

MW Hershaw



Scottish Home and Health Department

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire Services for Scotland

Report for 1989



SCOTTISH HOME AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Report 1989

of A Winton Esq, QFSM, MIFireE to the Right Honourable Malcolm Rifkind, QC, MP, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Scotland.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit my Report on the Fire Services in Scotland for the year ended 31 December 1989. I was appointed to succeed R J Knowlton Esq, CBE, QFSM, FIFireE, FBIM who retired from the post of Chief Inspector at the end of December. Before his retirement Mr Knowlton and other members of the Inspectorate had inspected the eight Scottish Fire Brigades and the Scottish Fire Service Training School. It is on the results of their inspections that this report is compiled.

I would record my thanks to Mr Knowlton for the advice and assistance given before my retirement from Tayside Fire Brigade in helping me to understand the current policies and practices of the Inspectorate and I would wish to pay tribute to Mr Knowlton's long and distinguished career in the British Fire Service.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

A WINTON

Contents

Paragraphs

	Section A General
1	Inspections
2	Fire Service Inspectorate
3-4	Fire Authorities and Firemasters
5-6	Honours and Awards
	Section B Personnel and Administration
7	Establishment and Strengths
8-10	Wholetime Personnel—Operational
11-15	Retained and Volunteer Personnel
16-18	Control Room Staff
19-20	Discipline
21-24	Health
25-26	Pensions
	Section C Operational
27-34	Fires and Other Emergencies
35-39	Fatalities
40	Rescues
41	Road Accidents
42	Fire Damage
	Section D Supplies and Services
43-44	Transport
45	Uniform
46-47	Equipment
48	Water Supplies
49-51	Premises
52-57	Communications
	Section E Fire Prevention
58-63	Summary
64-66	Inspection and Certification of Premises
67-70	Education and Publicity
71-73	Joint Fire Prevention Committee
74-75	Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987
76	The Fire Precautions (Sub-surface Railway Stations) Regulations 1989
77	Building Standards Advisory Committee
78-79	Health and Safety Executive
80-81	National Fire Prevention Youth Quiz
	Section F Training
82-85	Scottish Fire Service Training School
86-91	Fire Service College
92-97	Brigade Training
98-101	Fire Services Examinations Board
102-105	The Institution of Fire Engineers

Section G Miscellaneous

106–110	Scottish Central Fire Brigades Advisory Council
111–120	Research
121–122	Civil Defence and Emergency Planning
123–125	FINDS
126–127	Fire Services National Benevolent Fund
128	Fire Services Sports and Athletics Association
129–131	Competitions

Section A General

Inspections 1. A full programme of inspections of the eight Scottish Fire Brigades and the Scottish Fire Service Training School was completed by my predecessor and members of the Inspectorate staff. I am pleased to state from reports of the inspections made available to me that the outcome in each case was satisfactory. This indicates that the service in Scotland is functioning well. In addition to the formal inspections visits were made to brigades by members of the Inspectorate to discuss and give advice on particular matters.

Fire Service Inspectorate 2. There was no change to the establishment of the Inspectorate during the year and the strength remains at:

HM Chief Inspector	—1	
HM Inspector Grade II	—1	
Senior Assistant Inspector	—1	(upgrading of an Assistant Inspector)
Assistant Inspectors	—3	
Staff officer	—1	

Fire Authorities and Firemasters 3. At the end of the year the following Firemasters were in post:

Central Region	Firemaster I S T Adam, QFSM, GIFireE
Dumfries and Galloway	Firemaster J B Stiff, QFSM, GIFireE
Fife	Firemaster J White, MIFireE
Grampian	Firemaster A N Morrison, MIFireE
Highland and Islands	Firemaster D Grant, GIFireE
Lothian and Borders	Firemaster P D Scott, MIFireE
Strathclyde	Firemaster C B Halliday, QFSM, MIFireE
Tayside	Firemaster A Winton, QFSM, MIFireE.

Following the retiral during the year of Firemaster of Lothian and Borders Fire Brigade, R J Edmonds, on health grounds, Deputy Firemaster P D Scott was appointed Firemaster. Following my retiral from Tayside Fire Brigade in December 1989 the post of Firemaster is filled at present by Mr D Marr, Deputy Firemaster, in an acting capacity. An appointment is expected to be made in the coming year.

4. I would wish to take this opportunity to record the thanks of the Inspectorate to Firemasters and members of brigades for their ready co-operation during the year, to congratulate newly appointed senior officers and convey best wishes to retiring members for their long and valued service to the people of Scotland.

Honours and Awards 5. The following received recognition in The Queen's Honours Lists:

Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (Civil Division)
Senior Divisional Officer D Leitch, Strathclyde Fire Brigade.
Station Officer C Spence, Grampian Fire Brigade.

Queen's Fire Service Medal

Firemaster I S T Adam, GIFireE, Central Region Fire Brigade.
Firemaster J B Stiff, GIFireE, Dumfries and Galloway Fire Brigade.

The Fire Brigade Long Service and Good Conduct Medal was awarded to 148 members of the Scottish Fire Service during the year.

The 1988 Report touched on the disaster which befell Lockerbie in December of that year. It is fitting that I should record in this year's Report that the Firemaster of

Dumfries and Galloway Fire Brigade was awarded The Queen's Fire Service Medal for special services in relation to the disaster at Lockerbie. This award is a reflection of the professional but compassionate way in which the Firemaster and his Brigade acquitted themselves on the night of the disaster and in subsequent days.

6. I offer my sincere congratulations to all those whose gallantry or service was recognised by awards in 1989.

Section B Personnel and Administration

Establishments and strengths

7. The establishments and actual strengths of brigades are shown in Table 1.

Wholetime personnel— Operational

8. The total establishment figure for whole-time operational members of Scottish brigades on 31 December 1989 was 4,483, an increase of eight over last year's total, while the actual strength of 4,456 was 48 higher than the 1988 figure. The difference between establishment and actual strength of 27 is the lowest for many years. Taking into account the fact that a number of brigades have recruits ready to join the first training course of the new year, these figures suggest brigades are in a healthy position with regard to recruitment. For the first time in Scotland there are two female firefighters, both in Strathclyde Fire Brigade, included in whole-time strength returns.

9. During the year 139 members left the service, six more than the previous year; details of their reasons for leaving are summarised in Table 2. This was more than compensated for by an intake of 199 over the same period. Retirement on medical grounds was 74, an increase of 14 over 1988. This was disappointing after the slight improvement in ill-health retirement over the last two years. Figures of such retirements for the previous 10 years are:

1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
31	34	30	29	46	57	65	63	60	74

10. The Fire Services (Appointments and Promotion) (Scotland) Regulations became effective on 1 April 1989. These Regulations prescribe entry standards for the fire service which should assist in detecting any incipient medical problem before applicants enter the service. Supporting guidance provides general recommendations for improving the fitness of firefighters during their service. Most brigades have now incorporated fitness training into their general training programmes and are involved in discussion regarding the setting up of occupational health schemes. To date two brigades have instigated such schemes. Brigades should benefit from these initiatives by a reduction in sickness absences and premature retirements on medical grounds in future years.

