be skewed by a handful of highly paid employees. The median value for RBFRS across all staff is higher than the mean, suggesting there is some skewing throughout the organisation (this can be seen more clearly when you compare quartile on quartile).

The quartile distribution detailed below. This is based on the actual hourly ordinary pay for all staff and gives an indication of how white and ethnic minority staff are distributed across the organisation, in addition to the mean and median pay gap in each of the quartiles.

Quartile Pay Bands

The proportion of white/ethnic minority staff in each quartile pay band is as follows:



Quartile		Year	Mean Pay Gap	Median Pay Gap
Lower		2022	-5.57%	-2.25%
		2021	4.27%	0%
Lower Middle		2022	1.27%	0.55%
		2021	2.94%	3.89%
Upper Middle		2022	1.72%	-0.66%
		2021	2.83%	4.02%
Upper		2022	4.87%	2.57%
		2021	-9.64%	1.43%

Commentary

The mean and median pay gap was calculated for each of the quartiles to give an indication of the range and distribution of white and ethnic minority pay. When broken down into the four quartiles, the ethnicity pay gap differs significantly from the overall ethnicity pay gap. This can in part be attributed to the scope for variation in hourly pay in each of the quartiles. In addition each quartile,



contains a number of longer serving staff members, which sit in the upper, higher paid, part of each of the quartiles. Longer serving staff are more likely to have achieved competent status (for Grey Book) or reached the top of their pay spine (Green Book). 60% of staff from ethnic minority groups have over five years' service.

In the lower quartile, three staff are from ethnic minority groups, in the lower middle three staff are from ethnic minority groups, in the upper middle quartile there are eight staff from ethnic minority groups and in the upper quartile there are nine staff from ethnic minority groups. In each of these quartiles, staff from ethnic minority groups occupy a range of grades and roles.

While the overall proportion and number of staff from ethnic minority groups across each of the quartiles is broadly consistent (which could indicate there may be no mobility or progression concerns relating to ethnic minority groups), it is recognised that ethnic minority groups are still underrepresented in the workforce. The progression pathways will also differ for Grey and Green Book staff (whereby Green Book departments are often relatively flat in their structure and offer more limited scope for promotion).

We are confident that staff across the Service have equal access to promotion and development opportunities, but it is also acknowledged that culturally, barriers may exist which are not evident from these figures, and that staff in ethnic minority groups may experience challenges regarding their career progression which relate to biases or barriers which may exist within the organisation. RBFRS is taking action to identify any such trends and address this. The Service is currently expanding our equality monitoring processes to take into account progression, development and promotion. This will allow career progression and development to be monitored across the Service, with any causes for concern targeted and addressed as appropriate.

Notwithstanding the known issues with underrepresentation amongst ethnic minority groups, RBFRS pays staff in accordance to nationally agreed terms and conditions, and is satisfied that it is paying the same salary to roles of equivalent value across all staff groups. An equal pay audit was carried out in September 2022, the results of which did not indicate any underlying causes for concern.

The Service continues to work hard to attract a more diverse workforce and has already taken actions to address the overall diversity within the RBFRS workforce. These include but are not limited to:

- » Positive action activities and recruitment opportunities, including attendance at careers events and the hosting of 'Have a Go Days' at our stations
- » An internship programme aimed at 16 to 18 year old residents of Berkshire from ethnic minority groups that are currently under-represented within the Service ran over the summer of 2022. This paid internship gave students an opportunity to develop workplace skills and discover opportunities available within RBFRS. The pilot scheme is scheduled to continue for the next two years
- » Identifying and developing community engagement activities through our Local Safety Plans
- » Expanding our equality monitoring processes and reviewing the data we gather to allow RBFRS to monitor the career progression of underrepresented groups within the Service



Specific actions to address the ethnicity pay gap are contained in the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan which is appended to this report.

Wayne Bowcock
Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive
December 2022

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