





Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire Services for England and Wales

1999/00

Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for
the Home Department by Command of Her Majesty
April 2001

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*HM Fire Service Inspectorate
Horseferry House
Dean Ryle Street
LONDON SW1P 2AW*

March 2001

*To: The Right Hon Jack Straw MP
Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department*

Sir,

I have the honour to present my report upon the fire brigades of England and Wales for the year ended 31 March 2000.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant.

Graham Meldrum



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HM Chief Inspector of Fire Services

Graham Meldrum CBE OStJ QFSM DUniv FIFireE CIMgt

Opening remarks

1. In my report last year I mentioned that the Inspectorate had been heavily involved in re-organising its structure in line with the recommendations of the Culture and Organisation Review Project (CORP). Since then, the appointment of the Inspectorate as Best Value Inspectorate for the fire service has led us to consider whether our structure remains appropriate for our new role, and we are beginning the process of building on the success of CORP to encompass our new responsibilities under Best Value.
2. The arrangements to bring together all the fire service stakeholders through the Central Fire Brigades Advisory Council (CFBAC) bring greater consistency to the guidance and advice developed for the fire service in England and Wales. The CFBAC has created the Fire Safety Advisory Board (FSAB) which will become the national forum for the consideration of fire safety matters.
3. The FSAB will provide a forum for bringing together representatives from Central and Local Government with those representing professional associations and business organisations, to allow the development of a truly national strategy for ensuring the fire safety of society, whether it be in the home, at work or at recreation. The board has an independent chair in Pamela Castle and has already started its work via a number of sub groups looking at such issues as fire safety legislation, community fire safety, fire safety standards and guidance, and the costs of fires.
4. The Inspectorate is represented on the board and all its sub groups. A representative of the Inspectorate is chair of the sub group responsible for fire safety standards and guidance. Through this the Inspectorate will advise fire authorities on the development of best practice in relation to Fire Safety and be able to inform the development of strategies, policies and standards.
5. The statutory requirement for fire brigades systematically to review their activities to ensure Best Value is the main challenge facing the fire service. This has



implications for the Inspectorate in its role as Best Value Inspectorate. The early indications are pleasing, in that there has been some good initial progress towards meeting the significant expectations for the service to achieve performance improvements. One of the key needs for the delivery of these is for authorities and brigades to work more closely together. There is clearly significant benefit to be had from the pooling of knowledge and the removal of unnecessary duplication. There is also an urgent need in many brigades to improve arrangements for the collection of, and access to data related to performance measurement and management information.

6. The programme of thematic inspections mentioned in my last report has progressed with the publication of “Equality and Fairness” and “Fit for Duty” both of which have been well received by the fire service community and contain some valuable advice for brigades. Further thematic inspections will deal with Community Fire Safety and Unwanted Fire Signals.
7. The National Community Fire Safety Centre has become established and is playing a growing role in bringing together national and local initiatives on fire prevention and raising the profile of fire prevention. The new logo, which combines both stark reality and the positive and inclusive message:- **‘Fire kills - you can prevent it’**, has provided a powerful national fire safety brand. The Centre has been active in creating partnerships, not only with local fire brigades but also with other government agencies and commercial sponsors. The work of creating a Community Fire Safety Toolbox has commenced and will be released in the next year.
8. The work of the National Community Fire Safety Centre is central to the changes in the culture of the fire service as the service moves from focussing on intervention at fires to the prevention of fires. This change is seeing increased involvement with the community by brigades. It is particularly pleasing to see the growth in youth involvement through the Young Firefighters Association, Prince’s Trust Volunteers and numerous other innovative local schemes, many of which are aimed at disaffected young people.
9. The project to ensure that the appropriate advice was available to fire authorities and that all brigades were “Y2K compliant” was completed within the time targets. The situation was monitored at brigade level and nationally throughout the millennium period, and it is pleasing to record that all brigades were fully prepared for any difficulties and that no significant disruption was reported.
10. The publication of the Fire Service College Prior Options Review in December 1999 outlined options for the future of the college. An immediate consequence is



that the Inspectorate will undertake inspections of the College to review the performance of the college on a regular basis.