Retained and volunteer personnel

11. Retained and volunteer establishments are:

	<i>Establishment</i>		<i>Actual Strength</i>	
	1988	1989	1988	1989
Retained	2,561	2,561	2,364	2,395
Volunteer	1,560	1,536	1,358	1,387

12. Retained establishment remains the same as 1988 but there is an increase of 31 in the actual strength. This reflects the efforts of Firemasters to ensure the availability of retained crews throughout Scotland.

13. Included in the above totals are seven female retained and 29 female volunteer firefighters.

14. Following a recommendation from the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire Brigades, most brigades have now introduced additional training time for

retained personnel. This has resulted in amended training programmes and changes in the time which training and supervisory staff spend at retained stations.

15. The fire cover provided by retained and volunteer personnel is vital to the fire defence of the rural areas of Scotland; I would wish to acknowledge the work done by this group of citizens in providing this service, very often at considerable inconvenience to themselves and their employers.

Control Room staff 16. The establishment total for control room staff is 195 and the actual strength is 194—previous year's figures were 195 and 193 respectively.

17. Brigades in Scotland have adopted the recommendations on induction training made by the Joint Training Committee and the courses now run by the Fire Service College for control room staff are well supported.

18. Personnel working within these fire brigade nerve centres require to be highly trained in the operation of their equipment and be able to offer a calm response to callers who are likely to be under stress. The importance of the work done by control room staff is vital to the overall efficiency of fire brigades.

Discipline 19. During the year 16 members of brigades were charged with offences under the Fire Services (Discipline) (Scotland) Regulations and 25 charges were made. This is a decrease over last year's figures of 33 members and 46 charges.

20. Punishments awarded were:

Caution:	1
Reprimand:	4
Stoppage of Pay:	13
Dismissal:	2

In addition, one member was discharged for misconduct without being charged under the Discipline Regulations.

Health 21. The average level of time lost through sickness and injury remains fairly constant at 5% although there are quite wide variations between brigades.

22. The detailed survey of absences following injuries on duty was maintained for the fourth year. The results, with last year's figures in brackets, are as follows:

(a) Number of persons sustaining injury on duty involving an absence of three days or more:	256 (272)
(b) Number included at (a) who sustained injury at a fire:	115 (107)
(c) Number included at (a) who sustained injury at a special service:	6 (9)
(d) Number included at (a) who sustained injury during training:	50 (68)
(e) Number included at (a) who sustained injury while engaged in other duties:	85 (88)

23. A study of the returns on the cause of injury shows that most can be attributed to two main causes: (a) injured while lifting or carrying (51) and (b) slipping or falling on the same level (66). Over the past three years these two causes have resulted in the highest number of injuries. Brigades have been given a summary of the causes of accidents and asked to concentrate their efforts towards preventative measures in the two main areas of injury. Lifting and carrying techniques can be practised and advice is available.

24. Of the injuries recorded, 124 were sustained during operational incidents, the remaining 132 during training or while employed on other duties.

Pensions 25. With effect from 16 March 1988 the basic rate of child's ordinary allowance payable on the death of a regular firefighter is increased from 12.5% to 18.75% of the parent's pension. The overall limit of 37.5% for such allowances remains

unchanged but is now reached where there are two eligible children rather than three as previously.

26. A further amendment limits the pension benefits under the scheme to those which can be earned by reference to a salary of £60,000 per annum. The maximum amount payable by way of contributions is similarly limited. The £60,000 limit will be uprated by Treasury orders in line with rises in the retail price index. This restriction, announced in the Budget statement on 14 March 1989, applies to all new members who join after 1 June 1989. In view of this and the level of the restriction the amendment will only have limited application to firefighters.

Section C Operational

Fires and other emergencies

27. There was a sharp increase in the total number of calls received by Scottish brigades during 1989—96,124 compared to 82,750 in 1988, an increase of 16.16%. This is a reversal of the pattern of the past four years when there was a slight drop in the number of calls received. Graph 1 clearly shows the increase in the number of calls for the services of brigades over the past four decades from approximately 17,000 in 1950 to over 96,000 in 1989.

