



A Report of Her Majesty's
Inspectorate of Fire Services for Scotland

ISLE OF MAN FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

INSPECTION REPORT 1996-97



THE SCOTTISH OFFICE

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of Fire Services for Scotland

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Section I - Introduction

1.1 HM Inspectorate of Fire Services is charged with examining and improving the efficiency, effectiveness and standards of the Fire Service in Scotland, and the ways in which it provides a service to the public. Our aim is to promote high quality of service and value for money objectives which take full account of public expectations, in accordance with the principles set out in the Citizen's Charter, and inspire public confidence. In addition, the Inspectorate was invited, on a non-statutory basis, to examine the efficiency and effectiveness of the Isle of Man Fire and Rescue Service through an inspection process designed to embrace all of the above principles.

1.2 Reports are normally submitted to the Secretary of State for Scotland, however in this instance the published observations of the Inspectorate were made available to the Minister for Home Affairs in the Isle of Man. In line with our commitment to openness all reports are published. The reports aim to:

- inform the public about the performance of their fire service;
- draw brigade achievements and good practice to notice;
- identify publicly the scope for improvement;
- help accelerate improved value for money in the fire service; and
- promote greater public awareness of the Inspectorate's role and function.

1.3 Information gathering begins with the receipt from brigades of statistics covering many aspects of their performance, operations and administrative matters. This includes staffing, recruitment, training, equal opportunities, buildings, vehicles and fire safety, and the arrangements in place for dealing with complaints from the public.

1.4 Inspections are undertaken of all 8 Scottish brigades each year. The Inspectorate carries out a full 'primary' inspection on 4 of the brigades, with the remaining 4 undergoing an 'intermediate' inspection. The 'intermediate' inspection checks that action has been taken on recommendations from previous inspections and looks at any changes which have occurred since the previous 'primary' inspection was carried out. In addition, primary inspections of the Isle of Man Fire and Rescue Service and the Scottish Fire Service Training School are carried out once every 3 years.

1.5 The duration of an inspection will depend on the size and the nature of the brigade concerned and whether it is a 'primary' or an 'intermediate' inspection. It is normally undertaken by HM Chief Inspector and the Senior Assistant Inspectors and consists of:

- visits to fire stations and other brigade premises;
- discussions with senior officers on various aspects of the brigade's performance;
- pre-planned fire station drills and exercises; and
- meetings with representatives of staff associations.

At the conclusion of an inspection, HM Chief Inspector will discuss his preliminary findings with the Chief Fire Officer.

1.6 It should be emphasised that the report is an informed assessment based upon HM Inspectorate of Fire Services' professional judgement and does not purport to be a comprehensive account of all the Service's activities. Information within this report relates to the fiscal year 1996-97 unless otherwise mentioned.

1.7 The inspection of the Isle of Man Fire and Rescue Service was carried out by HM Chief Inspector of Fire Services, A N Morrison during the week commencing 17 February 1997. Throughout the period of inspection Mr Morrison was assisted by Senior Assistant Inspector of Fire Services, A S Whitton and Senior Assistant Inspector of Fire Services, C G N Stewart.



Section 2 - Service Profile

Management

Authority:	Isle of Man Department of Home Affairs	
Brigade:	Chief Fire Officer	W G Cain GIFireE
	Deputy Chief Fire Officer	A D Christian GIFireE
Geographic Area (km sq):	588	
Population:	71,714	

Personnel

	Establishment	Actual Strength
Wholetime	54	54
Retained	101	101
Non-uniformed	8	8

Vehicle Fleet

Pumping Appliances	18
Special Appliances	6
Ancillary Vehicles	12

Operations

Emergency Calls Attended	1,957
Special Service Calls	234
Total Rescues Effected	10

Fire Safety

Statutory Enforcement Inspections	370
Other Inspections	565
Plans Examined	257

Finance

Revenue Expenditure (estimated outturn)	£2,521,000
Capital Expenditure	£100,000
Income Generated	£19,500

- ★ Headquarters
- ◇ Wholetime
- Retained





Section 3 - Management

General

3.1 The Isle of Man is approximately 48 kilometres in length and 16 kilometres across at its widest point, covering an area of 588 square kilometres. It is situated in the Irish Sea and, through its centralised location, maintains firm links with Scotland, Northern Ireland, England, Wales and the Republic of Ireland. The population, assessed at the date of the 1996 census to be 71,714, is adapting to meet the changes in the employment base brought about by a new direction in the economy of the Island.

3.2 The traditional industry of tourism has markedly declined in recent years, although the Island boasts of a number of very picturesque small coastal towns where fishing and water sports are still much in evidence, while the more rural inland areas continue to maintain an agricultural base. The main centre of population is concentrated at the port of Douglas and this is where change is most apparent. Larger hotels and boarding houses, once forming part of the Island's traditional economy, are being replaced by office blocks to accommodate the financial investment houses setting up business there.

Fire Authority

3.3 The Isle of Man is a self-governing Crown Dependency with an elected Island's Parliament known as the Tynwald. This Parliament consists of 24 publicly elected members in the lower house, or "House of Keys", and the Legislative Council comprising of 9 members, incorporating the Lord Bishop of Sodor and Man and the Attorney General as standing members, is known as the upper house.

3.4 Following each general election, the Tynwald meets and elects a Chief Minister who, in turn, selects the Ministerial team from members of the House of Keys and the Legislative Council. A team of 10 selected members, including the Chief Minister, form the Council of Ministers and the division of responsibility for this group is as follows:

- Treasury Minister
- Minister of Home Affairs
- Minister of Health and Social Security
- Minister of Local Government and Environment
- Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
- Minister of Education
- Minister of Trade and Industry
- Minister of Tourism and Leisure
- Minister of Transport

3.5 Within the structure of the Tynwald, the Fire Service is administered by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA). This Department, headed by the Minister of Home Affairs, Mr A Bell a Member of the House of Keys (MHK), is responsible for the provision of the Police, Civil Defence and Emergency Planning, Prisons, Probation and After Care in addition to that of the Fire Service.

3.6 At the time of inspection 3 further members of the Tynwald, Mr A C Duggan MHK, Mrs B J Cannell MHK and Mr J P Shimmin MHK, were serving as assistants to the Minister of Home Affairs in matters pertaining to the operation of that Department.

3.7 Meetings of the Fire Authority are scheduled in an 8-weekly cycle and are chaired by the Minister and, in addition to the 3 members of the Tynwald who are members of the DHA, the Chief Fire Officer, Mr W G Cain and his Deputy, Mr A D Christian, meet with the Chief Executive of the DHA, Mr D Creer, at that time. The Finance Officer, Miss C Connor, and the Administrator, Mr C Sharpe, also attend each meeting of the Fire Authority.

3.8 To ensure an optimum level of understanding exists between all emergency services operating within the Island's area of responsibility, the Chief Fire Officer meets with his counterparts on a like 8-weekly cycle. Other members of the group which is chaired by the Chief Executive of the DHA are:

- The Chief Constable, Mr Robin Oake;
- The Prison Governor, Mrs Rosie Crosby;
- The Chief Probation Officer, Mr David Sellick;
- The Civil Defence/Emergency Planning Officer, Mr John Foster.

3.9 The statutory responsibility of the Isle of Man Fire and Rescue Service is embraced within their Fire Services Act of 1984. This Act received Royal Assent, was announced to the Tynwald and subsequently passed for enactment in October of that year. The principles of operation of the Fire Service in the Isle of Man are very much akin to those adopted throughout the UK as the provisions of this Act, to a great degree, mirror those incorporated in the Fire Services Act of 1947.

3.10 In a similar way, the conditions of service enjoyed by uniformed staff in the Fire Service, with few minor exceptions, are those embraced within the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire Brigades' Scheme of Conditions of Service as applied throughout the UK.

Fire and Rescue Service

3.11 In the 3 year period since the last inspection of the Isle of Man Fire and Rescue Service, the senior management structure has remained extremely stable with Mr W G Cain continuing in post as Chief Fire Officer.

During that time he has been assisted by the Deputy Chief Officer, Mr A D Christian and the Third Officer, Assistant Divisional Officer, Mr E W McArd.

3.12 As officers forming part of the Service Management Team are based at the Headquarters building in Douglas meetings are convened on a weekly basis. The members of the team are:

Rank	Name	Reference
CFO	W G Cain	Policy determination
DCFO	A D Christian	Finance and Premises
ADO	E W McArd	Operations and Training
ADO	N Rivers	Operations and Fire Safety
StnO	K Groom	General Staff Officer

In addition to the above, Sub-Officer A S Gawne serves as the Transport Officer.

3.13 During the inspection, the Inspectorate were afforded the opportunity to meet with the Minister for Home Affairs, Mr A Bell MHK and the Chief Executive for his Department, Mr D Creer. On a separate occasion the HM Chief Inspector met with officials of the various accredited associations which represent the workforce within the Service. That representation included the Transport and General Workers' Union, the Manx Fire Brigades Union, the Fire Brigades Union and the Fire Officers' Association. Topics of discussion in both instances centred on the necessary levels of funding to support service delivery throughout the Island and the evolution of training methods to meet the needs of the health and safety of the workforce in the course of their duties.

3.14 Throughout the meetings and interviews with representatives of the Fire Authority, the managers and officers of the Service and with the officials of the various accredited associations, the Inspectorate gained the impression that the co-operation between and morale of all groups associated with emergency services delivery to the public was at a high level.



Section 4 - Finance

Revenue

4.1 Within the financial year 1996-97 the net expenditure outturn was estimated at £2,521,000. Of that figure £2,105,400 (83.51%) is dedicated to salaries and staff costs, normally adjusted in November of each financial year to the agreed level of pay settlement for firefighters arrived at by the National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Fire Brigades, plus loan charges, with the remaining £415,600 (16.49%) meeting other costs within the working budget. This latter portion of the revenue budget, in normal circumstances, is increased at the outset of budget deliberation to the level of inflation experienced in the previous financial year. However, due to financial difficulties affecting another division of the DHA in 1996-97, the anticipated 3.76% inflationary increase for that period was not included in the calculation and the Chief Fire Officer was required to absorb any oncost within this budget.

4.2 The allocated revenue budget for the financial year 1997-98 is set at £2,635,000, an increase of £114,000 (4.52%) over the corresponding budget for the previous year. It should be noted that, within this period, the turntable ladder based at the Douglas Fire Station is due for a major 10-year service at an anticipated cost of £25,000. The Chief Fire Officer has indicated that in recent years the Treasury has issued, to all Departments, target figures that each should work within and it is becoming increasingly difficult to finance such one-off items.

4.3 At the time of inspection it was understood that, in addition to the expenditure required for the major servicing schedule for the turntable ladder, increased costs were anticipated for the provision of real fire training of operational staff at the Washington Hall facility of Lancashire Fire Brigade. The need for this, and other forms of training to be adopted in order that the health and safety of employees is ensured, is embodied in more detail in Section 6 of this report relating to that subject.