11. The fire service revenue settlement for England for 1999/2000 was £1,346 million, which represented a 3.6 per cent increase on the previous year. The settlement for the following year provided for an increase of 3.5 per cent to £1,393 million and, as a result of the spending review announced in July 2000, fire authorities in England will get an increased provision of £189 million over the three years from 2001/02, including more than £69 million (5 per cent) in 2001/02. The increase in the following two years will be 4 per cent.

12. In March the Audit Commission published performance indicators for the fire service in 1998/99. The Commission noted that the fire service remains, overall, a high performing service by meeting attendance standards for responding to fire calls in just over 96 per cent of cases. The Commission identified that variations remain between brigades in responding to fire calls, performance in dealing with fire certificates and spending per head of population. The advent of Best Value will highlight these variations and the reasons for them.

Awards for distinguished service

13. Her Majesty the Queen was graciously pleased to make awards for distinguished service in the Birthday Honours List 1999 and the New Year Honours List 2000 to the following members of the fire service:-

Commander of the British Empire (CBE)

Former Chief Fire Officer, Mr J G Russel - Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.

HM Senior Inspector of Fire Services, Mr P A G Morpew - HMFSI

Chief Fire Officer, Mr M Eastwood - Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service

Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)

Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Mr M S Coffey - London Fire and Civil Defence Authority

Chief Fire Officer, Mr J D Terry - Avon Fire Brigade

Chief Fire Officer, Mr I H Kerr - Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service

Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)

Firefighter, Mr T Sefton - Merseyside Fire Brigade. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

Mr R D Orringe - National Association of Retired Firefighters.

Sub Officer, Mr P Hitchmough - Merseyside Fire Brigade.

Sub Officer, Mr C A Rylatt - West Midlands Fire Service.



Mr A M Harris - Senior Fire Control Operator, Bedfordshire and Luton Fire and Rescue Service.

Mrs Y Lydon - Tyne and Wear Metropolitan Fire Brigade - Personal Assistant to the Chief Fire Officer

Miss W Hubbard - Fire Service College. HEO Business Information Officer. Station Officer, Mr S B Gittins - West Midlands Fire Service.

Mr R J W Salthouse - Fire Safety and Crime Prevention in Greater Manchester.

Miss E J Drinkall - Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service - Payroll and Pensions Officer.

Mr L Heaviside - Fire Protection Systems.

Sub Officer, Mrs C B Phillips - Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Leading Firefighter, Mr M B Atkinson - (Volunteer) - North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Sub Officer, Mr P W Bragg - Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Firefighter, Mr S Webster - Merseyside Fire Brigade.

Sub Officer (Retained), Mr T W Crofts - Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Firefighter, Mr D Goben - South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Firefighter, Mr D E Wood - South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The Queen's Fire Service Medal (QFSM)

Station Officer, Mr M J Norton - West Midlands Fire Service

Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Mr B Dixon - Greater Manchester County Fire Service

Senior Divisional Officer, Mr I C Dominy - Dorset Fire and Rescue Service.

Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Mr G T Thompson - Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.

Divisional Officer III, Mr K P Ratcliffe - Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Station Officer (Retained), Mr E Robinson - Cumbria Fire Service

Station Officer (Retained), Mr N D Barrow - Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service

Chief Fire Officer, Mr J P Gaunt - Defence Fire Services.

Chief Fire Officer, Mr D A Turner - Essex Fire and Rescue Service.

Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Mr A C J Wroclawski - Kent Fire Brigade.

Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct

Firefighter, Mr P G Stubbles - Somerset Fire Brigade

Firefighter, Mr P A Williams - Somerset Fire Brigade

Firefighter, Mr A M Weatherill - North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.