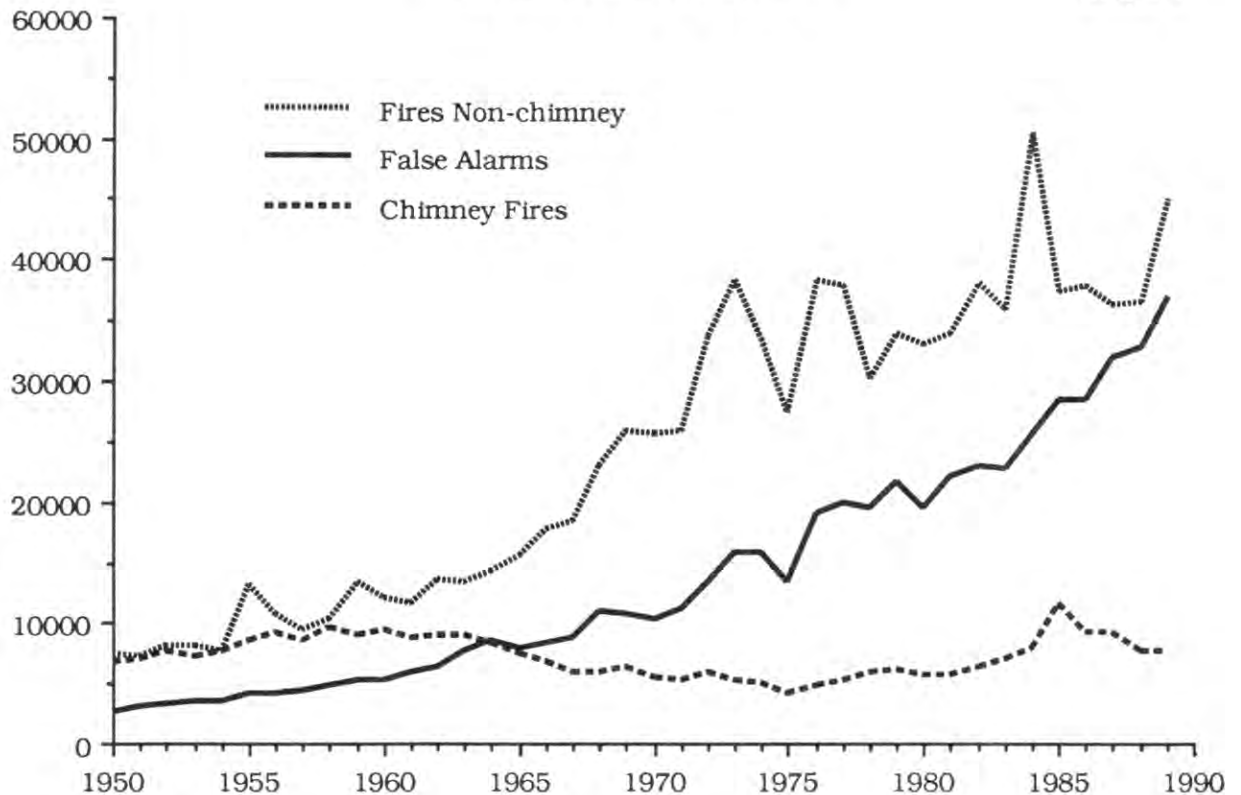


28. A detailed breakdown of the numbers and types of call is shown in Table 3, which gives each brigade's work load in seven categories and indicates the relative size of fires attended by the number of pumps required to extinguish them. Comparison with 1988 shows a 6.9% increase in fires to 20,274; a 40.6% increase in secondary fires to 24,784; a 15.6% increase in special service calls to 6,365; and a 12.4% increase in false alarm calls made up as follows: False Alarms (Good Intent)—18.4% to 15,302, False Alarms (Apparatus)—11.9% to 7,943 and False Alarms (Malicious)—6.7% to 13,795. The only reduction in work load is in chimney fires which were down from 7,707 to 7,661. (Percentage figures are rounded up or down and may not necessarily add up to 100%.)

29. A breakdown of the types of fire call received since 1950 is shown in Graph 2. The most significant trend is the ever increasing number of false alarm calls which are now exceeding the number of fire (non-chimney) calls received in 1987.

Breakdown of Calls

Graph 2



30. An illustration of the proportion of calls of different categories in 1989 is shown in Graph 3. While the size of the segments indicate only marginal changes from 1988 there is a slight drop in the size of segment relating to false alarms from 39.8% of the total in 1988 to 38.5% in 1989.

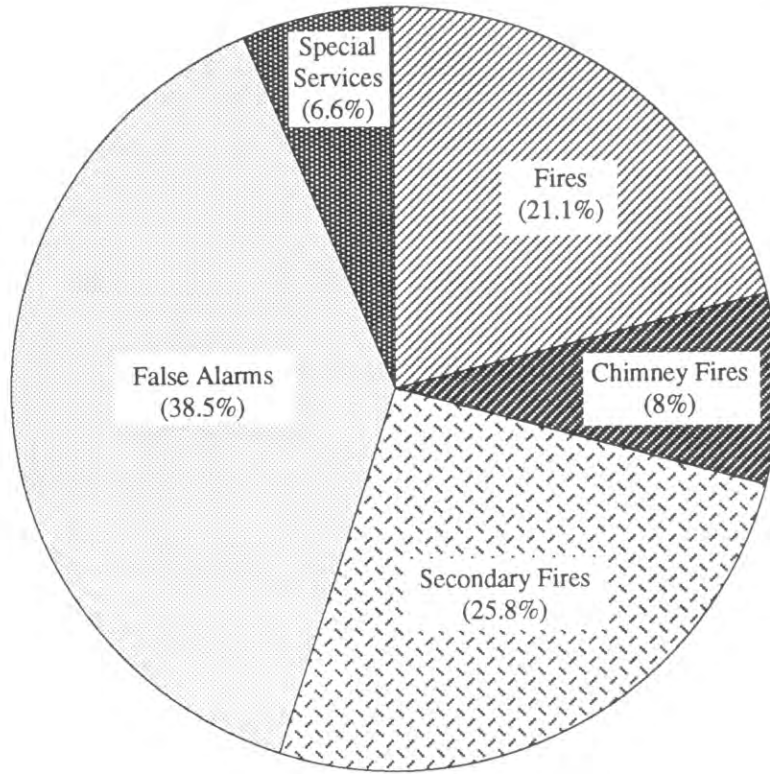
31. In Graph 4 there are only slight changes in the various types of false alarm calls. In the case of False Alarm (Malicious) the proportion of the total drops from 39.2% in 1988 to 37.2% in 1989 and calls to False Alarm (Apparatus) remains constant at 21.5%.

32. The report of the Joint Working Party on the Audit Commission Occasional Paper No. 1 looked carefully at the effect of false alarm calls on the work load of the Fire Service and noted that malicious calls accounted for approximately 40% of all false alarms. It was agreed that the most effective means of deterring a significant number of potential offenders would be the development of a sophisticated communications system which improved the means of identifying the source of these calls. Members of the Working Party were aware that British Telecom had embarked upon a programme to introduce digital exchanges throughout the country. It also noted that Mercury Communications Ltd had introduced a digital system covering over half of the country's telephone population. Although neither system would be likely to solve the problem in the short term; both had the potential to identify the source of all 999 calls in due course. The Working Party were also of the view that once offenders had been caught and convicted the courts had a duty to provide a further effective deterrent. It was considered that the practical implications of a call-out should be brought to the attention of the courts—one answer might be for the problem faced by the fire service to be explained to them.

33. The Working Party took the view that developments in communications technology were vital for the effective detection of malicious calls. They welcomed British Telecom's intention to introduce digital exchanges throughout the country with the potential which such a system offers for reducing the number of malicious false alarms.

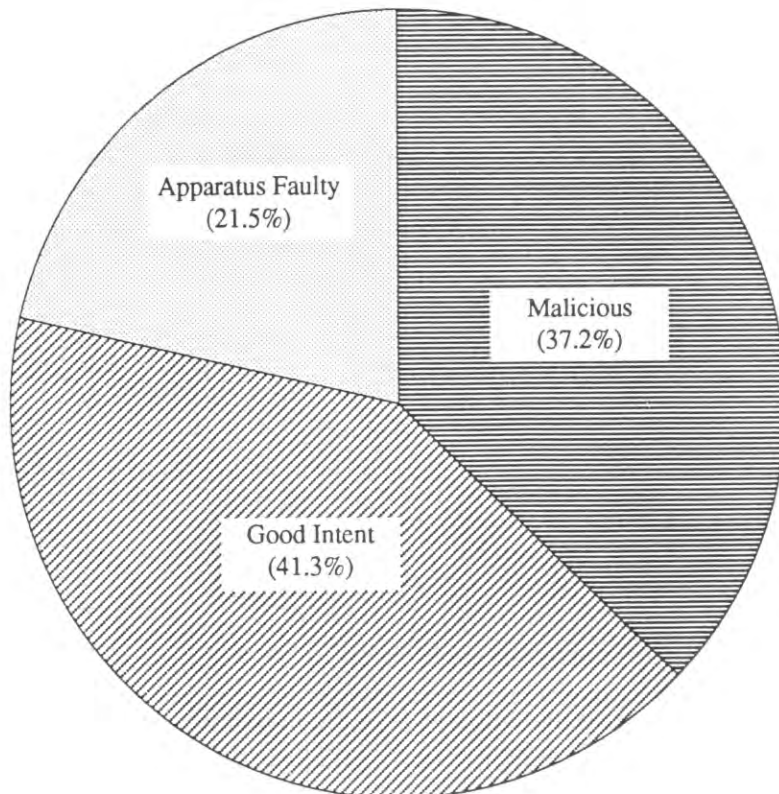
Type of Call

Graph 3



Type of False Alarm

Graph 4



34. False alarm calls of good intent accounted for approximately 40% of all false alarms. Despite this the view was taken that there was little scope for effectively reducing the number of calls as the public ought not to be dissuaded from calling the fire brigade whenever they perceived a genuine need for its presence.