4.4 Although collectively realising a deficit of £53,832, it is interesting to note that, over the past 5 year period, the balance of contributions and payments in the Firemen's Pension Scheme has moved from a negative to positive situation more recently as can be seen from the following table.

Year	Contributions Received	Benefits Paid
1991-92	93,041	103,361
1992-93	101,076	164,136
1993-94	106,807	109,102
1994-95	110,823	104,641
1995-96	116,948	101,287
TOTALS	528,695	582,527

However, the Inspectorate is aware that a number of officers are arriving at the end of their service period and increased future payments may once again shift that balance.

A personal pension scheme is operated for retained firefighters on the Isle of Man through the Norwich Union Insurance Group. Within this scheme the minimum contribution to be made on behalf of each individual is £25.00 of which £7.00 is paid by the Service. At the time of inspection it was understood that the take-up of this scheme by retained personnel was 63.37% of the workforce, necessitating a funding level of £4,513 by the Service to support this scheme during 1996-97.

Capital

4.5 The total capital expenditure for 1996-97 of £100,000 met the programmed purchase of a firefighting appliance, with an off-road capability, for the retained unit based at Kirk Michael Fire Station. In the following 5 years, to meet the policy of replacing front line fire appliances over a 15 year period, capital estimates for the Fire and Rescue Service have been prepared and show:

Capital Estimates

Replacement Appliance	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001
Standard fire appliance for Laxey Fire Station	153,000			
Standard fire appliance for Port Erin Fire Station		153,000		
Standard appliances for Douglas and Castletown Fire Stations			306,000	
Off-road 4x4 fire appliance for Laxey Fire Station				108,000
Total Expenditure	153,000	153,000	306,000	108,000

4.6 It is clear, from reference to the preceding table, that the capital estimates for the next 5 years make provision for nothing other than the replacement of fire appliances. However, it was intimated, at the time of inspection, that finance required for any new build premises would be included in the plan. At present the most pressing need for accommodation is the replacement of offices for fire safety officers and, although this is programmed outwith the current 5 year plan at present, the Chief Fire Officer intends to make a case to bring forward this project to an earlier date. The purchase of other major items of equipment would normally be drawn from revenue but, should it be necessary to acquire a significant amount of breathing apparatus or communications equipment, for example, a case can be made for inclusion in the capital estimates.

Income

4.7 The income made by the Service in 1996-97 amounted to £19,500 and the areas of generation of funds are detailed in the following table.

Training Receipts	£3,000;
Fire extinguisher retails	£500;
Search fees	£8,000;
Miscellaneous	£8,000.

Recommendations

4.8 The Inspectorate was impressed by the straightforward and effective method normally adopted for revising the revenue budget from year to year, whereby provision for staff costs has been separately increased in accordance with the pay settlement each year and provision for other directly incurred expenditure has been increased by the rate of inflation. It is noted with concern, however, that a decrease in the Service's revenue budget for 1996-97 was achieved by not taking into account the level of inflation for that particular year. It is recommended that this means of securing a reduced budget, which can only result in progressive reductions in the baseline for future budgets, should not be considered as an option in the future.



Section 5 - Personnel

Establishment

5.1 The uniformed establishment of the Service, as approved by the Fire Authority and authorised by the Minister for Home Affairs, stands at 154. The following table shows the establishment and the actual number of persons in post in each section at 31 March 1997:

	Establishment	Actual Strength
Wholetime	54	54
Retained	101	101
Total	155	155

5.2 Wholetime operational staff are all based at the Service Headquarters building and fire station at Douglas. In ensuring a response to emergency situations, the workforce there undertake to provide a system of compulsory retained cover on a rota basis and, by necessity, live in close proximity to the station.

5.3 Other duties carried out by wholetime staff include the provision of a fully trained and equipped sub-aqua dive rescue team, an equally well prepared mountain rescue team and a specialist team capable of high tower rescues. It was also recognised that as there are no dedicated Fire Control staff within the Service establishment this task fell to the on-duty watch personnel.

5.4 A further example of the versatility and innovation displayed by the Service lies in the siting of a hyperbaric chamber adjacent to the drill yard at Douglas Fire Station. This chamber is funded and operated by the Kevin Gray Memorial Trust, a charitable organisation. The main beneficiaries of hyperbaric medicine are those suffering from ailments such as multiple sclerosis, strokes, sports injuries or ulcerated legs as a result of poor blood circulation, who are referred there by the Isle of Man Department of Health. Quite clearly, however, the advantage to the Service in maintaining this facility on their premises is the immediate assistance that can be accessed should this form of treatment prove necessary for anyone suffering from smoke inhalation or exposure to toxic chemicals.

5.5 In addition to the uniformed establishment, the Service employs a number of non-uniformed staff in certain support roles. This sector of the Service includes a computer aided drawing operator, an administrative officer, a secretary and 2 workshop mechanics, all on a full-time capacity. A further 3 personnel are employed on a part-time basis. Two employees share the single post of secretary in the Fire Safety Department and also employed is one part-time cleaner.

Retirement and Resignation

5.6 During the period covered by this inspection a total of 2 wholetime and 2 retained employees retired from the Service and a further member of the retained sector resigned. It was noted that, although the Senior Fire Prevention Officer had retired in this financial year, the planning and construction of a large hospital complex encouraged the Fire Authority to re-employ this officer on a short-term contract in order to ensure continuity of expert advice throughout the planning phases, which it is estimated will last about 18 months.

5.7 The wastage levels of 3.77% in the wholetime sector of the Service and 2.97% in respect of the retained equivalent are extremely low and have the effect of establishing an experienced workforce. This has the beneficial effect, in addition to retaining the skills base of the Service, of minimising the cost of recruitment and equipping and training entrants.

Recruitment

5.8 It is the policy of the Service, as agreed by the DHA, to advertise wholetime vacancies throughout the ranks of the retained sector as it is considered that this course of action provides a suitable level of high quality applicant. During 1996-97 a total of 10 applications were received in this way and, after tests for educational, physical and practical aptitude, one person was selected following final interviews.

5.9 During the financial year covered by this inspection a total of 26 applications were received for enrolment to the retained sector of the Service. From that number 20 attended for tests resulting in the employment of 6 successful candidates. It was noted that advertisements for retained staff were circulated in the local press and by the distribution of suitably prepared brochures. No advert was placed in the offices of any recognised job-centre on the Island.

Sickness Levels

5.10 A comprehensive policy designed to monitor absences from work is now in force and covers all personnel, both uniformed and non-uniformed. This policy aims to promote a positive attitude towards good attendance and seeks to identify trends and courses of absenteeism so that the necessary remedial action can be taken. A 3 phase programme, embraced within the policy, is geared to provide a level of support for all personnel and designed to establish a structured programme of counselling, target-setting and monitoring to minimise the levels of absence from work.

5.11 The most recent statistical return available for a financial year relates to 1995-96 where the absence levels recorded for all staff stands at 3.9%.

5.12 A scheme is in operation in the Service where, dependent upon medical advice and approval, uniformed personnel who have been absent on long term sick leave are

encouraged to return to work on light duties. This scheme, whilst promoting an early return to full duties, derives the benefit of having experienced personnel assisting in central support areas or any other departments of the Service during their recuperative period. It is recognised however that where these personnel are operational firefighters there is still a loss to the Service in that capacity.

Occupational Health

5.13 Whilst it was appreciated by the Inspectorate that all operational personnel, both wholetime and retained, are subject to medical examination on a 3 yearly cycle after attaining their 40th birthday, it is recommended that the Service seeks to intensify the health monitoring of the workforce by initiating an Occupational Health Scheme (OHS) compatible with the recommendations contained in Part IV of the Guidance on Medical Standards in the Fire Service as applies to brigades throughout the UK. It is additionally recommended that any resultant OHS should apply equally to the non-uniformed sector of the Service.

5.14 Fitness training is presently included within the working routine of the operational shift personnel. It is recognised that this form of exercise can contribute to the health of the workforce in general terms and further comment on this subject is contained at paragraph 6.15 of this report.

Discipline

5.15 During the period covered by this inspection there were no recorded cases of any person being charged with an offence against discipline and it must be concluded, therefore, that the standard of discipline within the Service remains at a high level.

Equal Opportunities

5.16 The central policies of the Government are determined by the Council of Ministers and they are reviewed annually along with the associated objectives to ascertain their continued relevance and appropriateness. This framework of policies encompasses equal opportunities (EO) and it is therefore incumbent on the Service to develop their own policies and strategies.

5.17 Indeed the Government's "Policy on Society" contains a statement to the effect that "it is to be

ensured that individuals are afforded the greatest possible equality of opportunity and treatment" which clearly demonstrates the objective of EO in the community. The Inspectorate is aware that there is a current Equal Opportunities Bill for the Island waiting to be introduced into the Branches of the Legislature.

5.18 Although the Service has not yet adopted a formal EO policy, the general operating principles of such are in evidence, especially at the recruitment stage. It was noted that the only female firefighter serves at Kirk Michael Retained Station where she is proving to be a valuable asset to the firefighting force. Therefore the Service should be pro-active in their promotion of the Retained Fire Service to the female population, especially in the areas of the Island where there is known difficulty in obtaining daytime crews.

5.19 It is therefore recommended that the Service develop and produce an appropriate policy statement on EO in accordance with the wishes of the Council of Ministers and be pro-active in the recruitment of female firefighters especially in the Retained Service. Thereafter management should undertake to inform the personnel of the policy and the wider issues associated with this subject.

Qualifications and Promotion

5.20 A system of statutory promotion examinations is adopted in the Fire Service to provide a qualifying bench mark for advancement to the levels of Leading Firefighter, Sub-Officer and Station Officer. This system applies equally in the UK and in the Isle of Man. The number of personnel qualified for promotion to the next rank is shown in the table below.

5.21 While the number of personnel qualified for promotion to the next rank is sufficient to meet the needs of the Service at present, there is a requirement for an ongoing number of passes each year. To assist personnel in this the Service makes available tutorials designed to help candidates for the written examinations and organises mock examinations for those who wish to participate in the practical part of the promotion examination process. The Service also encourages the adoption of distance learning courses by all candidates by offering the incentive of a 75% reimbursement of costs to those who are successful in passing the relevant examination.

Rank	No. of Personnel in Existing Rank	Number Qualified for Promotion to:			Total
		Leading Firefighter	Sub Officer	Station Officer	
Firefighter	29	17	1	-	18 (62.1%)
Leading Firefighter	6	-	2	2	4 (66.7%)
Sub-Officer	9	-	-	2	2 (22.2%)
Station Officer	6	-	-	-	6 (100.00%)

Comments

5.22 It is evident that the multi-purpose role adopted by the operational staff serves to instil a sense of pride in the achievement attained. The Inspectorate were aware that, as a result, morale throughout the Service was at a very high level.

5.23 The Service is commended in its joint venture with the Kevin Gray Memorial Trust to site a hyperbaric chamber, with all the potential benefits that may accrue in the treatment of those suffering from smoke inhalation or exposure to toxic chemicals, within the curtilage of their Douglas premises.

