



SCOTTISH HOME AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Her Majesty's  
Inspector of Fire Services  
for Scotland  
*Report for 1976*

*Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Scotland  
by Command of Her Majesty  
June 1977*

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DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS

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## Report 1976

of JOHN JACKSON, Esq., O.B.E., F.I.FireE.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE BRUCE MILLAN, M.P.

*Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Scotland*

SIR,

1. I have the honour to submit my report on the Fire Services in Scotland for the year ended 31st December, 1976. In this introduction I will take the opportunity of commenting on certain highlights and events while the Chapters and Tables which follow provide more detailed information.

2. The 8 fire brigades evolving from the reorganisation of local government have now been functioning since May 1975. This transition has, of necessity, implied adjustments in the various administrative procedures and it is pleasing to note that, in general, there has been co-operation on the part of all concerned, so making the changeover relatively smooth and effective. As one would expect, there are still certain administrative matters which have yet to be consolidated but, in general, good working relationships have been established with the Committees and Departments of the new Regional and Islands authorities.

3. All brigades were inspected by me and my staff during the course of the year and I am pleased to say that a satisfactory overall level of efficiency is still being maintained.

4. Loss of human life is one aspect of fire service operations which causes the most serious concern to all members of the service and I am, therefore, pleased to be able to report a reduction in the number of lives lost. In comparison with the peak year of 1973, the following shows the gradual decrease in the number of fatalities: 1973—158; 1974—145; 1975—143; 1976—127. Last year I expressed the hope that the downward trend would continue and appealed to members of the public for increased assistance towards achieving this objective. I believe that the public are in fact becoming more aware of how devastating fire can be and are more ready to call the fire brigade promptly when incidents occur. Likewise, I must of course give due credit to brigades for the promptness and efficiency with which they have carried out their operational duties, since this is a major factor in minimising the death toll.

5. Naturally, it is hoped that the downward trend in fire deaths will continue, but any complacency in this respect must be guarded against. On the contrary, still more effort and diligence is required to ensure that the degree of misery and suffering resulting from fires is reduced to a minimum. Of the 127 persons who lost their lives in different incidents, the probability is that the main causes of the fires were carelessness on the part of the victims or, what is worse, carelessness on the part of others concerned.

6. Even if it is accepted that accidents will always happen, it must be emphasised that the majority of fires are not accidents; they are the direct result of negligent or careless acts by people.

7. A point worthy of note is the high proportion of those who died, or who received injuries which resulted in death, prior to the arrival of the fire brigade. A total of 104 persons died in this way—or 80 per cent of the total fatalities. Such is the rapidity with which fire can kill that the chances of survival or rescue are largely determined within the first few minutes of the outbreak. Any delay in evacuation may result in death or serious injury. May I, therefore, make a plea to the public by posing the question—is your home as safe as it can be? To those who are in any doubt about this, my earnest advice is that they should contact their nearest fire station for professional assistance. To others, the least I can say is that they should always shut the door behind them. This in itself will help to contain a fire and may prove to be the vital factor in saving a life.
8. Unfortunately, I cannot comment favourably on the number of fire calls, since this has risen dramatically over the total for the previous year. The number of calls increased by 11,040 to a total of 38,336, chimney fires increased by 716, and false alarm calls totalled 18,994, of which 6,794 were malicious.
9. The majority of the 11,000 increase in fires was undoubtedly accounted for by the prolonged spell of hot, dry weather. This made heavy demands on fire service personnel throughout the country, whose efforts were supplemented by forestry workers, estate workers and, in many instances, members of the general public.
10. To attribute the cause of this large number of outdoor fires simply to the dry weather conditions would be only a partial explanation. The burned out or blackened hillsides and the marred beauty spots are the grim reminders not only of the devastating power of fire but of the apathetic minority whose thoughtlessness was primarily responsible for the initial outbreaks.
11. If, therefore, people wish to enjoy the countryside and a fire is lit either for cooking or for warmth, then they must act responsibly and ensure that it is lit in a safe place and that it is properly extinguished before leaving. The careless disposal of smoking materials, both in the country and elsewhere, is also a common source of ignition and members of the public could, by being more careful in this respect, reduce the number of outbreaks considerably.
12. In acknowledging the work done by the members of the fire service, I would also take this opportunity to express my appreciation of the willing co-operation given by the private employers of the retained members of the service throughout the country. The numerous calls, often involving hours of absence from the normal place of employment of those men, impose considerable inconvenience on their employers and I am indebted to them for their understanding and forbearance, without which the operational tasks involved could not have been accomplished.
13. The monetary fire losses for Scotland rose slightly, the total being £27·2 million against £26·4 million for 1975. Whilst I am concerned at the amount of these losses, I consider that the increase is not unreasonable if allowance is made for the rate of inflation and the increase in the number of fire calls. The loss for Great Britain shows an increase of £19 million over 1975, bringing the gross total for this year to £231·7 million.
14. Whilst fires in industrial and commercial premises, with their expensive contents, such as machinery, computers and similar equipment, account for the

major part of the fire losses, the figures attributable to fires in the home are intolerably high due to the sheer number involved. Despite a reduction in the number of fires with fire losses exceeding £25,000, there was a slight increase in the number of very large fires where the loss was in excess of £1,000,000.