Fatalities 35. The number of fatalities (113) is a welcome drop over the figures for the past two years, ie 168 in 1987 and 150 in 1988. A study of a breakdown of the figures indicates that the groups at greatest risk are those over 60 (43), followed by age group 41-60 (32) with 10 deaths in age group up to 10 years old.

36. Ninety-six deaths occurred as a result of fires in the home and 11 as a result of vehicle accidents. Details of age groups, locations and months of occurrence of fatalities by brigade are detailed in Table 4.

37. It is too early yet to try and assess the effects of Regulations relating to Fire Safety of Upholstered Furniture and the installation of smoke alarms. Along with a greater public awareness of the dangers from fire, they still remain the main hope of further reducing the terrible waste of life as a result of fire.

38. While these figures are a move in the right direction it is essential that brigades continue their various campaigns to bring to the attention of the public the constant need of being aware of the danger from fire.

39. Everyone involved in the fight to reduce the number of lives lost as a result of fire can take heart from these figures, although I must caution that they may be no more than a statistical dip. I would hope that the fact that the fire death figures are the lowest for many years will encourage brigades to intensify their efforts in this field.

Rescues 40. Brigade personnel rescued 659 (685) persons from fire situations, 495 (711) from other dangerous situations and 819 (704) from vehicles involved in road accidents (figures for 1988 are shown in brackets). The variety of rescue equipment carried

by brigades as well as the level of expertise of the crews, both whole-time and retained, in the use of the equipment continues to improve and reflects well on the professionalism of the fire service.

Road accidents 41. The number of road accidents attended increased to 2,086 and reflects the steady rise in this type of incident. Previous years' figures were: 1,697 in 1988; 1,556 in 1987; 1,568 in 1986; and 1,448 in 1985. This represents a 44% increase over the previous five years. In 1989 819 persons were released as a result of these attendances.

Fire damage 42. Figures obtained from the Association of British Insurers indicate the estimated monetary fire loss for the United Kingdom in 1989 to be £792.4 million compared with £645.9 million in 1988. Corresponding figures for Scotland on its own are not available.

Section D Supplies and Services

Transport 43. At the end of the year there were 412 pumping appliances and 90 units classed as special appliances in service with Scottish brigades. Last year's figures were 419 and 90 respectively. In general most vehicles are of modern design and comply fully with prescribed Joint Committee on Design and Development specifications where applicable and are maintained to a high standard. The level of provision and replacement of vehicles is generally satisfactory. It is important that despite restrictions on spending programmes fire authorities maintain this level of provision through a programme of regular replacements.

44. The wide diversity of a brigade's fleet and the equipment carried demands a high level of maintenance to ensure down time is kept to a minimum. This requires a first class degree of expertise from brigade engineers and workshops staff in conjunction with adequate premises and tools to carry out the wide range of maintenance required. It is worthy of note that in general Scottish brigades are adequately provided for in this respect.

Uniform 45. Brigades have continued to experiment with and carry out trials on various items of firefighting uniform, namely fire tunics, overtrousers, boots and helmets. These items of uniform are in the main still under evaluation although there would appear to be a positive move towards the issuing of bunker coat style fire tunics by a number of brigades. These tunics provide additional protection to the lower body of firefighters.

Equipment 46. The range and quality of equipment used by brigades continues to improve. Full advantage is taken of technical developments, particularly in the field of equipment used for road accidents. Brigades have responded to the public's expectation of their increasing involvement in this type of work. Modern spreading and cutting tools have proved to be particularly effective in releasing victims and have done much to add to the professionalism of brigades in this important area of their work.

47. As with firefighting and rescue vehicles, equipment and tools must be ready for instant use with no chance of failure to operate. This is made possible by brigades following programmes of regular and systematic testing using nationally agreed standard tests. Such systems are essential to the confidence which crews must have in their equipment; this is underlined by the formal records of tests which are maintained in all brigades.

Water supplies 48. Hydrants are checked and maintained at least once per year by brigade personnel. This represents a considerable work load which is carried out by both whole-time and retained firefighters. The number of fire hydrants has increased steadily over the years and improves the ability of fire crews to deal quickly and effectively with fires which require the use of more water than that carried by the initial attendance. The hydrant standardisation programme of Scottish brigades continues although its pace is largely dictated by the need for replacement of old water mains and for the renewal of non-standard hydrants.

Premises 49. While no new or replacement fire stations were opened during the year three major projects: a replacement fire station for retained personnel in Denny, Central Region; complete refurbishment of the existing fire station in Kirkcaldy, Fife; and a replacement fire station and Divisional Headquarters in Dundee; continued to make

good progress. It is expected that the fire station in Denny will become operational in the new year and that the other two contracts will be finalised before the end of 1990.

50. The second phase of the major works at Strathclyde Fire Brigade Headquarters at Hamilton commenced and work is proceeding satisfactorily. Likewise Fife Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters building at Thornton is considered to be nearing the end of its effective life and the Brigade is actively pursuing a number of alternative sites to allow a replacement to be built.

51. To date a suitable site has not yet been located to allow the replacement of the King Street Fire Station in Aberdeen.

Communications 52. The World Administrative Radio Conference (WARC) of 1979 required that all Emergency Services' mobile radio systems should be removed from the 88-108 MHz broadcasting band by the end of 1989 and new radio frequency allocations were allotted to them. The conversion and planning which have been on-going for the past 10 years have been completed and brigades are now operating in the new bands although there are still some technical problems to be resolved.

53. The Home Departments negotiated new fireground frequencies with the Department of Trade and Industry which have now been issued to brigades. This will enable brigades to proceed with the purchase of improved fireground communications.

54. Negotiations with the Department of Trade and Industry have resulted in a licensing system for all fire service radio equipment by which a single licence now covers all types of equipment. The new arrangement is more favourable to Scotland than the previous arrangements and is easier to administer.

55. Future development in the improved use of radio will be aimed at ensuring brigades can link with neighbouring brigades during over-the-border incidents and enabling fire, police and ambulance services to operate on a common user waveband at major incidents. The technical aspects of these schemes are at present under discussion.

56. Secondary or duplicate control rooms to enable brigades to meet their statutory requirements in the event of a main control room failure have now been provided by the majority of Scottish brigades. Those who have still to make this provision are actively pursuing this matter.

57. Liaison between brigades in Scotland and the Directorate of Telecommunications at the Scottish Office has been very good over the past years, mainly due to the close working relationships which have developed as a result of the WARC proposals. Now that the major part of the work has been completed it is hoped that these relationships will continue. I would wish to record my thanks to the Directorate staff for the help given to the fire service in Scotland over the past years.