Recommendations

5.24 In the UK it is general policy to advertise widely in order to comply with the Equal Opportunities and Race Relations Act, therefore it is recommended that advertisements for the recruitment of firefighters, wholetime and retained, should be placed in such a way as to make the positions offered as widely available as possible to the entire spectrum of human resource on the Island. This would include advertising in the local press, the circulation of any brochure information and the promotion of the relevant information at all job centres.

5.25 It is recommended that the Service seeks to intensify the health monitoring of the workforce by initiating an OHS compatible with the recommendations contained in Part IV of the Guidance on Medical Standards in the Fire Service as applies to brigades throughout the UK.

5.26 It is additionally recommended that the resultant OHS should apply equally to the non-uniformed sector of the Service.

5.27 It is recommended that the Service develop and produce an appropriate policy statement on EO in accordance with the wishes of the Council of Ministers and be pro-active in the recruitment of female firefighters especially in the Retained Service. Thereafter management should undertake to inform the personnel of the policy and the wider issues associated with this subject.



Section 6 - Training

Training Management

6.1 The Training Department is based at Headquarters where the Assistant Divisional Officer (Operations) has overall responsibility for the reference. He is assisted by a Sub-Officer, a Leading Firefighter and a Firefighter.

Training Strategy

6.2 The wholetime training programme is determined by each watch commander, who is responsible for identifying individual training needs, whilst the retained training programme is determined by the Training Department. A range of subjects for the wholetime training programme is contained within the personal training records system which details the minimum number of sessions to be carried out for each subject over a 12 month period. Individual firefighters have a responsibility to report any training missed in order that the subject can be reallocated and the Officer-in-Charge also examines the records to ensure the training sessions have been completed. The current retained training programme covers a 12 month period and consists of core subjects such as the use of ladders, breathing apparatus and pump operation etc, which is supplemented by practical training utilising all equipment carried on the fire appliances plus lectures covering the technical aspects of firefighting and rescue techniques. A revised retained training programme is being trialled at present which also incorporates the personal training record.

6.3 The training requirement of the Fire Service is an evolutionary process which has resulted in a change of emphasis regarding the methodologies utilised in training firefighters. Whilst it was recognised at the time of inspection that the Service is currently investigating, in association with a fire brigade on the UK mainland, changes in their Training Strategy, there remains a number of inadequacies in the existing continuation training programme. The Service should continue to develop a Training Strategy which changes the manner in which the training needs of individuals and fire stations are identified and thereafter how the training is delivered to meet those needs. In so doing the Service should adopt a competence and risk based approach to continuation training and it is suggested the Emergency Fire Service Lead Body (EFSLB) draft standards of competence be utilised by the Service in determining the training objectives and requirements. Any system provided must make provision to ensure that an individual has demonstrated all of the performance outcomes relating to a function to achieve competence and thereafter that an assessment procedure is provided to ensure that competence is maintained.

6.4 Personal training records have been provided for wholetime personnel and are in the process of being introduced for retained personnel. It is recommended that the personal training record be more prescriptive in order

to identify the actual participation by an individual at a training event ie crew member, pump operator etc.

Recruit Training

6.5 One wholetime firefighter was recruited during the year under review. Training of wholetime firefighters is carried out by Lancashire County Fire Brigade. A total of 6 personnel were recruited to the retained service. Retained recruits attend Service Headquarters for a 4 day basic training course spread over 2 weekends. The course consists of standard drills, basic firefighting techniques and administration procedures etc. Continuation training for the retained recruits is carried out at their individual stations where their progress is monitored by supervisory officers. They are also required to attend an 8 day breathing apparatus course spread over 4 weekends.

Probationers

6.6 The probationary period for wholetime and retained firefighters is 24 months. Assessments are carried out at quarterly intervals by supervisory officers regarding wholetime firefighters progress and suitability. Examinations are carried out by 2 Station Officers to assess the probationers competency in practical operational skills, wearing of breathing apparatus and technical knowledge etc. Retained personnel are assessed by their Station Commander during the 2 year period however, a final probation report is not provided. It is recommended that the procedure provided for the wholetime personnel be adopted for the retained sector.

Driver Training

6.7 The driver training courses provided by the Service range from light vehicles, large goods vehicles to special appliances as well as initial emergency fire appliance driver (EFAD) training for wholetime personnel. To date, EFAD courses have only been provided for wholetime personnel therefore, it is recommended that this facility be extended to retained staff as soon as is practicable. In addition, the Service should consider introducing experience of driving at high speeds as part of the EFAD training.

6.8 Driver training is provided utilising a vehicle fitted with manual transmission whilst the majority of fire appliances provided at fire stations are fitted with automatic transmission. It is recommended that personnel receive driver training by a qualified driving instructor, with a vehicle fitted with automatic transmission, prior to being approved as an EFAD.

Station Training

6.9 Wholetime watch related personnel are allocated 2 hours on dayshift and 2 hours on nightshift duties for training purposes as detailed in the Service's training programme. In addition to normal Fire Service functions, the Service has a Rope Rescue, a Dive Search and Rescue

and a Hill Search and Rescue Teams. Due to the variety, complexity and volume of equipment operated by the wholetime personnel at Douglas Fire Station, it is recommended that consideration be given to increasing the time allocated for training purposes, which should form part of the overall review of training needs. The retained personnel attend their stations for training purposes for 2 hours each week. This training is occasionally supplemented by weekend courses and exercises. In view of the ever increasing training requirement, it is strongly recommended that the retained training period be extended to 3 hours.

Breathing Apparatus

6.10 Breathing apparatus refresher courses for both wholetime and retained personnel are carried out on an annual basis. This training, which includes the use of heat and smoke, is carried out at Service Headquarters, the Airport Fire House and Port Erin Fire Station.

First Aid Training

6.11 In order to comply with the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 the Service has 10 Instructors capable of providing tuition on First Aid, 4 of which are qualified to Health and Safety Executive (HSE) standard. At the time of inspection 70% of wholetime personnel and 100% of retained personnel were qualified to the standard of Trained First Aider. Re-certification is required every 3 years therefore, arrangements should be made for refresher courses followed by examination to be provided for this purpose.

External Training

6.12 The Service provides a positive commitment to the continuation training of its officers and during 1996 a total of 7 personnel participated in progression and specialist courses at the Fire Service College (FSC) at Moreton-in-Marsh. The courses included those for Watch Commander, Divisional Command, Retained Leading Firefighter and Rope Rescue One and Two. In addition, 20 personnel each year receive hot fire training at Lancashire County Fire Brigade.

Miscellaneous Training

6.13 The Training Department organised and provided a range of courses for wholetime and retained personnel. Subjects covered included Road Traffic Accident Procedures, Turntable Ladder Operator and Refresher, Hydraulic Platform Operator, Control Room Operator, First Aid, EFAD and Leadership and Management.

6.14 In November 1996 the Service participated in major exercises at off-station locations involving wholetime and retained personnel along with other emergency services. These exercises enabled personnel to become familiar with the special procedures formulated to deal with the risks involved as well as enabling firefighters

from various fire stations to work together. These exercises also enabled breathing apparatus procedures and search and rescue techniques to be practised along with command and control functions.

Personal Fitness Training

6.15 The Service allocates a 30 minute session during each shift for participation in personal fitness training. The training at the wholetime fire station at Douglas consists of conditioning, utilising multi-gym equipment and a rowing machine. Although time is allocated during each shift for fitness training it is not deemed compulsory that this training be carried out. The Service may wish to consider fitness training being made compulsory in conjunction with the introduction of an OHS as recommended in paragraph 5.13.

Commercial Training

6.16 Commercial training is provided by the Service for a number of agencies from the industrial and commercial sector. Subjects covered include a Fire Warden Course, Extinguisher Use, Breathing Apparatus Refresher Course, Road Traffic Accident Procedures and Residential Home/Nursing Home Staff Training. A total of 876 persons were trained in the year under review.

Comments

6.17 The Service is commended for their initiative in providing training and guidance to personnel regarding the behaviour of fire, flashover and backdraught phenomena. The purchase of a simulator to further enhance the theoretical input regarding these subjects will be an asset to the Service in reducing the risk of injuries to firefighters.

Recommendations

6.18 It is recommended that the Service continues to develop a Training Strategy which changes the manner in which the training needs of individuals and stations are identified and thereafter how the training is delivered to meet those needs. In developing this strategy, the Service should also continue to pursue the adoption of a competence and risk based approach to station training.

6.19 It is recommended that the existing personal training records be more prescriptive in order to identify the actual participation by an individual at a training event.

6.20 It is recommended that the probationary reporting procedure provided for the wholetime personnel be adopted for the retained sector.

6.21 It is recommended that the EFAD training be extended to cover retained personnel. In addition, the Service should consider introducing experience of driving at high speeds as part of the EFAD training courses.

6.22 It is recommended that personnel receive driver training by a qualified driving instructor, with a vehicle fitted with automatic transmission, prior to being approved as an EFAD.

6.23 In view of the ever increasing training requirement incumbent upon the Service, consideration should be given to increasing the training period for wholetime personnel, which should form an integral part of the overall review of training needs. In addition, it is recommended that the training period for retained personnel be increased to 3 hours each week.

6.24 Arrangements should be made for refresher courses and examinations for personnel who require re certification as Trained First Aiders.

6.25 It is recommended that the Service considers fitness training being made compulsory in conjunction with the introduction of an OHS.



Section 7 - Operational Efficiency

Standards of Fire Cover

7.1 Whilst the Service has not adopted the fire risk categorisation which is standard within the UK, target times for attendance at specifically identified levels of risk within the community are broadly in tandem with that expected of the Fire Service throughout the UK.

7.2 The method of assessing the weight of attendance at any given incident is determined by the type of building or other risk rather than the percentage of concentration of risk in a given area, as is currently the case in the UK. The accuracy of this form of assessment is set to increase in the near future as a digital mapping system, recently acquired by the Service, is to be used for more ready information retrieval and reference.

7.3 At present Control Room and mobilising procedures are detailed in Operational Orders Parts 1 and 2, where guidance for the control room officer aims to have the appropriate weight of attendance at given risks in the following areas:

a.	High risk areas in Douglas	1st pump in 5mins;
b.	Residential areas of towns and villages	1st pump in 8mins;
c.	Rural areas	1st pump in 15mins.

7.4 Following an Audit Commission Report on the Fire Service in England and Wales, a Joint Committee of the Central Fire Brigade Advisory Council (CFBAC) for England and Wales and the Scottish CFBAC is currently convened with a remit to review the Standards of Fire Cover operating within the UK. As the Chief Fire Officer of the Service in the Isle of Man begins to update the mobilising process, utilising the digital mapping system, it may be prudent to take cognisance of the results of any work carried out in that forum, so as to maintain the correspondence with best practice in the UK which has clearly existed in the past.

7.5 Arrangements have been made to secure the reinforcement of the firefighting resources in the Island should assistance at any incident, or incidents, prove necessary. In the knowledge that the time scale in transporting fire appliances and equipment by sea would be prohibitive in most emergency situations, these arrangements concentrate on the transport of personnel from Lancashire Fire Brigade by air.