15. In the home, it is primarily the occupants who set the standards of fire safety. The fire losses and the number of fires in the home are in themselves proof of the apparent lack of concern which characterises this sector. A determined, realistic effort must be made by all occupiers to reduce the deplorable waste of, what is in the end, part of the nation's wealth. In industry the safety standards and procedures are mainly the responsibility of management. Good planning, particularly in relation to fire prevention, can greatly assist in minimising losses. Much more could be achieved if these measures were always backed up by continuing high quality supervision, and the wholehearted co-operation of the entire workforce. I would hope that industry will not be content to rely on the lessons to be learned from the misfortunes of others but will actively pursue, by study and discussion, the risks and inter-related problems associated with their particular premises and devise and apply the necessary precautions and remedial action.

16. Aware of the value of fire prevention, brigades have devoted as much time and manpower as possible to this important field of service and during the year no fewer than 62,532 premises were inspected for fire prevention purposes. The introduction of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974, in relation to the transfer of certain fire certification and inspection functions as from 1st January, 1977, will in effect bring about a slight increase in the fire prevention workload of brigades, as well as transferring certain responsibilities to HM Fire Inspectorate. Consultation and discussion between the Health and Safety Executive and fire brigade representatives has continued to ensure the effective transfer of functions and responsibilities and brigades have been active in initiating the administrative arrangements required to integrate this additional work into the existing system. In the light of experience, further arrangements may obviously be necessary, but the essential liaison and contacts have been established and there is no reason to doubt that the changeover will progress satisfactorily during the forthcoming year.

17. By comparison with the previous year, the intake of recruits for training at the Scottish Fire Service Training School at Gullane declined to 169 students. This was due, primarily, to the result of action taken by brigades to effect savings imposed upon them by the financial restrictions applied nationally during the year. The reduction in student occupation provided an opportunity for the School to provide a series of industrial courses, places on which were taken up by staff from the South of Scotland Electricity Board, Area Health Boards and other industrial concerns.

18. A special Working Party was set up by the Organisation and Training Committee to examine and report on future staffing requirements for the School. It has been engaged in this task and expects to report in the early part of next year. A start was made with the proposed building development plans for improving and extending facilities at the School in the late summer. The first phase, comprising transport workshops, garage and appliance rooms with storage accommodation will itself prove a valuable asset. It is, however, the



inadequacy of residential and training accommodation for students which causes greatest concern and there is no doubt that the remaining phases of the development require to be progressed as quickly as possible if the School is to keep pace with demand and fulfil its role effectively.

19. Whilst dealing with the Training School, I would take this opportunity to pay tribute to the late Mr. Joseph Hartil Q.F.S.M., a former Commandant of the School. Mr. Hartil had devoted a lifetime to the fire service. Joining the fire brigade in Paisley prior to the Second World War, he quickly gained promotion and in 1961 took command of the Western Area Fire Brigade. In 1968 he retired from that appointment to take up the Commandant post at Gullane where he served until the Spring of 1976 when, due to health reasons, he was forced to retire. Always keen to improve the knowledge and efficiency of firemen in the service, he applied himself to the teaching and training aspects of the post and, in particular, to the simplification and improvement of tuition methods. Despite his failing health, he sustained this interest, although the demands of the post were particularly onerous and the resources of the School were taxed by the influx of the large number of recruits required to implement the 48-hour week. On the occasion of his death tributes were paid by his many friends in the Scottish Fire Service.

20. The considerations affecting recruitment to the service differ to some extent as between whole-time and retained personnel. Recruitment to whole-time establishments was, in effect, made less difficult as a result of financial restrictions and manpower ceilings and none of the brigades experienced any difficulty in recruiting suitable applicants. In the retained sector, the situation was more difficult. The changing pattern of social and industrial activity was undoubtedly making the task of recruitment in this field more difficult. There has been an increasing changeover in the retained membership, caused mainly by movement of workers to other employment, often outside the areas in which they reside. It is, in consequence, becoming increasingly difficult to meet the demand for replacements in areas of diminishing labour resources and, in some areas, these difficulties have become acute. Whilst brigades generally have managed to maintain satisfactory levels of fire cover, serious consideration will require to be given to the problem of recruitment conditions for the retained service if fire cover for the rural areas is to be maintained in accordance with recommended standards.

21. Fire authorities continued to review the fire cover provisions for their areas and during the year 2 new volunteer units were established, bringing the total in Scotland to 121. These units provide a first strike in the smaller hamlets and villages in the remoter parts of the country. Although the localities concerned are too small to justify retained crews, they are, of course, reinforced as necessary by retained crews. The volunteers are an excellent example of community involvement and their efforts contribute substantially to the minimising of fire losses in their areas.

22. The development of North Sea oil has continued to progress and, combined with the development of related oil industries, has now reached the stage where fire authorities responsible for the areas concerned, together with the developers twice face the problem of providing extra fire cover or back-up support. The problem is made more acute by the fact that the projects concerned generally



constitute major developments and are located mainly in very remote areas which, otherwise would require only the minimum recommended standard of fire cover.

23. Whilst fire brigades have not been immune from the current financial restrictions applying to local authorities, it is gratifying to report they have co-operated as fully as possible in maintaining their operations within the stringent financial limits. The success of the adjustments which have had to be made has been due, in no small measure, to the co-operation of the representative fire service bodies concerned.