Section E Fire Prevention

Summary 58. During 1989 brigades in Scotland inspected a total of 67,579 premises for fire prevention purposes. This total shows a decrease of 4,293 on the previous year's total.

59. The number of plans submitted to brigades for comment during the year was 10,449, which is slightly above the figure for the previous year.

60. Brigades continue to actively promote and encourage the fitting of smoke alarms in domestic dwellings. Although only time will tell, the results of more smoke alarms being fitted in dwellings appears to show positive results and it is hoped that brigades, and indeed local housing and private building contractors, will aim to provide smoke detection in all dwellings.

61. A further development in the attempt to reduce fire deaths in the home is the intention of the Loss Prevention Council to produce a standard for domestic sprinkler systems in conjunction with the British Automatic Sprinkler Association.

62. It is expected the new standard will be launched in 1990 and will provide guidance for sprinkler manufacturers and installers on the strict controls essential for ensuring the effectiveness and reliability of sprinkler systems in domestic dwellings. This is an interesting development given that 96 out of 113 fire deaths in Scotland took place in the home.

63. In addition brigades carry out house to house visits in areas that have been identified as being high risk thus channelling limited resources where they are most needed.

Inspection and certification of premises 64. The number of fire certificates issued under the Fire Precautions Act 1971 during the year was:

Factories	209 (202)
Offices, Shops, etc	715 (788)
Hotels and Boarding Houses	168 (144)

The 1988 figures are shown in brackets.

65. In addition the number of fire certificates which were revised was:

Factories	221 (281)
Offices, Shops, etc	668 (668)
Hotels and Boarding Houses	555 (451)

66. The number of fire certificates issued is slightly higher in two of the three categories. The number of certificates revised during the year shows an increase over the previous year in one of the three categories. This reflects a continuous and changing pattern of work load within the brigades.

Education and publicity 67. Over the Christmas and New Year periods the Scottish Home and Health Department sponsored the screening of television commercials encouraging the installation of smoke alarms and a fire prevention news release was issued urging extra care and vigilance over the festive season. Other releases during the year dealt with specific issues of fire safety, particularly for the elderly during the winter months, and of fire hazards during the summer drought.

68. National Fire Safety Week in Scotland was launched on 23 October 1989 with a news release on fire safety, which included a message of support from Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, MP, Minister for Home Affairs and the Environment at the Scottish Office.

69. The theme for 1989, 'Learn Not to Burn', which was aimed at promoting fire safety training and education in the home and the workplace, was actively supported by local initiatives in all brigade areas.

70. During the year a computer data base and project pack 'Firewise' was developed for children in the 9-13 age groups. The computer data base provides a log of 240 mainly domestic fires and is designed to direct the children towards specific conclusions. The approach is kept simple so that children and teachers can work with it.

**Joint Fire Prevention
Committee**

71. The Committee met twice during the year and included in the agenda for the meetings were progress reports on the current work in the preparation of guides which are required for the Fire Precautions Act 1971.

72. A code of practice required by the 1987 legislative changes to the 1971 Act and a new technical guide to fire precautions in existing places of work that require a fire certificate were published by HMSO during the year. The latter superseded two earlier guides to the Fire Precautions Act 1971—No 2 (Factories) and No 3 (Offices, Shops and Railway Premises).

73. The Hotels and Boarding Houses Guide which was issued by Home Office/Scottish Home and Health Department in 1972 is at present being revised; the revised guide will reflect current building standards for means of escape and British Standards appertaining to fire safety. A new guide 'Fire Safety at Work', a basic guide for owners or occupiers and their staff who need to know about fire precautions in places of work, is at final draft stage and is expected to be published early in 1990. The guide will cover fire safety in offices, shops (including restaurants and bars), factories and certain railway premises.

**Fire Safety and Safety of
Places of Sport Act 1987**

74. In 1989 the second phase of implementation of the fire safety provisions of the Act was completed with the coming into force of the fifth commencement order on 1 April. This brought into operation certain provisions of Part 1 of the 1987 Act not yet in force which amended the Fire Precautions Act 1971, including sections which provide for:

- the power for fire authorities to exempt premises from the requirement to have a fire certificate;
- the requirement that certain exempt premises must be provided with means of escape and means for fighting fire;
- the issue of a code of practice for fire precautions in factories, offices, shops and railway premises not required to have a fire certificate;
- the power for fire authorities to issue improvement notices where they consider that the duty to provide means of escape and means of fighting fire are being contravened.

75. Four other statutory instruments were necessary consequent upon the coming into force of these provisions and also came into force on 1 April. These were a new designation order for factory, office, shop and railway premises, an order prescribing a new form of application for a fire certificate and two consequential orders revoking existing regulations.

**The Fire Precautions (Sub-
surface Railway Stations)
Regulations 1989**

76. Regulations were made under Section 12 of the Fire Precautions Act 1971 and provide for fire precautions to be taken in certain underground and low-level railway stations used by members of the public. In Scotland they apply to Glasgow Underground and certain low level stations in the ScotRail network. The Regulations were

drawn up specifically to deal with fire safety in underground stations in the light of Mr Desmond Fennell's Investigation into the Kings Cross underground fire.

**Building Standards Advisory
Committee**

77. The technical work on the current major revision of the Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations is nearing finalisation. During the period of the revision the Inspectorate has participated fully in the work of the main committee and its working parties dealing with structural fire precautions, means of escape from fire and assistance to the fire service.

**Health and Safety Executive
(HSE)**

78. During the year the Inspectorate were involved in the work of the Advisory Committee on Dangerous Substances, which includes analysis of serious fires which are the subject of Health and Safety Executive reports. The link with HSE representatives serving on most of the joint committees of the Central Fire Brigades Advisory Councils which may have an influence on health, safety and welfare in the fire service continues to operate on a firmly established basis and proves to be helpful in resolving matters in the general safety field.

79. On 1 October 1989 the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1988 came into force. These Regulations impose duties on employers to protect employees and other persons who may be exposed to substances hazardous to health and also to impose certain duties on employees. Brigades are actively reassessing procedures to ensure their compliance with the new Regulations.

**National Fire Prevention
Youth Quiz**

80. The National Fire Prevention Youth Quiz was sponsored once again by the Fire Protection Association Central Fire Liaison Panel and organised by the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association.

81. The 1989 national competition attracted a record entry of over 16,500 young people between the ages of 13–16 years, and a total number of 3,366 teams from over 71 areas contested the first round. A high standard of fire safety knowledge was shown at every stage of this year's competition. The winners of the Scottish Final for 1989 were the 1st Methlick Scout Group from the Grampian Region, who are to be congratulated on a fine achievement.