Attendance Times

7.6 As recommended at the time of last inspection, a close monitoring of the attendance times to emergency calls in the Douglas area has been undertaken to determine

the need, or otherwise, for further fire cover there. However the results of this assessment are as yet inconclusive and the Chief Fire Officer intends to continue the monitoring process for a further period before making any recommendation to the Fire Authority. In general, the attendance times throughout the Service area are recorded as being satisfactory. It may be of interest to note that for the past 3 years a system of Output Measures and Performance Indicators (OMPI) has operated in Scotland. To provide a more readily available and comparable base of statistical information for any future inspection, it is recommended that a similar system is adopted by the Service. The Inspectorate is prepared to forward further details on request.

Confidence Levels

7.7 The term 'confidence level' describes the percentage of occasions on which a designated number of firefighters are available to respond on fire appliances to fire calls. It is used to determine the ability of the Service to maintain a minimum of 5 riders on the first appliance and 4 on the second sent to fire incidents on at least 75% of occasions. In the case of the Isle of Man it is the policy that 5 crew members are maintained as the normal response for both wholetime and retained appliances for any attendance crewed by either on-duty or retained personnel. As a result of this policy wholetime staffed fire appliances attained a confidence level of 100% over the period covered by this inspection and, as can be gathered from reference to the following table, the confidence level for those appliances staffed by the retained sector stands at 96.8%.

7.8 The following table makes it clear that there is little problem of availability of retained personnel in any retained unit other than the one based in Laxey. Although missing only one fire call as a result of a failure to provide sufficient personnel, where a response to the emergency would have been mobilised from the next nearest station, the fact that the inability to provide a crew extends to 43 occasions over the period covered by this inspection is a matter for concern. The lack of available personnel at this station is difficult to appreciate, given that all retained members in the Isle of Man are employed on the understanding that they can provide fire cover over the full 24 hour period and receive remuneration accordingly. It is recommended, therefore, that an intensive effort be made to identify suitable applicants, capable of giving the full cover desired, from the entire spectrum of human resource at Laxey. There is also a case for reviewing the level of retaining fee offered to those existing staff who are clearly providing less in terms of availability than expected.

Confidence Levels

Station Affected	Occasions Off-the-run	No of Emergency Calls Missed	Total Turnouts
Douglas	0	0	1,017
Laxey	43	1	46
Ramsey	0	0	132
Kirk Michael	0	0	27
Peel	2	0	64
Port Erin	0	0	88
Castletown	3	0	135
Totals	48	1	1,509

Exercises and Drills

7.9 The operational skills of both retained and wholetime staff were tested by the Inspectorate through the setting of practical exercises and drills across a range of situations. Demonstrations of equipment usage during these practical sessions were followed by the detailed questioning of crews to determine proficiency in technical matters. Apart from a few exceptions that were brought to the attention of the Chief Fire Officer at the time of inspection, in general, a high standard was displayed throughout the stations inspected in both the practical and technical areas tested.

7.10 The records of participation in joint service emergency exercises, as recorded in the Civil Defence and Emergency Planning sub-section of this report at paragraphs 7.35 and 7.36 suggest that a suitable level of training is undertaken in the preparation for major incidents.

Water Supplies

7.11 Schedule 1 of the Fire Services Act 1984 places a responsibility on fire authorities to take all reasonable measures for ensuring the provision of an adequate supply of water, and for securing that it will be available for use in case of fire. To satisfy that responsibility the Service has entered into an agreement with the Water Authority whereby all fire hydrants are installed and repaired by them at the expense of the Service. In addition, the Service has a policy of inspecting each hydrant on an annual basis.

7.12 As existing premises are subject to change and new accommodation continues to be provided for domestic, commercial and industrial purposes, there is a parallel need to review the provision of hydrants for firefighting purposes. During 1996-97 officers of the Service examined and reported upon a number of development plans, resulting in the installation of 22 hydrants and the removal of 2. The present total of hydrants, all conforming to the British Standard Specification, within the Service area, stands at 4,233.

Health and Safety

7.13 The Chief Fire Officer has overall responsibility for health and safety matters with the Deputy Chief Fire Officer having responsibilities delegated to him to ensure the policies and practices are implemented. He is supported by a Station Officer (Brigade Health and Safety Officer) who is the holder of a National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH) certificate.

7.14 The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1977 (an Act of Tynwald) allows the application of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (an Act of the Imperial Parliament) to be applied to the Isle of Man. An Application Order in 1980 brought the Act into force from 1 January 1982. A further Consolidation Order, the HSW Order 1995, came into force in December 1995.

7.15 In implementing the requirements and recommendations of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 within the Service, the Guidance contained in the HSE booklet, HS (G) 65 - Successful Health and Safety Management should be followed. Implicit within the guidance is reference to the set of regulations on Health and Safety commonly known as the 'six pack' and the approved codes of practice resulting therefrom, produced by the HSE. The following observations and recommendations are based on that guidance.

7.16 A health and safety policy has been formulated by the Service and is currently being considered by the Minister of Home Affairs. This document should be issued as soon as possible.

7.17 Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 competent person(s) require to be appointed for each respective workplace along with the provision of appropriate training to enable them to carry out this function in an efficient and effective manner.

7.18 Risk assessments under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 have not been carried out at Service occupied premises. Assessments should be carried out of these premises at an early date and the Service should ensure that the competent person(s)

appointed for each workplace receives a copy of the results. In addition, personnel at the workplace must be informed where necessary of the protective and preventative measures needed in case of an accident.

7.19 In meeting the requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 for the risk assessment, collation and dissemination of information to personnel in respect of industrial and commercial premises throughout the Service area that constitute a significant risk, it is understood the Service has formed a working party to evaluate the methodology to be utilised in carrying out these assessments. It is recommended that this risk assessment process be implemented as soon as possible and the recommendations contained in the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association document 'Guidance on the Application of Risk Assessment in the Fire Service' may be found useful for this purpose. In addition, consideration should be given to a method of providing this information and guidance to firefighters regarding these risks.

7.20 Assessments require to be carried out of all Service premises under the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992. Arrangements should be made to ensure that all personnel employed at these premises are instructed on the use and safety features of all equipment provided.

7.21 All Service premises require to be assessed under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992. In addition, provision should be made for all personnel to be provided with appropriate instruction in kinetics and manual handling techniques.

7.22 An analysis requires to be carried out of all workstations under the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 and all relevant staff must be provided with information regarding health and safety aspects of their workstations.

7.23 With the exception of personal gloves for the protection of firefighters at incidents, instruction, guidance and appropriate equipment has been issued to personnel to meet the requirements of the Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992. It is recommended therefore that appropriate gloves be provided for firefighting purposes as soon as is practicable.

7.24 It is understood that appropriate arrangements have been made for the annual testing and recording of all portable electrical equipment in accordance with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989. However, arrangements should be made to test both the 110 volt and 240 volt fixed electrical installations on fire appliances along with all portable lighting units and generators etc carried on the appliances. In addition, arrangements should be made with the Department of Local Government and the Environment (Architects Division) to maintain and test the main electrical installations at all Service premises.

7.25 A record of all accidents and injuries is held by the Service. The statistics are analysed on a regular basis regarding possible trends and causes of accidents and appropriate action taken to address any areas of concern. Since the last inspection, 8 firefighters have been injured to the extent that they were absent from work for more than 3 days. These occurrences were reported to the Senior Health and Safety Inspector of the Department of Local Government and Environment Health Factories Division in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1985 (RIDDOR) as applied to the Isle of Man.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health

7.26 While appreciating that the HSE operates the general provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 in the Isle of Man, it is important for the Service to continue to provide safe working conditions for employees. To this end the adoption of the objectives and principles of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1988 (The COSHH Regulations) is one way of reducing the risk to persons during the course of their employment through exposure to substances which may be hazardous to health. Among the many provisions of the legislation is the requirement to provide information, instruction and training for those who may be exposed to such substances found not only on Service premises but also those which may be found on premises during operational incidents.

7.27 In order to comply with these obligations the Service should carry out a survey of its premises and produce a register of substances covered by the COSHH Regulations which are found there. The register should contain data sheets on substances, giving information on the correct use and handling procedures, together with the appropriate first aid treatment in the event of an accident or emergency.

7.28 A comprehensive system should be incorporated into Service Orders to establish the location and type of hazardous substances found during operational incidents, also during familiarisation visits and statutory inspections of premises. The information should also be available to fire crews attending operational incidents.

7.29 The Service has identified some 200 premises, 12 of which have been individually assessed by a Staff Officer for eventual inclusion in the Geographical Information System. It would obviously be an advantage to the Service if the above information could be included in both the existing and future assessments of premises which would form the nucleus of an important operational database.

7.30 The Inspectorate noted during the inspection that of the 7 agro-chemical sites on the Island, 5 in Douglas and 2 in Ramsey, none are of such magnitude that would attract some special provision being made other than the

standard information already available to operational personnel through the auspices of the Fire Services Act 1984.

Control of Industrial Major Hazards

7.31 There are existing UK Regulations, not applying in the Isle of Man, which make the manufacturer who operates a regulated site responsible for conditions and procedures on site while the local authority is responsible for off site planning. The Isle of Man Fire and Rescue Service has operational procedures which effectively deal with 6 such sites of this nature and has encompassed them into an operational order on Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and Petroleum.

7.32 It is part of this order that operational personnel visit the sites on an annual basis to familiarise themselves with the life risk, plant, buildings, access to the site, water supplies and generally to heighten the crews awareness should an emergency occur. In addition, all stations and senior officers have now been issued with an individual copy of hazardous materials procedures as an aid memoir.

7.33 It may be worth considering the benefits and advantages of handling operational incidents and the efficient retrieval of information if the currently available CD-ROM by N Irving Sax were to be made available for such incidents and general use by senior officers.

Civil Defence and Emergency Planning

7.34 The responsibility for Civil Defence and Emergency Planning falls within the scope of the Minister of Home Affairs and the associated Government Department. The Chief Fire Officer serves as the Service Emergency Planning Officer for the Fire Service and attended approximately 6 meetings throughout the year of the Island's Joint Emergency Service Working Group. This Group is responsible for the formulation and revision of emergency plans and the organisation of exercises to test the planning arrangements.

7.35 This integrated approach resulted in 2 'live' multi-agency exercises being carried out to test the inter-disciplinary approach to emergency situations. One exercise named 'wetfeet' consisted of a simulated aircraft crash on the foreshore approach to Ronaldsway Airport where the plane was understood to have undershot the runway. The site access over seaweed covered rocks proved to test the resolve of all concerned in the initial task of locating and rescuing some 35-40 casualties.

7.36 The other exercise consisted of a simulated passenger ferry fire which required Service personnel to be transported by helicopter from the Island to the stricken vessel. It is recorded that, during the exercise with some firefighters on board the ferry, the helicopter had to abort the exercise to be diverted to a real emergency.

7.37 Following these exercises, an individual debriefing session took place to evaluate the procedures adopted and assess whether any amendments were needed within the emergency planning arrangements, the training of staff or in the technical information available to the emergency services.