24. The brigades are maximising their utilisation of existing resources but there are of course limits as to how far this process can be carried. It is not unlikely that the time will soon come when, without increased finance, it will be difficult to meet various statutory obligations.

25. I would take this opportunity of thanking fire authorities for all their work in connection with the organisational aspects of the fire service. Their judgement and awareness of the dangers of fire have been of great assistance to firemasters in their endeavour to provide a first-class service in their areas. I would wish to thank them also for their assistance and courtesy to me personally.

26. Members of fire brigades—officers and men, whole-time, retained and volunteer have continued to maintain the best traditions of the service and without their unswerving loyalty and dedication to duty it is unquestionable that fire would have claimed more victims and destroyed more property in the past year. I would accordingly place on record my personal tribute to the men and women of the Scottish Fire Service.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your Obedient Servant,

JOHN JACKSON

*H.M. Inspector of Fire Services for Scotland.*

May, 1977.

## CHAPTER I

### *Operational*

#### **Fires and Other Occurrences**

1.1 The number of fire calls dealt with by brigades during the year totalled 38,336, an increase of some 11,040 over the previous year when the number of calls totalled 27,296. The dry summer accounted for the major part of the increase in that woodland, forest and rural fires were the order of the day. Brigades which were particularly vulnerable made special attendance arrangements to meet the heavy demand placed upon their normal resources.

1.2 The dryness of the countryside and the lack of readily available sources of water due to drought conditions, made the task of fire fighting particularly arduous. Several fires which could, under normal conditions, have been readily controlled spread and developed to major proportions.

1.3 The 38,336 total does not include the calls to chimney fires which rose from 4,059 to 4,775. With modern heating systems, this total should be reducing and it can only be assumed that sweeping of chimneys is not being carried out efficiently and/or sufficiently frequently.

1.4 The number of special service calls (incidents other than fires) increased by 1,056 to 4,492. Of the 1,517 road accidents attended, loss of life occurred at 157 incidents and casualties occurred at a further 636 incidents. On only 18 occasions were the vehicles involved in fire.

1.5 Fire fatalities continue on the downward trend from 1974—145, to 1975—143 to the 1976 total of 127. Of that final figure, 104 persons died, or received injuries resulting in death, before the arrival of the fire brigade. Whilst the fall in the number of lives lost is welcome, it is not really an achievement to boast about, since the decrease is less than 10 per cent. It could well reflect the emphasis placed on fire prevention by the members of the public at large in that a minority are doing as much as possible whilst the majority do little or nothing for the safety either of themselves or their neighbours.

1.6 The number of false alarm calls with good intent rose from 8,410 to 12,200 during the year, which may reflect an improvement in public attitude to reporting any signs of fire, thereby permitting the fire brigade to attend promptly. The fact that the incidents on those occasions did not require the services of the brigade does not give cause for complaint by the fire service. On the other hand, the number of deliberate malicious calls to brigades increased from 4,992 to 6,794. In other words, more than 100 times every week fire brigade personnel and appliances were called from their stations to attend a non-existent fire purely to satisfy the warped minds of the instigators.

#### **Estimated Fire Losses**

1.7 The estimated fire losses for Great Britain (excluding Northern Ireland) were £231.7 million, being an increase of £19 million (8.9 per cent) over the

figure for last year. The Scottish component of the total losses was £27.2 million, which represents an increase of £0.8 million over the previous year's total. There was an increase in the number of fires costing over £1,000,000 but a decrease in the total number costing £25,000 and over. Relating the number of fires to the increased losses, it is true to say that the individual fire average loss is less. This is, however, merely a statistical fact and is of little importance unless there is a reduction in the number of fires so as to produce a significant reduction in overall loss.

1.8 The fire losses during the last 3 months of the year showed a downward trend and it is possible that the publicity and activities which accrued from the National Fire Safety week held towards the end of the year were partially responsible. National Fire Safety week was sponsored by industrial and commercial concerns in concert with fire brigades, the general activities being co-ordinated by the Fire Liaison Panels which operated throughout the country. The Fire Protection Association provided the panels with a great deal of the technical advice, fire safety broadsheets and posters relevant to the campaign. The Association, and associated Liaison Panels, provided a valuable link between the fire service and property owners and they are playing an increased part in the campaign to reduce monetary fire losses.

### **Fire Prevention**

1.9 Members of brigades carrying out some form of fire prevention duty visited a total of 62,532 premises and had discussions with appropriate bodies on plans for new or altered buildings involving a further 11,887 meetings.

1.10 A total of 421 certificates were issued under Section 40 of the Factories Act 1961 and a further 222 such certificates were revised. Under Section 148(1)(b) of that Act, 1,442 premises were inspected on behalf of the Factory Inspectorate.

1.11 Under the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963, a total of 16,328 inspections were made for the purpose of ensuring satisfactory means of escape under Section 28 of the Act and 718 fire certificates were issued under Section 29. During the year, 310 revised fire certificates were also issued. A further 840 premises were inspected but had not been certificated. The numbers in all those categories showed an increase over the totals for the previous year.