Section F Training

Scottish Fire Service Training School

82. The School's main function continues to be the training of recruit firefighters for the Scottish fire brigades and to train recruits for the Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service. School resources are also used to provide additional courses to meet the needs of Scottish brigades and organisations such as the Prison Service and Local Health Board Hospital Fire Safety Officers. School premises are also used by non-fire service organisations as a teaching and conference centre when accommodation is available.

83. During the year the following courses were held at the School with the numbers attending shown in brackets:

Recruits' Course	(213)
Retained Firefighters	(27)
Whole-time Leading Fireman	(78)
Breathing Apparatus Instructors	(39)
Retained Breathing Apparatus Operators	(4)
Retained Recruits	(32)
Specialist Legislation	(7)
Hospital Fire Safety	(80)
Road Traffic Accident Instructors	(9)
Prison Officers' Fire Prevention	(31)

84. In the course of the year the School was fortunate to receive a grant from the Fire Service Research and Training Trust to purchase new audio visual equipment. The Trustees held their August meeting at the School and hosted a dinner to honour their retiring Chairman, Sir Ronald Johnson, CB, formerly Secretary SHHD. Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, Minister for Home Affairs and the Environment and his wife were guests of the Trust and the Minister formally unveiled a photographic portrait of Sir Ronald provided by the Trust to hang at the School to recognise Sir Ronald's long and valued service to the Trust.

85. For the third year the School was formally inspected and again the Inspectors were ably assisted by Mr David Dick, OBE, who advised on teaching methods, assessments and curriculum planning. The inspection again confirmed that a high standard was being maintained.

Fire Service College

86. Scottish brigades were allocated a total of 353 course placings at the Fire Service College, 11 more than in 1988 and 70 more than in 1987. Despite this increase in place allocations there was still a shortfall of 12 bids for places on College courses. The majority of the unplaced bids were for the Divisional Command Course.

87. This increase in the number of students attending College courses is admirable and indicates that brigades are making every effort to ensure full participation in the progressive training system despite the high cost of travel and subsistence for students attending from Scotland.

88. The introduction of a system of student reporting and assessment on both the Brigade Command and Junior Officers' Courses introduced by the College in 1988 is now fully underway. This is designed to test the attainments of course objectives and form an important part of course evaluation. A report on student performance during the course is issued both to brigades and to students. Early indications are

that over 96% of students are achieving a pass standard or better on the Junior Officers' Course.

89. Towards the latter part of the year the Director of Studies, in conjunction with College Instructional Staff, prepared the way for assessment reports to be made available for students attending the Junior Officer Advancement Course, the Road Traffic Instructors' Course and the Breathing Apparatus Instructors' Course in 1990. This was achieved without interruption or interference with the already heavy work load carried out by College staff and I would wish to commend the Commandant and his staff on this achievement.

90. Work on the construction of a new training building comprising a shopping mall, high bay warehouse and railway incident training facility on the fireground area is now under way and is scheduled to be completed in late 1990. This will add to the wide variety of situations that are available to assist in the development of students in dealing with practical fireground situations.

91. The Fire Service College, like the Scottish Fire Service Training School, depends for its instructional staff on secondment from fire brigades. Without the active support from brigades these establishments could not maintain their high standards. I would commend Firemasters and applicants for teaching posts for agreeing to periods of secondment.

Brigade Training

92. The increased training time for retained firefighters has been in operation for some time now and reports would suggest that despite some teething troubles the extra training time is now becoming an accepted fact by most retained personnel. An increase of 50% in the time available for the training and management of a retained station creates an excellent opportunity to advance the technical and practical skills of this most important element of the service.

93. Brigades have produced training programmes and allocated instructor time to ensure that full use is made of this major improvement. It says much for the commitment of retained personnel that they have accepted on average an additional hour's training per week on top of the many hours they make available to ensure units at retained stations are adequately crewed.

94. In the case of whole-time members the main change has been the introduction of fitness training into the standard training programme in most brigades. It is still too early yet to assess how much this will contribute to a fitter and healthier fire service and this will be kept under review during annual inspections of brigades.

95. The Joint Training Committee of the Central Fire Brigades Advisory Councils have concluded that the Training Syllabus for Recruit Firefighters, which was issued in 1974 and forms the basis of recruit course instruction, requires updating to cater for changes that have taken place within the service since 1974.

96. The Drill Book Sub-Committee of the Joint Training Committee have been given the task of carrying out this review. While it is too early yet to contemplate what their recommendations will be it is not envisaged that recruits will need to spend a longer period at the Scottish Fire Service Training School. At present recruit firefighters carry out 12 weeks' basic training followed by two weeks' fire prevention and two weeks' breathing apparatus training, a total of 16 weeks in all.

97. Following the issue of the Report of the Joint Working Group on Chernobyl the Advisory Councils have set up a Working Group to examine certain items arising from that Report. The Working Group will prepare a report for the Joint Committee on Fire Brigade Operations on Incidents Involving Radioactivity and this may have a bearing on training carried out by brigades in relation to incidents involving radioactivity.

Fire Services Examinations Board

98. To obtain qualifications for promotion to a higher rank, firefighters are required to be successful in examinations set by the Fire Services Examinations Board. The examinations for promotion to the ranks of Leading Fireman and Sub-Officer have both written and practical elements while the examination for promotion to the rank of Station Officer consists of written papers.

99. In Scotland, three local boards administer both the written and practical examinations for the Fire Services Examinations Board with the practical tests for the Leading Fireman and Sub-Officer examinations taking place in the year following the written examinations.

100. The results of the written examinations are as follows (figures for the previous year are shown in brackets):

<i>Examination</i>	<i>Number of Candidates</i>	<i>Number and Percentage of Passes</i>	
Leading Fireman	327 (293)	110 33.6%	(117 39.9%)
Sub-Officer	175 (172)	57 32.6%	(45 26.2%)
Station Officer	179 (221)	27 15.1%	(23 10.4%)

The pass rate for promotion to Sub-Officer and Station Officer showed an increase over the previous year of 6.4% and 4.7% respectively.

101. Practical tests for candidates for the Leading Fireman examination took place during March and April and those for the Sub-Officer examination were held during May and June. The results (with equivalent 1988 figures in brackets) were:

<i>Examination</i>	<i>Number of Candidates</i>	<i>Number and Percentage of Passes</i>	
Leading Fireman	139 (110)	74 53.2%	(81 73.6%)
Sub-Officer	75 (69)	39 52.0%	(38 55.1%)

Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE)

102. The IFE, which is not part of the statutory examination system, sets its own examinations. In certain cases these examinations are accepted as alternatives to examinations set by the Examinations Board.

103. The Scottish Branch of the IFE, which is both active and progressive in its outlook, had a successful year in 1989. It held six well attended meetings in a variety of venues throughout Scotland. One of the more unusual was a visit to a North Sea Drilling Rig where a talk was given on the general operations and fire precautions on board a drilling rig.

104. Although a world-wide organisation, the IFE has as yet no Branches in Europe. The Scottish Branch has, however, established contacts with fire service organisations in Iceland, and through the efforts of Scottish officials there is now the prospect of the first European Branch of the IFE being formed in Iceland.