7.38 The Service has drawn up arrangements for incidents classed as special risks and the pre-determined first attendance to them which are all contained in published operational policy and orders. Additionally, the Service has a Major Incident Planning Manual which was revised and amended, to suit the needs of the Isle of Man, in 1996 based on a UK document. The risks are inclusive of such diverse subjects as oil and gas plants, the airports of Ronaldsway and Jurby, maritime vessels in harbour, hospitals, power stations, oil pollution, fire and flooding.

Recommendations

7.39 As a Joint Committee of the CFBACs is presently reviewing the Standards of Fire Cover operating in the UK, and their findings are expected to be made known in approximately 18 months' time, it is recommended that consideration of any adjustment to the mobilising response in the Isle of Man should take this into account, so as to maintain the correspondence with best practice in the UK which has clearly existed in the past.

7.40 To provide a readily available and comparable base of statistical information for any future inspection, it is recommended that a similar system of OMPI to that currently adopted by brigades throughout Scotland is considered by the Service.

7.41 To reduce the number of occasions when the retained unit based in Laxey is unavailable to respond to emergency calls, it is recommended that an intensive effort be made to attract suitable applicants to the Service, capable of giving fire cover over the full 24 hour period, from the entire spectrum of human resource domiciled there.

7.42 To ensure value for money, it is recommended that the degree of commitment of individual members of staff within the retained unit in Laxey be reviewed to determine whether attendance frequencies and retaining fees paid are commensurate with the level of fire cover expected.

7.43 The proposed Service Health and Safety Policy should be issued as soon as possible.

7.44 It is recommended that the Service appoint a competent person(s), as specified in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, for each respective workplace and that they receive appropriate training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities under the regulations.

7.45 It is recommended, in accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, that risk assessments be carried out of all Service premises at an early date and a copy of the results be provided to the respective competent person appointed for the workplace.

7.46 It is recommended that the Service initiate risk assessments throughout the Service area of industrial and commercial premises considered to constitute a significant risk, in accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992. In addition, it is recommended that consideration be given to a method of providing information and guidance to firefighters regarding these risks.

7.47 It is recommended that assessments be carried out of all Service premises under the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992.

7.48 It is recommended that, under the terms of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, the Service take urgent steps to carry out assessments of all its premises and should also initiate training on kinetics and manual handling techniques to all uniformed and non-uniformed staff.

7.49 It is recommended that an analysis be carried out of all workstations utilised by the Service in accordance with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992.

7.50 Under the Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992, it is recommended that appropriate gloves be provided for firefighting purposes.

7.51 Under the terms of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, it is recommended that the Service make arrangements to test both the 110 and 240 volt fixed electrical installations on fire appliances along with all portable lighting equipment and generators etc, carried on the appliances. In addition, it is recommended that arrangements be made to test the main electrical installations at all Service premises.

7.52 In order to comply with the COSHH Regulations it is recommended that the Service carry out a survey of its premises and produce a register of substances covered by these Regulations which are found there. The register should contain data sheets on substances, giving information on the correct use and handling procedures, together with the appropriate first aid treatment in the event of an accident or emergency.

7.53 It is recommended that a comprehensive system be incorporated into Service Orders to establish the location and type of hazardous substances found during operational incidents, also on familiarisation visits and statutory inspections of premises. The information should also be available to fire crews attending operational incidents.



Section 8 - Communications

Fire Control

8.1 The Service's Mobilising and Communications Centre (Fire Control) is located at Fire Service Headquarters at Douglas. All emergency calls for assistance are routed to this point from which appropriate mobilising of resources are made.

8.2 The Fire Control is staffed by operational firefighters who are detached from the day or nightshift watch for that purpose.

Emergency Incidents

8.3 From April to December 1996 Fire Control handled a total of 1,840 incidents to which fire appliances were mobilised. This represents a 26% decrease in incidents from the previous year. In addition to the above, Fire Control operators also deal with administrative functions associated with the operational activities of the Service along with radio operation etc.

Equipment

8.4 Emergency calls for assistance are processed at Fire Control via a computer assisted Multitone mobilising system. The system consists of 2 workstations which have independent electrical supplies etc. The primary bearer for transmitting signals to the fire stations is radio with automatic telephone link being actuated in the event of radio equipment failure. The retained personnel are contacted by pocket alerter tone pagers to respond to an emergency.

8.5 A Geographic Information System has recently been provided in Fire Control. In addition to enabling identification of incidents, it can also be used for route plotting, the identification of open water supplies and the position of hydrants etc. The System has significant potential and at the time of the inspection the Service was evaluating the most efficient and effective method of developing its risk assessment of premises and stored hazardous materials along with pre-determined attendance for mobilising purposes etc. The System could also be utilised for providing graphic details of emergency calls and trends in incidents throughout the Service area.

8.6 The Service's main radio system enables voice communication throughout the area with all fire appliances, officer's cars and ancillary vehicles being provided with radio equipment. The Service's fixed radio system consists of Microwave Links interconnecting 7 hilltop sites and Fire Control whilst the mobile system is a VHF Quasi-Synchronous system.

8.7 All wholtime and retained fire appliances are provided with portable fireground radios for on-site

communications at emergency incidents. The sets are of the Intrinsically Safe (IS) type which allows the radios to be utilised in certain flammable atmospheres.

8.8 The Service has a facility within the Control Room for receiving Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) calls from protected premises throughout the Island. This equipment is provided by a private contractor and is monitored by the Service. At present there is no method of transferring any call from this system to an alternative location in the event of evacuation of the Control Room. Consideration should be given to the provision of such a facility.

Standby Control

8.9 The Service's standby arrangements consist of a portable computer and associated equipment which is sited within the lecture room at Headquarters. This area has been provided with alternative power supplies to the remainder of the complex and has ex-directory telephone lines provided for use in the event of an emergency. Should the Headquarters complex require to be evacuated emergency calls can be routed to the Ambulance Control Room which has facilities to mobilise fire stations.

Fire Control - Staff Training

8.10 Continuation training in Control Room functions is carried out by watch commanders on a weekly basis. When a specific training need is identified a firefighter who has the reference for Control Room training, provides the necessary training for all personnel.

Information Technology

8.11 The development of the Information Technology (IT) structure is continuing with enhancements to the Local Area Network (LAN) and the provision of additional personal computers.

8.12 A short term strategy document was produced by the Treasury's Information System Division for the Service in 1994 and was designed to address the developments necessary over a 2 year period. The recommendations contained in the report have been completed.

8.13 A wide variety of software applications are utilised by the Service which in many instances are on standalone machines. The software applications are fragmented and require to be integrated into a total package. This will be increasingly difficult as the Service appears to have 3 separate operating systems in use at present.

8.14 A comprehensive appraisal of all IT systems is required to ensure that a realistic and effective IT policy is pursued. Within the resources available, the Service is unable to develop an IT strategy to the extent that would achieve maximum benefit to personnel. Considerable investment in IT is required to provide additional hardware, to replace outdated hardware, and to develop and purchase software packages which can be integrated into a total system.

Recommendations

8.15 It is recommended that consideration be given to arrangements being provided for the transfer of the AFA system to the Standby Control centre in the event of evacuation of Fire Control.

8.16 It is recommended that a comprehensive appraisal of all IT systems in use by the Service be carried out to ensure that a realistic and effective policy for IT is pursued.



Section 9 - Accommodation

Premises

9.1 The Service Headquarters is situated at Douglas and comprises accommodation for a Wholetime/Retained Fire Station, Administration, Training, Fire Control, Workshop and Store. The Fire Safety Department is housed in a temporary structure within the precincts of the Headquarters complex. There are also 6 retained fire stations providing operational fire cover throughout the Island.

Building Replacement/Renovation

9.2 A new flat roof was provided at Douglas Fire Station at a cost of £22,000 during 1996-97.

9.3 The operational activities performed by the Service have increased considerably over the past 10 years with a corresponding increase in equipment provision being necessary. This has resulted in the appliance bays at the fire station at Douglas becoming overcrowded with 7 appliances being accommodated in an area previously designed for 4. The temporary structure utilised by the Fire Safety Department is also considered inadequate for the services now provided and additionally the environmental conditions therein are not conducive to maintaining the efficiency or morale of the personnel working there. As stated in Section 10 of the report, the Workshop facilities also require improvement to comply with current standards. It is therefore recommended that an immediate review be carried out of the total accommodation requirement at the Headquarters complex and action be taken to rectify the deficiencies at the earliest opportunity.

9.4 It was noted that the Service does not install vehicle exhaust extraction equipment in fire station appliance bays. The Service should consider the provision of this equipment in the future as it assists in alleviating health risks as well as reducing the frequency of redecoration of these areas.

Routine Maintenance (Minor Works)

9.5 The responsibility for arranging and supervising the property maintenance of the Service premises rests with the Deputy Chief Fire Officer in conjunction with the Station Commanders. He liaises with the Department of Local Government and the Environment (Architects Division) regarding priorities for work to be carried out.

9.6 A total of £53,000 was allocated from the revenue budget by the Government for property maintenance during the last financial year. This sum has been reduced to £33,000 over the following 2 years to enable other projects to be accomplished. All premises visited during the inspection were being maintained to a high standard in

terms of structure and decoration. In order to maintain this standard, the original level of funding should be reinstated at the earliest opportunity.

Fire Station Drill Towers

9.7 Drill towers are not provided at Laxey, Kirk Michael, Peel and Castletown. Such facilities would be desirable at these stations as and when finance permits. However, in the meantime, personnel do have access to this type of facility at other fire stations throughout the area.

Comments

9.8 During the year, in addition to the normal maintenance programme, the Chief Fire Officer devolved a level of finance to each fire station for the purposes of minor works and the purchase of furniture and fittings. The Service is commended for this initiative which has resulted in a number of improvements to stations which have been carried out to a high standard and in a very cost effective manner.

Recommendations

9.9 It is recommended that an immediate review be carried out of the total accommodation requirements at the Headquarters complex and action be taken to rectify the deficiencies at the earliest opportunity.

9.10 The Brigade should consider the provision of vehicle exhaust extraction equipment in fire station appliance bays as it assists in alleviating health risks as well as reducing the frequency of redecoration of these areas.

9.11 In order to maintain the appropriate standard of maintenance in Service accommodation, the original level of funding provided for maintenance purposes should be reinstated at the earliest opportunity.



Section 10 - Transport and Equipment

Operational Fleet

10.1 The Service's vehicle fleet comprises of the following:

Pumping Appliances	13 (including 2 held in reserve);
Light Fire Appliances	5;
Aerial Appliances	2;
Special Appliances	4 (including rescue units and foam tender);
Ancillary Vehicles	12 (including training vehicle, reserve landrover, vans and cars).

Vehicle Workshop

10.2 The Workshop and Transport Store is located at Fire Service Headquarters at Douglas and comprises a single bay attached to the fire station. Due to the number of functions carried out within the same complex the space available for servicing and repairs to appliances is limited. This may create difficulties in complying with current health and safety requirements in relation to manual handling and environmental facilities. It is therefore recommended that consideration be given to extending the Workshop or to providing this facility at an alternative location.