1.12 While still disappointing in some areas, encouraging progress was made with the inspection and certification of hotels and boarding houses coming within the scope of the designation order made under the Fire Precautions Act, 1971. Of the 5,460 premises which applied for a certificate, 3,710 (68 per cent) had been inspected for certification purposes. Of that number 2,582 had received certificates. The number of officers in brigades whose primary reference was fire prevention increased from 164 in 1975 to a total of 184.

### **Mutual Assistance**

1.13 Under Sections 2 and 12 of the Fire Services Act, 1947, provision is made for mutual assistance between brigades. During 1976, assistance with first attendance appliances was given to other brigades on 293 occasions and reinforcements only were supplied on 6 occasions.

### **Appliances and Equipment**

1.14 A total of 26 vehicles, including first line appliances, were purchased during the year by fire brigades. The fleet of operational appliances increased from 555 to 564. Due to the financial restraints imposed upon local authorities generally, the fire brigades have naturally had restrictions placed on their spending, and reductions have had to be made in vehicle and equipment replacement schemes. Such restrictions inevitably throw greater strain on the brigade transport departments and it is to the credit of the personnel of those departments that the fire appliances and ancillary equipment continued to function well. It is unfortunate that no relaxation from the continuing restraints can be foreseen in the near future and reliance on efficient transport staffs will be greater than ever in the coming year.

### **Water Supplies**

1.15 The number of fire authority hydrants increased last year and now totals 123,093, a rise of 804 over the 1975 figure. Approximately 10 per cent of the total were non-standard hydrants. The long dry spell in mid-year placed great stress on the ingenuity of fire-fighters when confronted with heath and forest fires which occurred in the more isolated areas. Close co-operation with the Forestry Commission and owners of private woodlands was maintained and emergency plans were prepared for eventualities occurring in the remoter regions. Local discussions of the problems caused by the drought gave rise to a proposal that the Home Departments should convene a special Working Party to review the experiences of the fire service during the summer. The first meeting of this Working Party is expected to be held early in the coming year.

### **Research**

1.16 The Joint Committee on Fire Research continued to sponsor research programmes on various aspects of fire service work through the Scientific Advisory Branch of the Home Office, the Fire Research Station, and outside consultants. Progress reports were circulated at intervals and some Scottish brigades were involved in the trials of equipment and other aspects of the projects. The Joint Committee approved the distribution to fire authorities of reports on the practical guidelines on control system planning and operation, the administrative use of computers by fire brigades, the trial results of foam on petrol fires, and a portable thermal imaging system to assist the vision of firemen in smoke.

### **Communications**

1.17 The required modifications to communications systems providing the network for the new regional brigade structure have been completed except within the Strathclyde area where, owing to the extensive boundary changes, 5 brigade systems required consolidating. This work is of considerable magnitude. Financial restraints delayed progress on the scheme and it will be some time before it is finally completed. The interim arrangements enabled fire calls and attendances to them to be handled satisfactorily and the introduction of the "Operations Room" facilitated the mobilisation for major incidents.

1.18 Updating the call-out arrangements to fire stations is now well advanced in all brigades and 5 of the new regional brigade areas have completed centralised

mobilising arrangements. The remaining 3 brigades made progress towards this and it is expected that all of them, with the exception of Strathclyde with its major problems, will be completed in 1977.

1.19 The new Brigade of Dumfries and Galloway installed a complete radio network centralised on Dumfries. Apart from some "interference trouble" which is being investigated, the system operated satisfactorily.

1.20 The Directorate of Telecommunications staff continued to be closely involved in the planning stages of all brigade schemes and full use was made of the expertise available through this body by the brigades concerned.

### **Premises**

1.21 At the end of 1976 the building programme had reached the following stage:

<i>Fire Stations</i>	<i>Whole-time</i>	<i>Retained</i>
Built since 1948	52	141
Under construction	2	8
Premises adapted	14	20
Purchased and adapted properties	1	14
Drill Towers built	54	76
Under construction	—	4

The total number of fire stations in Scotland at the end of 1976 was:

Whole-time 75; Retained 176; Volunteer 121.

The fire authorities owned 584 houses, a drop of 32 from the 1975 figure. One new house was being provided. There were none under construction.

## CHAPTER II

### *Administration*

#### **Honours and Awards**

2.1 The following received recognition in the Queen's Honours Lists:

Order of the British Empire (Civil Division)

Officer (O.B.E.)

Eric W. Macintyre Q.F.S.M., Firemaster, Northern Fire Brigade

British Empire Medal (B.E.M.)

Sub-Officer (retained) William L. Bain, Grampian Fire Brigade

Queen's Fire Service Medal (Q.F.S.M.)

James Anderson, Firemaster, Lothian and Borders Fire Brigade

The Fire Brigade Long Service and Good Conduct medal was awarded to 117 members of Scottish fire brigades.

#### **Promotions**

2.2 The following promotions were made during the year:

1 to Firemaster

2 to Assistant Firemaster

2 to Senior Divisional Officer

7 to Divisional Officer Grade I

6 to Divisional Officer Grade II

11 to Divisional Officer Grade III

21 to Assistant Divisional Officer

33 to Station Officer

49 to Sub-Officer

144 to Leading Fireman

1 to Principal Fire Control Officer

1 to Group Fire Control Officer

5 to Fire Control Officer

21 to Senior Fire Control Operator

28 to Leading Fire Control Operator

In Northern Fire Brigade, Mr. W. Shand was appointed Firemaster on the retirement of Mr. Eric W. Macintyre. I would wish to acknowledge the work done by Mr. Macintyre for and on behalf of the fire service in Scotland.

