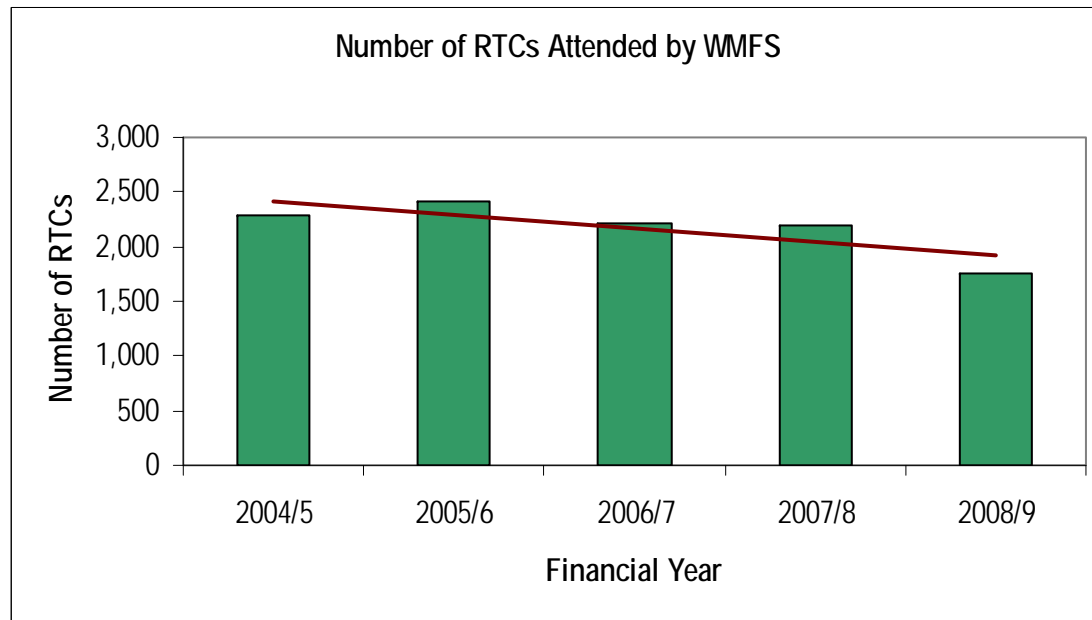


West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) responders are frequently called to assist in the event of road traffic collisions (RTC) within our brigade area. We do not however, attend all RTCs as some can be solely dealt with by West Midlands Police and Ambulance Services. We only attend those where the removal of a casualty is required, where the vehicle has caught fire or there is need to make the vehicle safe.

The graph below relates only to the number of RTC's that West Midlands Fire Service have attended over the last five financial years as opposed to *all* collisions that have occurred in the West Midlands Metropolitan area. As can be seen, the number of RTCs attended by WMFS has reduced by 22.7% over the last 5 years. This equates to a reduction of 517 incidents.



We are committed to driving down the number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads in our region. In order to achieve this, WMFS have set up a Road Traffic Education programme aimed at all road users, in partnership with West Midlands Police, Road Safety agencies and Primary Care Trusts. It is initiatives such as these which have contributed to the significant reduction in RTC's across the brigade.

A multi- agency approach is needed to achieve any significant success in this type of work, as road safety is a cross-cutting issue. The Police will lead on the enforcement side, while the Ambulance and Health Services are responsible for casualty care and recovery, but there is also a valuable input from local authorities and the Highways Agency, working to design and implement the best elements of road engineering so that accidents are less likely, or their impact is reduced.

Finally, we need to work with schools and other education services, to raise awareness of the effects of RTCs and how people can help to avoid the loss and suffering that these events can entail.

While the number of RTCs we attend seems to be showing a downward trend, it is still essential to monitor the overall numbers of road accidents and the instances of people being killed or seriously injured on the road, as there are more casualties generated by road accidents than those from fires.