10.3 The Workshop is not provided with a rolling brake test facility but at the time of the inspection arrangements had been made with the Vehicle Inspectorate in Douglas to provide this test for the Service's operational fleet on an annual basis.

10.4 Major electrical work, servicing of aerial appliances and body repairs are carried out by specialist companies.

10.5 The Workshop utilises a variety of computer software packages for its fleet management system which are capable of maintaining an accurate and detailed cost analysis of all transport functions.

Workshop Management

10.6 A Sub-Officer carries out the duties of Transport Manager and is supported by 2 mechanics. He is responsible to the Chief Fire Officer for the efficiency of the vehicle fleet and for ensuring the maintenance schedules for all vehicles are carried out satisfactorily.

10.7 The Workshop staff operate a 24 hour emergency call out system for the repair of operational appliances and equipment.

Servicing Schedules

10.8 The servicing frequency for operational appliances is annually with the exception of certain specials and the wholtime pumps which are serviced bi-annually. It is recommended that this policy be reviewed, with inspection and servicing being in accordance with the guidance contained in the Vehicle Inspectorate 'Heavy Goods Vehicle Inspection Manual' and the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association 'Recommended Best Practice for the Maintenance of Fire Service Vehicles'.

10.9 Workshop personnel are also responsible for the maintenance and repair of a wide range of ancillary equipment such as ladders, pumps, generators, compressors and other portable fire equipment.

10.10 At the time of the inspection the service schedules adopted for operational and ancillary vehicles were being met.

10.11 The Workshop also carries out agency work for the Department of Home Affairs. This work includes vehicle servicing plus maintenance of standby generators at hilltop communication sites.

Appliance Replacement

10.12 The Service's replacement policy for operational appliances is 15 years for pumping, aerial and special appliances. The fleet is of a very good standard and generally the replacement cycle is being met.

10.13 It is recommended that consideration be given to replacing the driver training vehicle at an early date with a more modern appliance which would have driving characteristics more akin to the pumping appliances provided at all stations.

10.14 It is recommended that all new fire appliances being purchased by the Service be provided with a Joint Committee on Design and Development (JCDD) test certificate or where applicable a JCDD type certificate.

10.15 In order to minimise the possibility of injury to firefighters, all future operational appliances purchased should be designed to conform with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992.

Supplies and Equipment

10.16 The Service is well equipped with firefighting equipment and a continuous evaluation programme is maintained to ensure that operational needs are being adequately met.

10.17 During the last 18 months the Service has been phasing in lightweight carbon composite cylinders for breathing apparatus sets throughout the area. It is anticipated the programme will be completed in 1997-98.

10.18 In meeting the recommendations of Technical Bulletin 1/1994, Periodic Inspection and Testing of Fire Service Equipment, the Workshop staff carry out the annual testing of all ladders. Breathing apparatus is maintained and tested by qualified breathing apparatus technicians. Station personnel only carry out a visual inspection of lines.

Recommendations

10.19 It is recommended that consideration be given to extending the Workshop or to providing the facility at an alternative location.

10.20 It is recommended that the inspection and servicing programmes for operational vehicles be in accordance with the guidance contained in the Vehicle Inspectorate 'Heavy Goods Vehicle Manual' and the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association 'Recommended Best Practice for the Maintenance of Fire Service Vehicles'.

10.21 It is recommended that consideration be given to replacing the driver training vehicle at an early date with a more modern appliance which would have driving characteristics more akin to the pumping appliances provided at all stations.

10.22 It is recommended that all new fire appliances be provided with a JCDD test certificate or where applicable a JCDD type certificate.

10.23 It is recommended that all future operational appliances purchased be designed to conform with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992.



Section II - Fire Safety

Management and Organisation

11.1 The Fire Prevention Department comprises:

- 1 ADO - Senior Fire Prevention Officer;
- 4 - 4 Station Officers on flexi-duty;
- 2 Sub-Officers on a 42 hr week. + 1 on CFS.

These officers are based at Service Headquarters in Douglas and are responsible for Fire Prevention duties throughout the Island. Whilst transport arrangements for the inspecting officers are on most occasions satisfactory, they can from time to time depend on the availability of the duty officers vehicle for use on inspection work. Administrative support is provided for the specialist officers by 2 part-time typists and a computer aided design system (CAD) operator. The CAD system is a series 13 with digital mapping installed from which high quality layout drawings are produced for use in the inspection of premises and their subsequent certification under the Fire Precautions Act 1975 (1975 Act). Additional work is also processed through the CAD operator for other Departments of the Service as and when the need arises.

11.2 Operating as a centralised Fire Prevention Department, the Island is divided into 2 administrative districts with nominated officers for each area. Although the staff are operating as Fire Safety officers they are all multi-referenced which can effectively cut their main reference working time by half. It is recommended that a survey be conducted to establish the balance between officers' working hours and the existing Fire Prevention workload. A suitable database for this exercise would be the Home Office - Guide to Fire Safety Planning and Management (ISBN No 1-85893-339-0) issued in 1995. Once the existing workload and staffing requirements have been established, work resulting from future legislative changes and additional inspection programmes can then be more accurately forecast and planned for.

Accommodation

11.3 The accommodation provided for all members of the Fire Prevention staff consists of a Portakabin unit which is totally inadequate as a modern suite of offices and

contributes very little in assisting the serving officers to function as a professional Department. Although the Inspectorate is aware that the replacement of this unit has not been included by the Treasury from the Capital Replacement Scheme, it is nevertheless recommended that progress be made on the available outline plans and costing of a suitable building with some degree of urgency.

Fire Precautions Act 1975

11.4 Several designating orders have been brought into force under the 1975 Act to bring a variety of premises within the scope of fire certification procedures which are:

- Hotels and Boarding Houses;
- Nursing Homes; and
- Cinemas.

It is interesting to note that there is draft legislation in hand to alter the definition of a hotel from the version based on that given in the Tourism Act 1975. The current criteria of the provision and distribution of sleeping accommodation for certain numbers of people will not in future be the only basis for determining which premises are within statutory control. These measures will undoubtedly have the effect of increasing the fire prevention workload and should be monitored for their effect.

11.5 Unlike most other UK fire brigades the Isle Of Man Fire and Rescue Service does not make any charge for the production of Fire Certificates under the 1975 Act. However, a considerable amount of valuable inspection time is taken up by fire prevention officers conducting file searches and also producing reports for solicitors and others who are making property enquiries. The Service currently charge a flat rate for a file search with or without a report attached, therefore it would be quite legitimate to make an additional charge where a report has been compiled following a file search and an inspection. The Service may wish to consider this course of action as a means of increasing their revenue income.

11.6 Statutory enforcement of the 1975 Act resulted in the prosecution of one hotelier on 5 out of 15 offences resulting in fines exceeding £7,000 being imposed. The table below indicates the statutory enforcement workload of premises falling within the certification procedures of the 1975 Act, together with the progress made in dealing with certifiable and certificated premises.

Table A: Work Done Under the Terms of the Fire Precautions Act

Certifiable Premises	Hotels	Cinemas	Nursing Homes
Number of Premises Registered	239	2	9
Number of Premises Certified (in force)	216 (211)	0	7
Number of annual inspections carried out	*199 (94.3%)	*2	11

*NB: This figure has been extrapolated from figures supplied at January 1997.

At the time of the inspection a total of 370 inspections of all categories has been carried out under the 1975 Act in conjunction with the examination of 120 associated plans, with the average time taken for each inspection being 1.6 hours.

11.7 From the table it can be determined that the Service has certificated 89.2% of the premises which require such documentation under the 1975 Act. The statistical return from the Service indicates that all of the premises without a fire certificate have been inspected by Fire Prevention officers, as the first step in the certification procedure. This is inclusive of 4 recent applications from hoteliers in addition to other applications received throughout the year. However, both of the registered cinemas are still to be issued with certificates although they actually comply with fire safety standards at present. The Statute Law Revision Bill 1997 also allows the Service the right to refuse a re-application for a fire certificate from a relative of the original applicant, who had not completed requirements placed on them, where they are of the opinion that the re-application has the intention of prolonging the use of the building without carrying out the improved fire precautions.

11.8 During the year under review the Department of Home Affairs exercised powers to make Regulations under the 1975 Act which affects flatted accommodation on the Island. They are known as The Fire Precautions (Flats) Regulations 1996 and they specify fire precautions to be taken in flats, and in buildings of which flats form part. Contravention of the Regulations is an offence under the 1975 Act and provision is made for the exemption for 3 years of all existing flats, and for further exemptions for particular buildings or flats to be given by the direction of the Fire Authority. There are an estimated 5,000 flats on the Isle of Man and although the Regulations are self regulatory the Service has carried out the following work in this respect:

Initial Inspections	2;
Re-inspections	9;
All plans	48;
Specific Inspections	15.

Once again there is the potential for a future increase in the workload of the Department which will require close monitoring by supervisory staff. For the past 16 years the Tourist Board has managed a 'Homestay' scheme, run to benefit the placement of visitors into ordinary dwelling houses for the duration of the TT Races. The effect of the foregoing Regulations on this scheme may perhaps be of some interest to the Service and should be monitored accordingly.

Annual Inspection of Certificated Premises

11.9 The purpose of inspecting certificated premises at regular intervals is to ensure that the fire precautions installed or adopted within the premises to safeguard its occupants are maintained to the standard accepted for the fire certification of the property. Within the year under review it was the policy to re-inspect all certificated premises on an annual basis and the table below indicates

that there will be a shortfall of 5.7% in respect of certifiable hotels and an over provision in the inspection of nursing homes. It is recommended that a re-structured programme of annual inspection be introduced and monitored to meet the requirements of the stated policy.

Other Fire Safety Legislation and Inspections

11.10 The total number of inspections carried out during the year in premises other than those falling within the 1975 Act, was 565. This total includes inspections in residential occupancies such as old people's homes and residential care premises, in addition to non-residential premises such as licensed properties, schools, sports centres and public entertainment buildings.

11.11 The Local Government Consolidation Act 1916 and the Local Government Amendment Act 1922 provides for the licensing of theatres and other places of public entertainment and the Inspectorate is aware that there is an imminent alteration of this legislation due in April 1997, subject to approval by Tynwald. The effect of this change will be monitored by the Inspectorate at the time of the next inspection.

11.12 Complementing this work the Fire Prevention staff examined 137 plans of new or altered buildings and prepared reports on the provision of suitable fire precautions. A comprehensive list of planning applications is sent to the Fire Prevention Department on a weekly basis as a result of negotiations between the Chief Fire Officer and the Chief Executive of the Department of Local Government which concluded in January 1997. It was noted that Building Control is organised locally in Douglas, Onchan and Ramsey with the Department of Local Government and the Environment overseeing the remainder of the Island.