#### **Uniformed Personnel: Operational and Control Room**

2.3 The total whole-time establishment of fire brigades in Scotland was reduced by 63 from the 1975 figure and now stands at 3,981 (see Table 1 for details). The authorities, due to the restraints imposed on expenditure, as agreed in discussions with the Department, accepted a virtual "stand-still" in numbers



which had the effect of holding the strength of the fire service in Scotland to that which existed at 1st September, 1975. This actual strength figure of 3,900 uniformed staff was used as the basis of computing relevant expenditure for the service in 1976-77 and 1977-78.

2.4 Recruitment at 191 was well below the 1975 figure of 546 because of the need to restrict numbers. The number of personnel lost to the service by retirement, discharge on medical grounds and resignation was 321. The actual strength of brigades at the end of the year was 3,863 which is a decrease of 110 as compared to the figure of 3,973 for 1975.

2.5 The recruitment "peak" created by the introduction of the 48-hour week in 1974 has now passed. The temporary halt of recruitment to stabilise numbers at the September 1975 level caused a corresponding "trough" through most of 1976, although intake was getting back to normal (about 10 per cent of strength per annum) by the end of the year.

2.6 A restructuring of control room and watchroom functions resulted in an increase in the number of personnel employed in these duties; from 195 in 1975 to 214 in 1976.

2.7 The part-time retained and volunteer totals, with the comparative totals for the preceding year, are shown hereunder:

	<i>Establishment</i>		<i>Actual</i>	
	1975	1976	1975	1976
Retained	2,672	2,607	2,234	2,243
Volunteer	1,279	1,293	1,050	1,088

Despite a slight reduction in the establishment figure for retained personnel, there was a small increase in the number actually in post.

2.8 Generally, the availability of recruits for the retained service has been sufficient to ensure satisfactory manning levels, but certain localities are beginning to pose problems, especially in the developing industrial areas of some parts of the country. Firemasters are aware of the problems and their recruiting campaigns are directed to maintaining an acceptable level of fire cover.

### **Non-Uniformed Staff**

2.9 There was a small increase in the number of non-uniformed personnel employed by fire authorities in 1976, the total being 528 compared with 519 in 1975; this is 34 below the authorised establishment.

### **Health**

2.10 Absences from duty due to sickness accounted for 6 per cent of the total working days lost. The percentage was slightly up on the figures for 1975. There were no deaths reported on fire brigade duty.

### **Discipline**

2.11 There were 10 charges brought under the Fire Services (Discipline) (Scotland) Regulations 1953. The punishments awarded were: Stoppage of Pay—2, Reprimand—2 and Caution—1. The other 5 cases were dismissed.



## CHAPTER III

### *Training*

#### **Scottish Fire Service Training School**

3.1 There was a reduction in the number of recruits attending the School, mainly due to the brigade strengths being frozen at the September 1975 level. A total of 169 recruits were trained, compared with 519 in 1975. Fifty-nine students attended other courses at the School.

3.2 As well as catering for fire brigade personnel, the School provided courses for certain industrial and commercial organisations and personnel attended representing the British Airports Authority, Health Boards, Distillers Company Ltd. and a variety of other industries.

3.3 The first phase of the development at the School started in the summer and progress close to schedule was maintained. The bad weather towards the latter part of the year slightly upset the programme but the contractors were confident that, if reasonable weather conditions prevailed in early 1977, the contract would be completed on schedule.

3.4 It is a matter for concern that the current financial restrictions may retard the progress of the subsequent phases. Any prolonged delay in completing the project would have serious repercussions on the efficiency of future training arrangements.

#### **Fire Service Colleges**

3.5 The Fire Service Staff College, Dorking, and the Fire Service Technical College, Moreton-in-Marsh, continued to provide nationally approved training courses for fire service officers; 341 students from Scottish brigades attended one or other of the Colleges. Additionally, 9 students from brigades attended specialised courses provided at non-fire service establishments. The new progressive training system introduced at the Staff and Technical Colleges in 1974 continued. While it was too early to give a definite evaluation, the indications were that the change in policy will prove beneficial to students and to the fire service.

#### **Brigade Courses**

3.6 Most brigades provided facilities for the training of works and industrial firemen on selected fire stations. The Lothian and Borders and Tayside Brigades were heavily involved in providing fire training for merchant marine and oil industry personnel respectively. During 1976, a total of 1,394 persons with interests in the shipping field received a course of instruction in Lothian and Borders, and Tayside provided courses for 592 members from the oil companies. The latter courses were run in conjunction with the Petroleum Industry Training Board with which frequent discussions were held.

### Fire Services Examinations Board (Scotland)

3.7 The statutory educational and technical written examinations arranged by the Examinations Board were held during the month of February at various centres. There was a considerable increase in the number of candidates for this year's examinations particularly in the Leading Fireman grade. Due to the increase in the number of candidates, certain brigades were faced with the problem of maintaining adequate fire cover on the day of the examination. With the approval of the Examinations Board and the co-operation of brigades and the representative organisations, modified arrangements were made which resolved the problems satisfactorily.