105. In Scotland and further afield the IFE is recognised as making a valuable contribution to the professionalism of the fire service and its related organisations. Amongst its members there is a vast source of knowledge and expertise which is available to brigades and services at all rank levels. It is one of the few organisations that bring together professionals from the many fields of fire engineering and fire safety.

Section G Miscellaneous

Scottish Central Fire Brigades Advisory Council

106. At the Council meetings held on 9 June and 1 December, the chair was taken by Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, Minister for Home Affairs at the Scottish Office, and Mr W K Reid, CB, Secretary, Scottish Home and Health Department, respectively. The Council considered reports from the Joint Committee on Fire Brigade Communications, Joint Committee on Appliances, Equipment and Uniform, Joint Committee on Fire Research, Joint Committee on Special Appliances and Joint Working Group on Chernobyl. The Council also considered papers from the Joint Pensions Committee, Joint Fire Prevention Committee, Joint Committee on Fire Brigade Operations, Joint Training Committee and Joint Working Party on Audit Commission Occasional Paper.

107. The Council normally meets twice each year, in June and December, and takes half the Joint Committee Reports at each meeting. This allows an opportunity for full discussion on the items which are summarised in the Reports and for explanations by a member of each Committee on the detail of work carried out during the year. In addition, the Commandant of the Scottish Fire Service Training School presents a Report at the June meeting on the work of the School during the previous year.

108. The Audit Commission's Occasional Paper No. 1 on Value for Money in the Fire Service contained a number of suggestions for improving the cost effectiveness of the fire service. In the light of this paper a Working Party under the auspices of the Central Fire Brigades Advisory Councils examined the Commission's suggestions other than those which related to pay and conditions of service. Although the Audit Commission paper related solely to England and Wales because of the nature of the suggestions contained in the paper with regard to the service in Scotland, the Scottish Home and Health Department and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities were fully represented on the Working Party.

109. The Working Party examined 12 issues and with one exception arrived at conclusions for all of the other issues raised. The report of the Joint Working Party was approved by the Council at its meeting in December and issued to Scottish fire brigades.

110. A Joint Working Party on Pay and Conditions of Service comprising the Home Office, Scottish Home and Health Department and the employers' and employees' sides of the National Joint Council is due to commence work early in the new year under the Chairmanship of Lord Ferrers, Minister of State, to discuss matters relating to conditions of service which were raised by the Audit Commission paper.

Research

111. In 1989 the Joint Committee on Fire Research considered various fire-related projects in the programme of research carried out by the Research and Planning Unit of the Home Office and a number of outside agencies. The 'Strategic Plan for Home Office Fire Research' continued to act as the catalyst for most of the research carried out during the year.

112. In keeping with the two main threads of the plan, one of which is concerned with fire prevention and protection and the other to improve efficiency and effectiveness, the following summarised projects (paragraphs 113-120) were currently researched during the year. Many of the areas of research are long-term and often overlap into the following year.

113. It has been agreed to set up an operational 'Study of the Physiological Effects of Wearing Breathing Apparatus'. It is envisaged that the study will consist of two work packages. The first will identify problem areas of task and protective equipment combinations common to the fire service; the second will assess the degree of the effects which different task/protective equipment combinations have in relation to safe working practices by simulating firefighters' tasks and measuring their physiological and subjective performance either under controlled conditions or in the field. This work should commence in 1990 and will be carried out by the Institute of Occupational Medicine, Edinburgh.

114. A draft specification was drawn up for life jackets incorporating positive buoyancy. Three jackets have been manufactured to meet this specification and were tested to identify problems of bulk, restriction of movement, etc. The initial tests, which were carried out using the ship at the Fire Service College, are to be followed by safety and buoyancy tests at the College swimming pool.

115. Nineteen eighty-nine saw the completion of brigade trials in London, Tyne and Wear and Hampshire on assisted pump control systems. The results of the trials proved the usefulness of such controls, but many feel that work has still to be done to improve the reliability of the systems.

116. The problems posed by the introduction of high security doors to combat crime and vandalism resulted in trials being carried out to test the effectiveness of a selection of tools in gaining entry. Results show that it is possible to gain access using traditional methods and tools but it takes longer. Some further work has been carried out using newly available tool combinations.

117. Past public concern on the hazards of various petrol formulations resulted in trials being carried out on the effectiveness and performance of portable foam extinguishers. The tests show that there is no necessity to change the foam fire extinguisher requirements for retail forecourts, although during the tests it appeared that the petrol additives had some effect on the quality of the foam blanket. These results would indicate a need to investigate the same effects for large scale fires.

118. In response to a request from the Joint Working Party on Appointment Provisions to the Fire Service, work started on a project 'Development of Practical Aptitude Tests for Fire Service Recruits'. Pre-entry aptitude tests help reduce the rate of recruit wastage during initial training and the associated cost. As the satisfactory completion of initial training is the criterion for the evaluation of the tests, the study concentrated wholly on skills required to cope with training school programmes.

119. It is proposed to develop a set of psychometric tests specifically for the fire service. Particular attention is to be paid to the requirements of current equal opportunities and race relations legislation concerning indirect discrimination against female applicants and applicants from ethnic minority groups. In the interim period it has been agreed by the Joint Training Committee of the Councils that the existing ability range tests can continue in use subject to the modifications proposed in a report to the Home Office in September 1988.

120. A study was completed on the noise levels to which firefighters are exposed. To comply with the regulations relating to noise at the work place due to be introduced by the HSE as an implementation of the European Community Directive on noise, it was necessary to determine whether firefighters are subjected to noise levels in excess of those specified in the Directive/regulations and whether exemptions from the relevant elements of the Directive/regulations should be sought.

Civil Defence and Emergency Planning

121. During the year all Scottish brigades continued to press on with the detailed plans for wartime emergencies. Although recent world events have produced an easing of tension and the likelihood of conflict has been greatly reduced, the need for emergency planning has been illustrated by the recent spate of natural disasters and other civil emergencies.

122. Disasters inflict a great deal of suffering and misery. It is only by coordinated planning with brigades working in harmony with other emergency services and organisations that a speedy response can be made thus providing help and relief in the most effective way possible.

FINDS 123. The 'Fire Information National Data Service' (FINDS), which is a system quite unique to the fire service, has been operational since April 1988. FINDS was set up by the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association and has been developed and operated on their behalf by Bradford University Research Limited. Established as a charitable limited company FINDS has been created with the intention of providing a vast pool of constantly growing and up-to-date information to assist the fire service to optimise its efficiency in every area of its activities.

124. The database provides details and results of research projects; training courses available throughout the country; a complete current who's who of brigade references; lists of emergency equipment and its availability; and a disaster management checklist.

125. FINDS offers a national data infrastructure for the fire service by linking all brigades in a national computer network and is attracting interest from other emergency service organisations in the UK and fire brigades across the world.

Fire Services National Benevolent Fund 126. During 1989 brigade fund raising rose 11% to £1,665,000 and overall income by 15.5% to £2,880,000.