Chief Fire Officers

14. A list of the Chief Fire Officers in post as at 31 March 2000 follows:

Fire and Civil Defence Authorities

London	B G Robinson CBE QFSM FIFireE
Greater Manchester	G H Almond MBE DL FIFireE FRSH MIPM FPID
Merseyside	M Saunders MA(Oxon) MSc MIFireE
South Yorkshire	B R O'Donnell DMS MIFireE
Tyne and Wear	R Bull QFSM FIFireE
West Midlands	K J Knight QFSM MIFireE FIMgt
West Yorkshire	P Toase BSc MCGI FIFireE

Counties - England

Cornwall (Isles of Scilly By Arrangement)	M A Howell MBA MCGI MIFireE
Cumbria	J M Elliott CertEd MIFireE
Gloucestershire	P J Jones QFSM CDipAF DMS MIFireE
Hertfordshire	R J King OBE MSc FIFireE
Isle of Wight	G Bryson (Acting Chief Fire Officer) DMS MIFireE
Lincolnshire	J H Herrick OStJ QFSM FIFireE FIMgt FICD
Norfolk	B E Smith QFSM FIFireE
Northamptonshire	G F Goldsack QFSM FIFireE
Northumberland	J C McCall GIFireE
Oxfordshire	T M Carroll MIFireE
Somerset	M Burrell MIFireE DMS
Suffolk	M H Alcock MCGI FIFireE MISM
Surrey	M Kitchen OBE OStJ QFSM MBA MIFireE FIMgt
Warwickshire	B Hibbert MIFireE
West Sussex	K J Lloyd QFSM FRSA FIFireE

Combined Fire Authorities

Avon	J D Terry OBE FIFireE
Bedfordshire and Luton	M W Freeman SBStJ MSc FIFireE
Royal Berkshire	D J Harper MVO FIFireE
Buckinghamshire	J Goddard OBE MIFireE
Cambridgeshire	A R Gray OBE GIFireE
Cheshire	S McGuirk BA(Hons) BSc MIFireE
Cleveland	J C Doyle
Derbyshire	B Cahill MSc MIFireE
Devon	P Young FIFireE
Dorset	M Chapman MIFireE
Durham	A Thompson OBE, MIFirE
East Sussex	A C McCormack QFSM MIFireE

Essex	D A Turner QFSM MSc CDipAF MIFireE
Hampshire	M Eastwood CBE CStJ QFSM FIFireE
Hereford and Worcester	D J O'Dwyer QFSM MA DMS MIFireE
Humberside	R Williamson QFSM MIFireE
Kent	J W Beech CBE QFSM SBStJ FIFireE
Lancashire	P M Holland OStJ QFSM FIFireE
Leicestershire	A Russell QFSM MIFireE
North Yorkshire	E W L Clark QFSM DMS MIFireE
Nottinghamshire	P Woods MSc MCGI MIFireE
Shropshire	I H Kerr OBE MIFireE
Staffordshire	A Doig BSc FIFireE MIMgt
Wiltshire	J M Craig OStJ QFSM FIFireE FIMgt

Wales

North Wales	P Quinn QFSM MIFireE
Mid and West Wales	R King OBE OStJ QFSM FIFireE
South Wales	A D Martin (Acting Chief Fire Officer) MIFireE

Northern Ireland

	J McClelland BA DMS MBA FISM MIMgt MIPD MIFireE
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Part I

Brigade Inspection Teams (BIT)



The Brigade Inspection Teams

15. After the great changes to the Inspectorate last year, I am pleased to report on the progress made by the newly formed Brigade Inspection Teams (BIT).

16. This is the first year of the operation of the new inspection arrangements which have been carried out under the procedures outlined in the "Guide to the Inspection Process for Local Authorities Fire Brigades". The emphasis of these new style inspections has been an audit of systems within a brigade to ensure that policies, procedures and practices are in place to deal with the wide variety of challenges facing brigades. Also, for the first time HMFSI has worked to a published "code of practice," which sets out the high standards of conduct expected of all staff.

17. The changing emphasis of inspection and the increased importance attached by Inspectors to a partnership approach is beginning to help brigades to ensure that they have policies, procedures and practices in place to meet the whole range of challenges facing the fire service. The value of a partnership approach is apparent to me because, in preparing for the Best Value inspection regime, we have tried not only to work closely with fire authorities and brigades, but have developed much improved liaison with the Audit Commission, the District Audit Service, Local Government Association (LGA), the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association (CACFOA), and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Indeed liaison and consultation with external audit companies, the District Audit Service and HSE now forms a part of every brigade inspection.