3.8 The results of the 1976 examinations were as shown hereunder (1975 figures in brackets).

	<i>Presentations</i>	<i>Passes</i>
Station Officer Examination	176 (146)	24 (22)
Sub-Officer Examination	159 (135)	29 (27)
Leading Fireman:		
Educational	684 (547)	257 (59)
Technical	441 (373)	182 (72)

The presentation of prizes to the candidates who had gained the highest marks in the technical examinations took place in Glasgow on the 17th June, when hospitality for those attending was provided by Strathclyde Fire Authority. Prizes were awarded as follows:

Station Officer Examination:

    Leading Fireman I. Robertson, Tayside Fire Brigade.

Sub-Officer Examination:

    Leading Fireman A. D. Lay, Northern Fire Brigade.

Leading Fireman Examination:

    Fireman A. W. Keating, Strathclyde Fire Brigade.

3.9 The statutory Practical Examinations for Sub-Officer and Leading Fireman candidates were conducted by the Board and fire authorities respectively. The results are shown hereunder (1975 figures in brackets)

	<i>Number of Candidates</i>	<i>Passes</i>
Sub-Officer	42 (69)	32 (53)
Leading Firemen	185 (80)	156 (52)

3.10 The special working party set up in 1975 by the Examinations Board to review the results of the statutory promotions examinations in recent years made good progress with its remit. It will report early in 1977.

3.11 The Fire Services (Appointments and Promotion) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 1976 made certain changes in the composition of the Board consequential on local government reorganisation.

### Programmed Learning

3.12 During the year the Home Office Unit for Educational Methods produced 2 new programmes dealing with Liquefied Petroleum Gas. Both programmes include transparencies for use with overhead projectors and appropriate lecture

notes. The Unit continued to supply brigades with a variety of instructional packages and new projects were under review incorporating tape/slide systems of presentation. All brigades made use of the services of the Unit and the study of selected subject material from this specialised form of teaching is compulsory for new entrants to several brigades.

### **Fire Service Sports and Athletics Association**

3.13 Sporting activities under the banner of the above association continued to flourish in all brigades. The highlights of the year were the successes at international level achieved by the football, rugby and athletics teams. The football team won the annual match against an English select; the rugby 15 won their international against England and drew with Wales; and a team from Lothian and Borders Fire Brigade won the National Seven-a-Side competition for the fifth time, in itself a commendable achievement. No less creditable is the performance of members of the Strathclyde athletics section who competed in an International Road Race event in Dublin, winning the team trophy by virtue of their 3rd, 4th, 6th and 7th place finishes. This was followed by an even more captivating performance in Rotterdam where they competed against teams from Holland, Germany, England and the Republic of Ireland and ran out the eventual winners of the team award taking 2nd, 3rd, 5th and 6th places. Strathclyde became the holders of the Netherlands Brandweer Sports Association Cup and accepted the honour of arranging the 1977 International Road Race. Much of the credit for the successes of the athletics teams must go to the well organised Sports and Athletics Committee whose activities behind the scenes contributed to the fruitful results of the competitors.

3.14 At district level, a football team from Tayside won the National District Championships and Strathclyde will field the eleven who compete for the trophy in the forthcoming year.

3.15 For the first time for several years, a Scottish team entered the National Table Tennis Championships and whilst not achieving any degree of success found the experience beneficial and it is hoped to have further forays into this sporting area.

3.16 The officials at district and local level continued their hard work and interest over the year. They provided a worthwhile contribution towards fostering goodwill at national and international levels throughout the fire service.

## CHAPTER IV

### *General*

#### **Scottish Central Fire Brigades Advisory Council**

4.1 The Advisory Council met twice during the year; on both occasions the Chair was taken by Mr. Harry Ewing, M.P., Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Devolution and Home Affairs at the Scottish Office.

4.2 The Council noted the co-operation and efforts which had been made by the fire authorities and the fire service organisations to contain staffing levels and were concerned about the need to continue constraints in view of the implications for the fire service in the Rate Support Grant settlement for 1977-78.

4.3 The Council received and considered reports from the Joint Standing Committees on Pensions, Training, Design and Development, Uniform and Personal Equipment, Fire Research, Fire Brigade Operations and Fire Brigade Communications. In addition, the Council received and approved the first report of the Working Party on Incidents on Ships in Docks and Ports, the Report of the Working Group which considered fire precautions in high rise blocks of flats and endorsed the recommendation by the Drill-Book Sub-Committee that a revised Drill-Book should be printed in 1977.

4.4 Among other matters discussed by the Council were the Report of the Working Party on Civic Government and the implications for the fire service of the proposed legislation on licensing. The Council endorsed amendments to the Regulations, governing the appointments and promotion procedures to take effect from 1st January, 1977; the main amendments were in matters of qualification for appointment in the fire service on grounds of sex and citizenship. The Council were also concerned about the position of brigades in connection with the designation order which, with effect from 1st January, 1977 gave fire authorities responsibility under the Fire Precautions Act, 1971 for fire precautions in factories, offices, shops, etc.

4.5 The Council noted the setting up of a Joint Working Party to review the experiences of the Summer of 1976; also a Standing Panel on dangerous substances to give advice, on behalf of the Home Departments and the fire service, on proposals made by other Government Departments.