127. Nineteen eighty-nine was another fine year for the Fund with records for both income raised and grants made being exceeded. It is worthy of comment to say that members of brigades not only provide the much needed fund raising efforts on which the Fire Service National Benevolent Fund largely depends, but also help in providing, often in the form of joint fund raising, income for other well deserving charities.

Fire Services Sports and Athletics Association 128. The Fire Services Sports and Athletics Association continues to play a prominent part as the focus and framework for fire service competitions and sporting activities at local and national level. Sporting activities within the fire service, apart from contributing to the fitness of firefighters, create team spirit and improve morale. They are also a useful means of contact between other emergency services and foreign teams.

Competitions 129. During 1989 teams from fire stations from all over Great Britain matched their technical knowledge and expertise in the National First Aid Competition and the Fire Brigades Technical Quiz. Both competitions are run by the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association. First aid is an extremely valuable and necessary part of a firefighter's work and any competition which encourages study to a high standard is very worthwhile.

130. In the first aid competition all Scottish teams have shown a high level of competence, but it is notable that one Scottish brigade in particular has made its mark in a very positive way. Strathclyde Fire Brigade entered two teams in the 1987 competition and came first in both Men's and Open Sections at Scottish level. In 1988 this performance was repeated with the teams winning both sections of the Scottish final. They went on to fourth place in the Men's and second place in the Open Competitions at the national finals. In the 1989 finals the Brigade entered one team for the Men's Competition. This team succeeded in winning the Scottish Final once again and came second in the National Final. This is a very creditable performance and the teams are to be congratulated.

131. The Fire Brigade Technical Quiz takes the form of a competition for whole-time members in alternate years, with a similar competition held for retained members in the intervening years. In 1989 the retained members' competition was held and a team from Fife Fire and Rescue Service (Tayport) won the Scottish District final. The team was eventually eliminated in the Northern District Final.

ESTABLISHMENT AND STRENGTH OF FIRE BRIGADES

as at 31st December 1989

Table 1

Operational Personnel	CENTRAL		DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY		FIFE		GRAMPIAN		HIGHLAND AND ISLANDS		LOTHIAN AND BORDERS		STRATHCLYDE		TAYSIDE		GRAND TOTALS	
	Establishment	Actual Strength		Establishment	Actual Strength		Establishment	Actual Strength		Establishment	Actual Strength		Establishment	Actual Strength		Establishment	Actual Strength	
		Male	Female		Male	Female		Male	Female		Male	Female		Male	Female		Male	Female
Firemasters ...	1	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	1	14
Senior Divisional Officers ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11
Divisional Officers Grade I ...	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	16
Divisional Officers Grade II ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	40
Divisional Officers Grade III ...	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	38
Assistant Divisional Officers ...	9	9	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	40
Station Officers ...	17	17	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	113
Sub Officers ...	26	27	8	8	29	29	31	31	34	34	34	34	34	34	35	35	35	340
Leading Firefighters ...	32	32	8	8	62	58	47	46	67	67	64	64	64	64	36	36	36	427
Firefighters ...	148	150	54	54	234	223	173	168	483	431	432	432	432	278	249	249	249	581
Totals ...	239	242	94	94	380	365	302	296	95	95	664	664	2,291	2,306	392	410	4,483	4,454
Control Room Staff																		
Prim. F.C. Officers ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Group F.C. Officers ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Fire Con. Officers ...	4	4	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	14
Sen. Fire Con. Operators ...	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	30
Lead. Fire Con. Operators ...	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	31
Fire Control Operators ...	8	8	10	10	12	12	9	9	8	8	12	10	44	5	3	3	3	36
Totals ...	17	17	15	15	21	21	18	18	13	13	26	22	67	8	18	18	195	192
Part-time Retained																		
Station Officers ...	3	3	1	1	2	2	11	11	13	13	5	4	8	8	7	7	8	49
Sub Officers ...	14	13	16	16	8	8	34	37	27	27	25	24	56	50	19	17	17	199
Leading Firefighters ...	17	17	20	20	10	10	46	55	54	54	32	30	67	69	35	40	40	281
Firefighters ...	136	127	151	151	92	70	369	349	271	271	233	218	518	484	237	184	2,032	1,854
Totals ...	170	157	188	188	112	90	460	452	365	365	295	276	649	611	298	249	2,561	2,388
Part-time Volunteer																		
Assistant Divisional Officers ...	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Station Officers ...	98	99	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	98
Sub Officers ...	117	116	84	84	84	84	84	84	84	84	84	84	84	84	84	84	84	117
Leading Firefighters ...	24	12	13	13	2	2	25	15	14	14	14	14	208	211	31	41	41	1,137
Firefighters ...	24	12	15	15	2	2	32	22	14	14	14	14	234	237	32	42	42	1,536
Totals ...	24	12	15	15	2	2	32	22	14	14	14	14	234	237	32	42	42	1,536
WHOLETIME																		
CONTROL ROOM	239	242	94	94	380	365	302	296	95	95	664	664	2,291	2,306	392	410	4,483	4,454
PART-TIME RETAINED	170	157	188	188	112	90	460	452	365	365	295	276	649	611	298	249	2,561	2,388
PART-TIME VOLUNTEER	24	12	15	15	2	2	32	22	14	14	14	14	234	237	32	42	42	1,536
GRAND TOTALS	450	416	297	297	513	461	812	770	1,490	1,490	944	944	3,241	3,162	686	758	8,775	8,226

SUMMARY OF FIRES AND SPECIAL SERVICES WHICH HAVE OCCURRED 1989

Table 3

	Total Fires	Classification of fires by number of pumps used for firefighting purposes:						Chimney Fires	Secondary Fires	False Alarms			Special Service	Total
		(a) 1 pump	(b) 2 pumps	(c) 3/5 pumps	(d) 6/10 pumps	(e) 11/15 pumps	(f) Over 15			Good Intent	Apparatus Fault	Malicious		
Central	897	772	97	20	8	—	—	410	839	644	443	693	213	4,139
Dumfries and Galloway	415	255	145	14	1	—	—	505	236	346	103	239	215	2,059
Fife	1,158	1,126	29	2	1	—	—	550	1,330	819	595	886	301	5,639
Grampian	1,607	1,323	190	91	3	—	—	1,052	1,293	1,106	343	431	512	6,344
Highland and Islands	743	622	83	34	4	—	—	1,670	640	567	211	183	410	4,424
Lothian and Borders	3,973	2,673	672	7	—	—	—	761	4,264	3,283	1,108	2,705	934	17,028
Strathclyde	9,762	8,595	978	179	9	1	—	2,158	13,669	7,563	4,688	7,889	3,239	48,968
Tayside	1,719	1,551	160	8	—	—	—	555	2,513	974	452	769	541	7,523
Total	20,274	16,917	2,354	969	33	1	—	7,661	24,784	15,302	7,943	13,795	6,365	96,124



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