18. The publication of the Portfolio of Expectations by the Inspectorate has been very well received by the Service. These documents, are based on established best practice and recommended guidance and set out what would be expected of a well managed, forward looking brigade. It is encouraging to see how well these documents are being used as an aid to performance management within brigades. These are 'living documents' and will have additions and amendments made as necessary. Indeed further development and extension of each of the seventeen documents will be made this year, in response to popular request!

19. The new inspection process has seen the start of a new type of inspection: "Thematic Review Inspections." These are surveys of all brigades of a specific subject, followed by inspections of a representative sample of brigades to audit activity and trends and to identify and report upon good practice. This form of national review, identifies action that the Fire Service nationally needs to take in important areas of activity and will form important elements in the subsequent inspections of individual brigades. The Thematic Review Inspection Reports, are extremely resource intensive for HMFSI but, I believe, serve a very useful purpose for



brigades and authorities by identifying good practice and encouraging inter-brigade co-operation on topics of national significance.

20. To date we have published the Thematic Review Inspection report on “Equality and Fairness in the Fire Service” and on the Management of sickness and ill-health in the fire service, entitled “Fit For Duty.” In 2000-01 we will be publishing Thematic Review Inspection reports on Community Fire Safety and Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals.

21. The period covered by the report has been a busy one for all personnel in BIT, preparing for Best Value which will come into effect on 1 April 2000. We have worked closely with colleagues in Fire and Emergency Planning Directorate (FEPD), CACFOA, the Audit Commission and the Department of the Environment Transport and Regions (DETR) to produce a suite of Best Value Performance Indicators for the year 2000/01.

Part II

**The Brigade Efficiency
Support Team
(BEST)**



The Brigade Efficiency Support Team

Millennium preparedness of fire brigades

22. Last year I reported that FEPD had provided guidance to fire authorities on their preparedness for the millennium. FEPD had also instituted a series of independent assessment of fire brigade preparedness. HMFSI monitored the situation over the millennium period and I am happy to report that no brigade reported any material disruption to its operations.

Fire Brigade Communications

23. In September HMFSI, working with its consultants, produced and published a package of procurement support material in electronic format to assist fire authorities and their brigades to procure replacement radio systems using the strategy recommended by the CFBAC. This strategy involves locally organised procurement competitions using an output specification. Fire authorities and their brigades are encouraged to collaborate in this process and HMFSI continues to support a number of such collaborative groups. HMFSI has continued to work with BT to ensure that its Airwave mobile radio service (formerly known as the PSRCS), now adopted nationally by the police, is one of the options available to fire brigades. HMFSI also continues to support fire service participation in the Airwave pilot in Lancashire.

24. Fire Authorities will be required to carry out a Best Value review of their control room and communications during 2000/2001. In October 1999, the Minister announced a study managed by HMFSI on behalf of the FEPD to provide authoritative guidance to fire authorities on the most cost-effective way forward on moving to joint control rooms and the potential value for money of the Airwave service. The control room part of the study was published in May 2000. FEPD continues to support the Department of Health led Invest to Save pilot projects for shared control rooms in Cleveland, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire.

Appliances Equipment and Personal Protective Clothing

25. Activity in this area continues to be driven by the need to comply with European led legislation in both the fields of personal protective clothing worn by firefighters and the operational equipment used by them. This activity requires the continuing involvement in the development of International, European and National standards, and the guidance and advice necessary to complement these standards.

26. Members of the Inspectorate act as both Chair and national 'experts' on a variety of committees carrying out an extremely varied work programme to develop the standards necessary to support the Essential Health and Safety Requirements of the various European Directives which impinge on the activities of the fire service. These activities continue to be conducted in close co-operation with colleagues from



CACFOA and as a consequence the UK is able to maintain its significant and influential input to this sphere of work.

27. The day to day support, guidance and advice given on a wide variety of matters concerned with their operational appliances and equipment and liaison with manufacturers and other agencies to resolve individual issues continues to provide a valuable source of support and expertise for brigades.

The Health and Safety Section

28. The health and safety section of HMFSI, working in partnership with the health and safety sub-committee of CACFOA issued a significant amount of comprehensive guidance in September 1998. This guidance has been reviewed and amended, where necessary, during the year.