#### **Legislation**

4.6 The Fire Services (Appointments and Promotion) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 1976, which are operative from 1st January, 1977, provide for several changes in the principal regulations governing the appointments and promotion procedures in the fire service. The main amendments are in matters of qualification for appointment on grounds of citizenship or sex and of nomenclature and composition of the appropriate examinations scheme, Northern Ireland Fire Authority and the Fire Services Examinations Board (Scotland).

4.7 The Firemen's Pension Scheme (Amendment) Order 1976, which came into effect on 6th September, 1976, amended the Firemen's Pension Scheme 1973 to give effect to the agreements relating to the reckoning of service for pension purposes to the nearest day in respect of retirements which took place on or after 1st May, 1975; and to a new commutation right for those who retired with an ordinary pension after 25 years' service, on or after 1st April, 1975. The Order also provided for awards to or in respect of a regular fireman who has held the post of firemaster or assistant firemaster to be not less than it would have been had his scale of pay been the scale in force immediately before 1st August, 1975.

4.8 The Firemen's Pension Scheme (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 1976, which came into effect on 1st December, 1976, amended the Firemen's Pension Scheme 1973 and, in so far as they continued to have effect, the Schemes of 1971, 1966, 1964, 1956, 1952 and 1948. Under these Schemes the amounts of certain awards were determined by reference to flat-rates which do not qualify for increases under the Pensions (Increase) Act, 1971. This Order provided for an increase in these flat-rates.

4.9 The Explosives (Age of Purchase etc.) Act, 1976 which came into effect on 22nd August, made it an offence to sell explosives, including fireworks, to any child apparently under the age of 16. It also increased the maximum penalty for such offences and for those involving the letting off of fireworks in a street or public place.

4.10 In August the first designation order under the Safety at Sports Grounds Act, 1975 was made, requiring those responsible for the international association and rugby union football grounds in Scotland as well as the grounds of the clubs in the Premier Division of the Scottish Football League to apply for a general safety certificate before 1st January, 1977, when the designation order became effective. Fire authorities have an interest in this order in so far as they may be requested to advise on particular requirements appropriate for inclusion in the safety certificates. General fire precautions in places of work, for which provision was made in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974 became the responsibility of fire authorities under a designation order requiring factories, offices, shops and railway premises previously covered by the Factories Act, 1961 and the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963 to obtain fire certificates under the Fire Precautions Act, 1971. The order became effective on 1st January, 1977. Under the Fire Certificates (Special Premises) Regulations 1976, which were made at the same time, the Health and Safety Executive remain responsible for the fire certification of certain classes of high hazard premises.

4.11 The Licensing (Scotland) Act, 1976 made provision for licensing boards to consult the appropriate authorities, including fire authorities, before granting applications for the grant or renewal of liquor licences or for the grant or renewal of certificates of registration of clubs, or before giving consent to the reconstruction, extension or alteration of any licensed premises which might affect a public or common part of such premises.





**ESTABLISHMENTS AND STRENGTH OF FIRE BRIGADES**  
as at 31st December, 1976

**TABLE 1**

	BRIGADE												Totals					
	Central		Dumfries & Galloway		Fife		Grampian		Lothian & Borders		Northern				Strathclyde		Tayside	
	Establishment	Actual Strength	Establishment	Actual Strength	Establishment	Actual Strength	Establishment	Actual Strength	Establishment	Actual Strength	Establishment	Actual Strength			Establishment	Actual Strength	Establishment	Actual Strength
<b>Operational Personnel—Elsewhere than at Fire Stations</b>																		
Firemasters ... ..	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8	
Assistant Firemasters ... ..	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9	
Senior Divisional Officers ... ..	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12	
Divisional Officers (Grade I) ... ..	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	28	
Divisional Officers (Grade II) ... ..	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	34	
Divisional Officers (Grade III) ... ..	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	34	
Assistant Divisional Officers ... ..	7	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	60	
Station Officers ... ..	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	125	
Sub-Officers ... ..	7	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	117	
Leading Firemen ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	88	
Firemen ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	85	
Totals ... ..	24	22	16	15	28	27	32	27	61	62	28	24	161	159	48	47	398	
<b>At Fire Stations</b>																		
Divisional Officers (Grade I) ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Divisional Officers (Grade II) ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Divisional Officers (Grade III) ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Assistant Divisional Officers ... ..	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	14	
Station Officers ... ..	5	5	3	3	3	3	2	2	11	12	1	1	93	86	12	12	145	
Sub-Officers ... ..	9	9	3	3	3	3	10	10	42	46	3	3	177	175	21	22	284	
Leading Foremen ... ..	18	18	6	6	6	6	54	50	81	81	9	10	226	226	36	37	444	
Firemen ... ..	120	104	48	48	201	193	137	119	366	349	42	36	1288	1263	246	234	2448	
Totals ... ..	153	137	61	61	289	276	170	164	518	505	55	50	1798	1764	319	309	3363	
<b>Grand Totals</b> ... ..	177	159	77	76	317	303	202	191	579	567	83	74	1959	1923	367	356	3761	







**SUMMARY OF FIRES AND SPECIAL SERVICES WHICH HAVE OCCURRED DURING THE YEAR  
ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1976**

