

Fire Service face Health and Safety charges following death of firefighter Ewan Williamson



The fire service is facing three charges under the Health and Safety at Work Act in relation to the death of Edinburgh firefighter Ewan Williamson who died in the line of duty while tackling a blaze at the Balmoral Bar on Dalry Road on July 12, 2009.

The case was called at the High Court in Glasgow yesterday and was adjourned by judge Lord Turnbull for legal debate which will take place at the High Court in Edinburgh on December 6 2013.

The first allegation claims the necessary “instruction and supervision” was not provided to employees and includes an accusation that there was a lack of appropriate training for firefighters in relation to tackling basement fires.

The second charge alleges that the fire service failed to provide “a system of work” that was safe and without risks on the day of the fatal fire and that there was not an adequate response to Mr Williamson becoming trapped within a toilet on the ground floor at the Balmoral Bar as well as a failure to have in place an effective communication system between firefighters.

The third charge claims there was not a “suitable and sufficient risk assessment” and an allegation of not identifying adequate control measures in conditions of “restricted visibility and extreme heat”.

The 35 year old firefighter worked for the former Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service before the new service was formed in April this year.