11.13 During discussion with the senior management of the Service it was established that serious consideration was being given to the adoption of the principals of the imminent UK Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997, which contain the fire safety provisions of 2 extant European Framework & Workplace Directives. Unlike its more prescriptive predecessor, the proposed Places of Work Regulations, this piece of legislation is deliberately non-prescriptive and has utilised 'copy out' language to accord exactly with the directive. The Regulations will have a very wide effect on the workplace and will apply to most places of work where people are employed. It is therefore recommended that the implementation of similar regulations affecting the Isle of Man be adopted and that the interim period of assessing the impact of the Regulations in the UK and the drafting of local legislation be utilised to reduce the effect on the workplace.

11.14 This is especially relevant on the Isle of Man where no previous legislation has existed to specifically deal with fire safety in the workplace. The Inspectorate is aware of a recent programme of goodwill inspections to address the

lack of fire precautions in factories and would wish to see that initiative extended to all other places of work. It is therefore recommended that the Service be pro-active in inspecting the workplace by setting up a programme of goodwill visits that will:

- establish a rapport between employers and the Service in places of work;
- cover basic fire precautions ie means of escape, firefighting equipment and fire routines;
- reduce the impact of any new Fire Precautions 'Workplace' Regulations.

The Involvement of Operational Personnel in Fire Safety Inspections

11.15 At the time of the inspection it was determined that operational personnel carried out routine inspections of certificated Hotels and Boarding Houses in the Douglas area. The work is devolved from the Fire Prevention Department to each of the 4 watches in Douglas Fire Station and monitored by the Senior Fire Prevention Officer.

Training and Qualifications *DO 3 Stn 0.*

11.16 The ADO, 3 Station Officers and one Sub-Officer have completed the Specialist Fire Safety Course at the FSC. It is worth noting that there is now a modular approach to Fire Safety qualifications at the FSC which might prove to be worthwhile in attracting prospective entrants and provide them with initial training prior to entering the Department. The Service has the facility to choose the level of training required, with the module 'A' offering training to students which will allow them to carry out the duties of an inspecting officer in places of work. (The import of which will not be lost with the impending legislative change affecting 'places of work' about to come to fruition in the UK). This module lays the foundations for the following 4 modules - B, C, D and E, which, in their entirety will lead to a Fire Safety Officer Qualification. Completion of the A, B, and C modules will lead to a Fire Safety Inspecting Officer qualification.

Fire Safety Education and Publicity

11.17 During the year the Service continued to promote, albeit in an ad hoc manner, the fire safety message in a number of ways, and to a variety of people, using where possible a mobile publicity unit. It is evident from feedback that there is a great deal of empathy for the Service within the larger community. Fire Prevention staff and operational personnel organised or participated in the following events:

1 Sub 0 1 1/2 years service in past.

- fire safety messages in newspapers eg the Isle of Man Examiner, The Independent and the Courier;
- hand delivery of fire safety leaflets;
- talks to schools and other organisations;
- an attendance at agricultural shows;
- the use of the local IOM radio station and ITV Border television;
- counselling of young arsonists with Social Services; and
- fire station open days throughout the year.

It is recognised that through necessity rather than choice this function is a secondary consideration of the Fire Prevention Department and if the Service should decided to extend the provision of advice and education to all sections of the community there would almost certainly be staffing as well as other management matters that would need to be taken into consideration.

Comments

11.18 Following some personnel changes during the year under review the Department appears to have settled down well, with a high morale in evidence, despite the problems associated with the lack of accommodation. At the time of the inspection both ADO N Rivers and the inspecting officers displayed an obvious enthusiasm for the subject and a keen knowledge of fire safety matters.

Recommendations

11.19 It is recommended that a survey be conducted to establish the balance of officers' available working hours against the existing Fire Prevention workload. A suitable database for this exercise would be the Home Office - Guide to Fire Safety Planning and Management (ISBN No 1-85893-339-0) issued in 1995. Once the existing workload and staffing requirements have been established, work resulting from future legislative changes and additional inspection programmes can then be more accurately forecast and planned for.

11.20 It is recommended that progress be made on the available outline plans and costing of a suitable building for the Department with some degree of urgency.

11.21 It is recommended that a re-structured programme of annual inspection be introduced and monitored to meet the requirements of the stated policy.

11.22 It is recommended that the implementation of Regulations similar to the proposed UK Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations be adopted and that the interim period of assessing the impact of the Regulations in the UK and the drafting of local legislation be utilised to reduce the effect on the workplace.

11.23 It is recommended that the Service be pro-active

Completed Fire Safety module A

in inspecting the workplace by setting up a programme of goodwill visits that will:

- establish a rapport between employers and the Service in places of work;
- cover basic fire precautions ie means of escape, firefighting equipment and fire routines;
- reduce the impact of any new Fire Precautions Workplace Regulations.

11.24 Progress on Previous Recommendations:

11.24.1 Consideration should be given to the passing of legislation which would give powers to the Chief Fire Officer to require measures in new buildings, certain existing buildings and certain installations to mitigate the effects of fire, reduce the impact of fires on firefighting resources and safeguard key or sensitive facilities against the loss from fire.

Although this matter has not been addressed by the introduction of legislation, particularly for existing buildings, the principal of the recommendation certainly has been adopted in the case of new buildings of this nature. An example of which is the construction of the Islands new hospital which will not only comply with Building Regulations but will be of a higher standard than the minimum required and encompass fire safety measures to accord with the previous recommendation.

11.24.2 Any proposal to shadow the proposed UK Fire Precautions (Places of Work) Regulations should be delayed pending the passing of those Regulations by the British Government. The need for fire safety control in places of work should be met by setting up a system of goodwill inspections and addressing the wider issues of fire safety in the workplace.

Although it is now 3 years since this recommendation was made the principal remains sound and the theme has been continued as a recommendation of this report.

11.24.3 More comprehensive records of staff utilisation and work carried out should be kept, perhaps based on the OMPI system developed for the UK fire brigades. Consideration should also be given to keeping these records on a computerised system which could be further developed into a management information system. There would be some advantage in the Senior Fire Prevention Officer or his representative visiting selected brigades in the UK to examine the systems developed by them to meet this need.

The Senior Fire Prevention Officer now has access to computerised records albeit not the OMPI system recommended. The system has been developed for the Island's needs and can generate certain information on

premises although not as yet capable of being used as a true management information system.



Section 12 - Summary of New Recommendations

Section 4 - Finance

12.1 The Inspectorate was impressed by the straightforward and effective method normally adopted for revising the revenue budget from year to year, whereby provision for staff costs has been separately increased in accordance with the pay settlement each year and provision for other directly incurred expenditure has been increased by the rate of inflation. It is noted with concern, however, that a decrease in the Service's revenue budget for 1996-97 was achieved by not taking into account the level of inflation for that particular year. It is recommended that this means of securing a reduced budget, which can only result in progressive reductions in the baseline for future budgets, should not be considered as an option in the future (paragraph 4.1).

Section 5 - Personnel

12.2 In the UK it is general policy to advertise widely in order to comply with the Equal Opportunities and Race Relations Act, therefore it is recommended that advertisements for the recruitment of firefighters, wholetime and retained, should be placed in such a way as to make the positions offered as widely available as possible to the entire spectrum of human resource on the Island. This would include advertising in the local press, the circulation of any brochure information and the promotion of the relevant information at all job centres (paragraphs 5.8 and 5.9).

12.3 It is recommended that the Service seeks to intensify the health monitoring of the workforce by initiating an OHS compatible with the recommendations contained in Part IV of the Guidance on Medical Standards in the Fire Service as applies to brigades throughout the UK (paragraph 5.13).

12.4 It is additionally recommended that the resultant OHS should apply equally to the non-uniformed sector of the Service (paragraph 5.13).

12.5 It is recommended that the Service develop and produce an appropriate policy statement on EO in accordance with the wishes of the Council of Ministers and be pro-active in the recruitment of female firefighters especially in the Retained Service. Thereafter management should undertake to inform the personnel of the policy and the wider issues associated with this subject (paragraph 5.13).

Section 6 - Training

12.6 It is recommended that the Service continues to develop a Training Strategy which changes the manner in

which the training needs of individuals and stations are identified and thereafter how the training is delivered to meet those needs. In developing this strategy, the Service should also continue to pursue the adoption of a competence and risk based approach to station training (paragraph 6.3).

12.7 It is recommended that the existing personal training records be more prescriptive in order to be able to identify the actual participation by an individual at a training event (paragraph 6.4).

12.8 It is recommended that the probationary reporting procedure provided for the wholetime personnel be adopted for the retained sector (paragraph 6.6).

12.9 It is recommended that the EFAD training be extended to cover retained personnel. In addition, the Service should consider introducing experience of driving at high speeds as part of the EFAD training courses (paragraph 6.7).

12.10 It is recommended that personnel receive driver training by a qualified driving instructor, with a vehicle fitted with automatic transmission, prior to being approved as an EFAD (paragraph 6.8).

12.11 In view of the ever increasing training requirement incumbent upon the Service, consideration should be given to increasing the training period for wholetime personnel, which should form an integral part of the overall review of training needs. In addition, it is recommended that the training period for retained personnel be increased to 3 hours each week (paragraph 6.9).

12.12 Arrangements should be made for refresher courses and examinations for personnel who require re certification as Trained First Aiders (paragraph 6.11).

12.13 It is recommended that the Service considers fitness training being made compulsory in conjunction with the introduction of an OHS (paragraph 6.15).

Section 7 - Operational Efficiency

12.14 As a Joint Committee of the CFBACs is presently reviewing the Standards of Fire Cover operating in the UK, and their findings are expected to be made known in approximately 18 months' time, it is recommended that consideration of any adjustment to the mobilising response in the Isle of Man should take this into account, so as to maintain the correspondence with best practice in the UK which has clearly existed in the past (paragraph 7.4).

12.15 To provide a readily available and comparable base of statistical information for any future inspection, it is recommended that a similar system of OMPI to that currently adopted by brigades throughout Scotland is considered by the Service (paragraph 7.6).

12.16 To reduce the number of occasions when the retained unit based in Laxey is unavailable to respond to emergency calls, it is recommended that an intensive effort be made to attract suitable applicants to the Service, capable of giving fire cover over the full 24 hour period, from the entire spectrum of human resource domiciled there (paragraph 7.8).

12.17 To ensure value for money, it is recommended that the degree of commitment of individual members of staff within the retained unit in Laxey be reviewed to determine whether attendance frequencies and retaining fees paid are commensurate with the level of fire cover expected (paragraph 7.8).

12.18 The proposed Service Health and Safety Policy should be issued as soon as possible (paragraph 7.16).

12.19 It is recommended that the Service appoint a competent person(s), as specified in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, for each respective workplace and that they receive appropriate training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities under the regulations (paragraph 7.17).

12.20 It is recommended, in accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, that risk assessments be carried out of all Service premises at an early date and a copy of the results be provided to the respective competent person appointed for the workplace (paragraph 7.18).

12.21 It is recommended that the Service initiate risk assessments throughout the Service area of industrial and commercial premises considered to constitute a significant risk, in accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992. In addition, it is recommended that consideration be given to a method of providing information and guidance to firefighters regarding these risks (paragraph 7.19).