29. The work of the health and safety section of HMFSI has focussed very much on reinforcing the guidance and influencing the stakeholders of the service to make use of the guidance provided. This has been achieved through HMFSI's and HSE's inspection process and through the organisation of a national health and safety seminar in March 2000.

30. The work that has been undertaken includes:-

● National Health and Safety Event Database

Accident data from all UK brigades have been inputted to an Access database and some initial analysis has been undertaken, work is ongoing to publish the data in table form on the Home Office internet website. The results of the initial analysis were presented to the CFBAC committees and the national Fire 99 conference.

● Positive Pressure Ventilation (PPV)

There was a significant contribution to the work of CFBAC task group on PPV which resulted in the production of a health and safety video on the subject. A PPV implementation strategy document for brigades was published in September 1999.

● Health and Safety Audit

Guidance to brigades relating to how to audit their health and safety performance has been issued as a stand-alone "module" of Volume II of the existing health and safety guidance to fire service managers.

● Generic Risk Assessments

Working groups have met to formulate Generic Risk Assessments (GRA's) on asbestos, and composite materials, underwater rescues and petrochemical installations.



- **Meat and Bonemeal (MBM)**

Guidance has been developed in conjunction with the intervention board on dealing with incidents involving meat and bonemeal storage buildings. This guidance was published in February 2000.

- **Manual Handling Competition**

A competition has been devised and launched on behalf of the CFBAC's health and safety sub-committee inviting brigades to enter examples of good practice of back injury reduction. A number of brigades have responded to this initiative which was run to coincide with national health and safety week (October 25-31). The sub-committee has reviewed the entries and selected a winner. Prizes were awarded by Mike O'Brien MP at the LGA conference in April 1999.

- **Fire Behaviour Guidance**

The health and safety section has made a significant contribution to the development of guidance on training for compartment fires.

Fire Emergency Information Centre (FEIC).

31. The Inspectorate have now established a Fire Emergency Information Centre (FEIC) within Horseferry House. The FEIC was developed from experience gained during the joint operation with Emergency Planning Department of the combined facility within the Home Office, Emergency Operations Centre during the millennium date roll-over and celebration period. The centre will be opened and staffed during periods of national or local crisis or other occasions as considered necessary to gather information and monitor events requiring significant involvement by, or impacting directly upon, the fire service.

Emergency Stockpile.

32. The Green Goddess Emergency Appliances held in the central Home Office store at Marchington continues to be reviewed.

Hazardous Substances.

33. The work undertaken by HMFSI with FPU, on behalf of Comité Technique International de Prévention et d'Extinction du Feu (CTIF), to establish an effective Emergency Action Code (EAC), is continuing. CTIF have adopted the EAC and forwarded an 'Information Paper' to the ADR/RID Joint Committee of Experts for consideration.

UK Fire Service Search and Rescue Team (UKFSSART)

34. The past year has been the busiest ever for UKFSSART. During this period the team has been involved in the following missions at the request of the Department for International Development (DFID).



Macedonia 23 April 1999 – 25 July 1999.

The team undertook a mission to Skopje Airport, Macedonia to establish an Airhead Handling Unit which received inbound humanitarian aid. The team, consisting of ten personnel, rotating every four weeks, was in Macedonia for three consecutive months.

Turkey 17 August 1999 – 25 July 1999.

Following the devastating earthquake on 17 August 1999 UKFSSART was mobilised by DFID. A team of some 28 personnel drawn from five brigades was sent to Istanbul within 24 hours of the earthquake occurring. The team was deployed, under the guidance of the Turkish Government, to Duzce and then Golyaka. As a consequence of the escalating situation DFID requested additional assistance from UKFSSART. A second team of 32 personnel was sent within 24 hours. During the period of the mission the teams carried out several successful live rescues.

India 7 November 1999 – 20 November 1999.

Orissa, India was affected by severe floods following the cyclone of 29 October 1999. At the request of DFID an HM Inspector, trained in disaster assessment techniques, led the UK assessment team. The team assessed the humanitarian situation on the ground in Orissa to ascertain immediate relief needs and to consider the effectiveness of the humanitarian operations that had already been carried out. The information gained informed DFID in preparing their immediate humanitarian strategy for the region.