**TABLE 3**

FIRE AREA	Fires requiring the attendance of										Total Fires	Chimney Fires	False Alarms			Total Fire Calls	Special Services	Total Calls 1976
													Malicious	With good intent	Total			
	1 Pump	2 Pumps	3-4 Pumps	5 Pumps	6-8 Pumps	9-10 Pumps	11-20 Pumps											
Central ...	1,227	107	41	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,375	184	467	486	953	2,512	98	2,610
Dumfries & Galloway ...	487	144	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	643	166	116	180	296	1,105	91	1,196
Fife ...	1,771	70	10	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1,852	357	550	512	1,062	3,271	246	3,517
Grampian ...	2,309	24	38	1	3	—	—	—	—	—	2,375	785	215	543	758	3,918	331	4,249
Lothian & Borders	5,726	289	103	2	4	—	—	—	—	—	6,124	672	934	1,942	2,876	9,672	642	10,314
Northern ...	1,405	35	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,449	647	264	251	515	2,611	279	2,890
Strathclyde ...	20,337	1,184	221	13	11	1	—	—	—	—	21,767	1,534	3,941	7,611	11,552	34,853	2,297	37,150
Tayside ...	2,682	63	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2,751	430	307	675	982	4,163	508	4,671
Totals ...	35,944	1,916	440	16	18	2	—	—	—	—	38,336	4,775	6,794	12,200	18,994	62,105	4,492	66,597

**FIRE PREVENTION INSPECTION WORK UNDERTAKEN BY FIRE BRIGADES  
DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1976**

TABLE 4

	FIRE AREA										Totals
	Central	Dumfries & Galloway	Fife	Grampian	Lothian & Borders	Northern	Strathclyde	Tayside			
(a) Industrial or business premises or undertakings subjected to:	Survey	444	278	922	682	656	—	437	4,849	8,268	
	Specific	201	42	656	1,310	1,384	—	2,863	6,129	13,592	
	Routine	403	602	573	85	1,067	94	4,620	1,937	9,181	
	Follow-up	548	452	797	640	2,192	434	756	2,400	8,219	
(b) Industrial or business or undertakings (Inspected on a goodwill basis)	Survey	39	16	41	—	—	9	—	185	290	
	Specific	459	68	202	—	365	163	104	1,384	2,745	
	Routine	—	4	1	—	—	—	—	6	11	
	Follow-up	42	2	8	—	—	—	—	88	140	
(c) Local Authority premises or undertakings other than schools, hospitals and homes	Survey	14	3	26	5	60	5	85	198	396	
	Specific	105	17	53	28	297	39	39	813	1,376	
	Routine	—	7	2	—	6	6	3	1,422	1,443	
	Follow-up	9	1	2	—	2	—	—	59	116	
(d) Schools	Survey	7	4	21	9	25	4	45	85	200	
	Specific	50	9	118	240	90	26	244	321	1,098	
	Routine	2	77	40	—	3	—	112	119	353	
	Follow-up	7	3	2	—	23	5	35	21	98	
(e) Hospitals and homes	Survey	3	3	27	10	32	10	24	72	181	
	Specific	28	4	55	82	87	42	284	315	897	
	Routine	1	2	6	—	1	—	47	17	136	
	Follow-up	13	2	6	2	35	21	33	33	112	
(f) Cinemas, theatres and other places of public entertainment or assembly	Survey	23	26	39	43	133	24	22	239	549	
	Specific	257	25	88	61	424	60	130	836	1,878	
	Routine	7	50	201	2	375	59	155	59	849	
	Follow-up	9	11	5	2	41	13	11	16	108	
(g) Miscellaneous premises	Survey	17	12	15	49	145	14	102	201	555	
	Specific	103	27	102	547	510	125	1,768	5,586	8,768	
	Routine	—	—	1	1	7	—	766	86	861	
	Follow-up	2	—	1	—	27	—	64	18	112	
(h) Plans inspected	Specific	718	498	836	1,550	1,040	587	2,012	4,646	11,887	
Total										74,419	

Factories Act, 1961		32	27	41	90	8	39	184	421
(a) Number of new Means of Escape Certificates issued:		22	7	29	70	13	41	40	222
(b) Number of Means of Escape Certificates revised:									
Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963									
(a) Number of new Fire Certificates issued:	5	31	32	115	148	13	89	285	718
(b) Number of Fire Certificates revised:	1	14	1	44	134	5	53	58	310
(c) Number of Section 28 Premises inspected and Means of Escape now satisfactory:	1,046	345	938	4,593	2,324	285	3,352	3,445	16,328
Fire Precautions Act, 1971									
(a) Number of Fire Certificates issued:	25	138	107	55	178	109	55	285	952
(b) Number of Fire Certificates revised:	—	8	—	—	41	—	47	7	103

Work done during 1976

NOTE: For the purpose of this table the terms "Survey", "Specific", "Routine" and "Follow-up" are used as follows:

Survey. A thorough and comprehensive examination of the premises and processes at risk as regards fire prevention arrangements which are in operation or require to be made, covering for instance, fire appliances and equipment, water supplies, means of escape, storage conditions and good housekeeping.

Specific. An examination of the premises and plant for the purposes indicated above but limited to one or more particular aspect of fire prevention.

Routine. An examination made as a rule periodically for the purpose of ascertaining whatever particular precautions which should be in operation are, in fact, being maintained.

Follow-up. An inspection made following a survey or specific inspection to note progress or advise on detail.

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