12.22 It is recommended that assessments be carried out of all Service premises under the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992 (paragraph 7.20).

12.23 It is recommended that, under the terms of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, the Service take urgent steps to carry out assessments of all its premises and should also initiate training on kinetics and manual handling techniques to all uniformed and non-uniformed staff (paragraph 7.21).

12.24 It is recommended that an analysis requires to be carried out of all workstations utilised by the Service in accordance with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (paragraph 7.22).

12.25 Under the Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992, it is recommended that appropriate gloves be provided for firefighting purposes (paragraph 7.23).

12.26 Under the terms of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, it is recommended that the Service make arrangements to test both the 110 and 240 volt fixed electrical installations on fire appliances along with all portable lighting equipment and generators etc, carried on the appliances. In addition, it is recommended that arrangements be made to test the main electrical installations at all Service premises (paragraph 7.24).

12.27 In order to comply with the COSHH Regulations it is recommended that the Service carry out a survey of its premises and produce a register of substances covered by these COSHH Regulations which are found there. The register should contain data sheets on substances, giving information on the correct use and handling procedures, together with the appropriate first aid treatment in the event of an accident or emergency (paragraph 7.27).

12.28 It is recommended that a comprehensive system be incorporated into Service Orders to establish the location and type of hazardous substances found during operational incidents, also on familiarisation visits and statutory inspections of premises. The information should also be available to fire crews attending operational incidents (paragraph 7.28).

Section 8 - Communications

12.29 It is recommended that consideration be given to arrangements being provided for the transfer of the AFA system to the Standby Control centre in the event of evacuation of Fire Control (paragraph 8.8).

12.30 It is recommended that a comprehensive appraisal of all IT systems in use by the Service be carried out to ensure that a realistic and effective policy for IT is pursued (paragraph 8.14).

Section 9 - Accommodation

12.31 It is recommended that an immediate review be carried out of the total accommodation requirements at the Headquarters complex and action be taken to rectify the deficiencies at the earliest opportunity (paragraph 9.3).

12.32 The Brigade should consider the provision of vehicle exhaust extraction equipment in fire station appliance bays as it assists in alleviating health risks as well as reducing the frequency of redecoration of these areas (paragraph 9.4).

12.33 In order to maintain the appropriate standard of maintenance in Service accommodation, the original level of funding provided for maintenance purposes should be reinstated at the earliest opportunity (paragraph 9.6).

Section 10 - Transport and Equipment

12.34 It is recommended that consideration be given to extending the Workshop or to providing the facility at an alternative location (paragraph 10.2).

12.35 It is recommended that the inspection and servicing programmes for operational vehicles be in accordance with the guidance contained in the Vehicle Inspectorate 'Heavy Goods Vehicle Manual' and the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association 'Recommended Best Practice for the Maintenance of Fire Service Vehicles' (paragraph 10.8).

12.36 It is recommended that consideration be given to replacing the driver training vehicle at an early date with a more modern appliance which would have driving characteristics more akin to the pumping appliances provided at all stations (paragraph 10.13).

12.37 It is recommended that all new fire appliances be provided with a JCDD test certificate or where applicable a JCDD type certificate (paragraph 10.14).

12.38 It is recommended that all future operational appliances purchased be designed to conform with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (paragraph 10.15).

Section 11- Fire Safety

12.39 It is recommended that a survey be conducted to establish the balance of officers' available working hours against the existing Fire Prevention workload. A suitable database for this exercise would be the Home Office - Guide to Fire Safety Planning and Management (ISBN No 1-85893-339-0) issued in 1995. Once the existing workload and staffing requirements have been established, work resulting from future legislative changes and additional inspection programmes can then be more accurately forecast and planned for (paragraph 11.2).

12.40 It is recommended that progress be made on the available outline plans and costing of a suitable building for the Department with some degree of urgency (paragraph 11.3).

12.41 It is recommended that a re-structured programme of annual inspection be introduced and monitored to meet the requirements of the stated policy (paragraph 11.4).

12.42 It is recommended that the implementation of Regulations similar to the proposed UK Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 be adopted and that the interim period of assessing the impact of the Regulations in the UK and the drafting of local legislation be utilised to reduce the effect on the workplace (paragraph 11.13).

12.43 It is recommended that the Service be pro-active in inspecting the workplace by setting up a programme of goodwill visits that will:

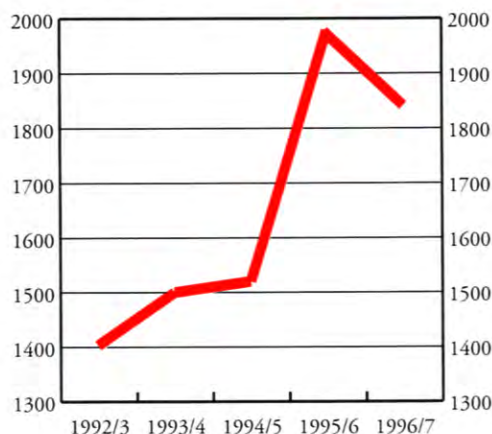
- establish a rapport between employers and the Service in places of work;
- cover basic fire precautions ie means of escape, firefighting equipment and fire routines;
- reduce the impact of any new Fire Precautions Workplace Regulations (paragraph 11.14).



Appendix I - Operational Workload

1. This section deals primarily with the operational workload figures available for the period 1 April 1996 to 31 December 1996. The total number of emergency calls attended by the Service was 1,380, which when extrapolated over a 12 month period to 1,840 (estimated total) still represents a decrease from last year's total, previously the highest incidence recorded.

Graph No 1 Total emergency calls to which the Service responded

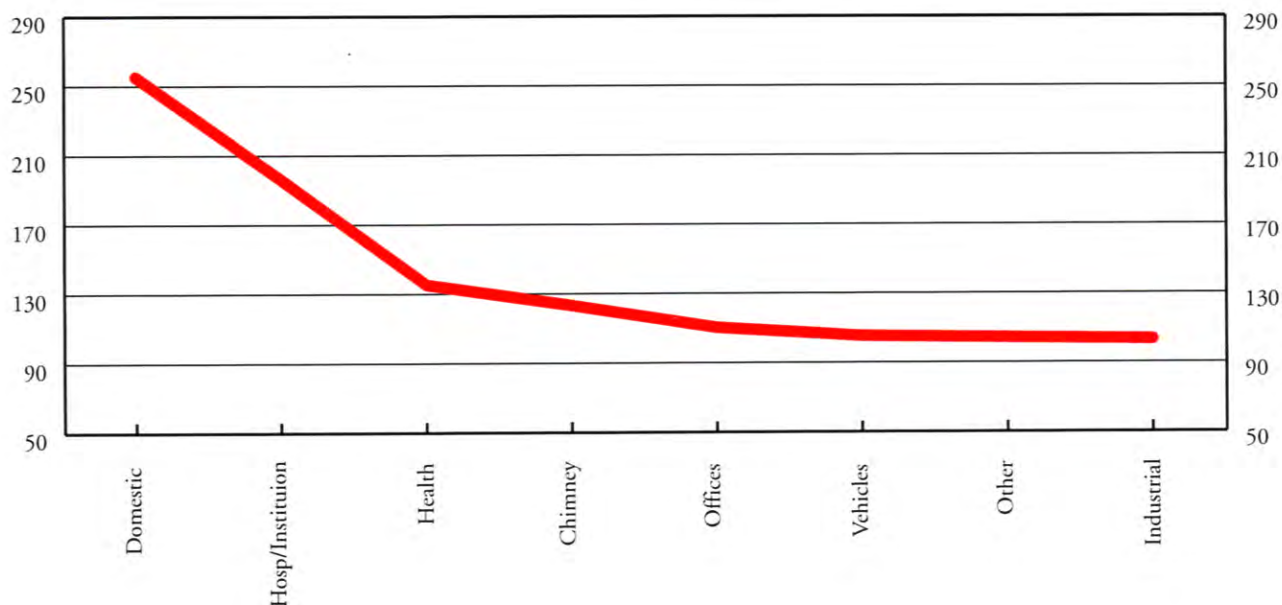


2. Graph No 1 shows the sharp increase in calls during 1995-96 with an estimated return to 1994-95 levels. The record high in 1995-96 is representative of a 57% increase over that returned a decade ago.

Fires (All Fires)

3. From the total of 1,380 calls received by the Service within the reporting period they attended 557 fire calls which is a decrease of 26% from the same period last year. The total number of fires is shown in Graph No 2.

Graph No 2 Total number of fires



4. From the total number of all fires attended the main causes were recorded as being:

- i. Electrical fault 34;
- ii. Overheated fats and oil 34;
- iii. Careless disposal 33;
- iv. Malicious ignition 24;
- v. Children with naked flame 11.

The remainder of the fires fell into other minor categories or the causes of fire following investigation remain unknown.

False Alarm Incidents

5. The total of false alarm calls to which the Service mobilised within the reporting period was 299, very marginally more than for the same period last year and represents 21.7% of the overall total number of incidents attended by fire appliances.

6. For statistical purposes, false alarm calls are divided into various categories - Good Intent, where the caller genuinely, although mistakenly, believes that an emergency exists which requires the attendance of the Service; Automatic Fire Alarm Fault (AFA) where the call to the Service is, in the main, the result of a fault in a fire warning installation; and Malicious, where the caller knows that an emergency situation does not exist.

7. Within this period the total number of calls in each of the false alarm categories was:

Good Intent	142;
AFA	111;
Malicious	46.

Special Service Incidents

8. The Service attended 234 Special Service incidents throughout the Island with the most common types of these incidents being:

- pumping water from flooded areas;
- road traffic accidents;
- rescue or releasing people;
- standing by or assisting at spillages.

Deaths due to Fire

9. During the reporting period only one person, an elderly female, lost her life in a fire to which the Service was called. The fatality occurred in a local authority 'Commission' flat in which a smoke alarm had been fitted.



Annex A - Glossary of Terms and Acronyms Used in the Report

Confidence Level

The standard of fire cover set by the Home Departments includes recommendations regarding the weight of attack by crews responding to a fire call. In general, establishment levels for personnel are arranged to provide minimum crews of 5, and 4 riders on the first 2 appliances to attend an incident on at least 75% of occasions. The degree to which a Brigade achieves this target is known as the confidence level.

Common Acronyms

ADO	- Assistant Divisional Officer
AFA	- Automatic Fire Alarm
CAD	- Computer Aided Design
CFBAC	- Central Fire Brigades Advisory Council
DHA	- Department of Home Affairs
EFAD	- Emergency Fire Appliance Driver
EFSLB	- Emergency Fire Service Lead Body
EO	- Equal Opportunities
FSC	- Fire Service College
HSE	- Health and Safety Executive
IS	- Inherently Safe
IT	- Information Technology
JCDD	- Joint Committee on Design and Development
LAN	- Local Area Network
OHS	- Occupational Health Scheme
OMPI	- Output Measures and Performance Indicators

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