Turkey 12 November 1999 – 17 November 1999.

An earthquake with a magnitude of 7.2 on the Richter scale, struck Northwest Turkey on 12 November 1999. The epicentre was Duzce in Bolu province, a region already badly affected by the earlier earthquake on 17 August. At the request of DFID, a team consisting of 32 personnel from five brigades was mobilised arriving in Turkey within 24 hours of the event occurring. The team was deployed for five days.

Mozambique 2 March 2000 – 16 March 2000.

A multi-skilled team consisting of personnel from the fire service and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), under the leadership of a fire brigade officer was dispatched to assist the flood victims in Mozambique. The team also delivered approximately 50 tonnes of aid including 50 inflatable boats and engines and tents and plastic sheeting for use as shelters. During the deployment, several missions were undertaken to assess needs and direct aid to where it was most urgently needed. One such mission saw a sortie on the River Buze with personnel from the UK party transporting two doctors from Medicine du Monde with medical aid to outlying communities. The operation lasted three days and



covered a distance of 160 miles with the team being self-sufficient and remaining in the bush. There were a number of dangers associated with the uncharted river courses and obstacles including the threat of crocodiles and hippopotami. During the mission the remaining personnel were involved in assisting air operations and delivering aid by helicopter. The mission was extremely successful, both in respect of the humanitarian work undertaken and, in the way the multi-skilled team collaborated.

The Fire Service College

35. The Prior Options Review team of the Fire Service College reported in December 1999 and recommended that consideration should be given to amalgamating the Fire Service College with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) fire service training facility in partnership with the Private Sector. The CFBAC meeting on 14 March 2000, decided to facilitate further consideration through a series of bilateral meetings and a Stakeholders' Seminar which was held on 22 May. This offered an opportunity for Stakeholders to discuss their views in an informal atmosphere. The seminar was very successful and as a result a Study is being carried out to establish the central training needs of the UK fire service.

Implementation Working Group on Training Strategy (IWG)

36. The work of the IWG continued based on "*A Competence Framework for the Fire Service*". A number of projects are running to :-

- Review the accredited Emergency Fire Services S/NVQs
- Produce an Initial Firefighter Training Programme for trainee and probationary firefighters
- Finalise a role related integrated performance development model
- Develop occupational performance standards and role descriptors for senior positions within the Service
- Devise a personal development recording (PDR) system for brigade use

The Vocational Qualifications Review Group (VQRG)

37. The VQRG continues to review the accredited national occupational performance standards and vocational qualifications for the Emergency Fire Services. The published Fire Service Role Maps serve as primary source documents for the review. 26 brigades are currently registered with the Fire Services Awarding Body as Approved Centres to provide NVQs and 1,871 candidates are working towards the attainment of a Firefighting NVQ. To date 160 firefighters have been awarded a whole NVQ certificate and 457 awards gained.

Training publications

38. The production of training publications in the Fire Service Manual series continues supported by the Stationery Office. Recent publications include Marine

Incidents, Aircraft Incidents, Firefighting Foam - (Technical), Petrochemical Incidents and Health and Safety Training Model.

Fire Behaviour Training

39. Dear Chief Officer Letter 11/1999 provided brigades with interim guidance on the use of compartment fire training facilities using real or simulated fires to provide practical fire behaviour and firefighting training. A Working Group led by CACFOA and involving all interested parties including the HSE and the Fire Brigade Union (FBU), is developing the guidance. Complementary work is being undertaken by a jointly sponsored Home Office/HSE research project to examine the physiological and environmental aspects of Firefighting Training.

The Fire Service Examinations Board

40. As in previous years, the Fire Services Examinations Board (FSEB) held examinations for eligibility for promotion to the ranks of Leading firefighter, sub-officer and station officer. The written examinations for leading firefighter were held in September 1999. Eligible candidates took the practical tests in March and May 2000. The results were as follows (the previous year's figures are shown in brackets).

Examination	Number of Candidates	Number of Passes	Percentage of Passes
Leading Firefighter practical	986 (1116)	611 (694)	62.0% (62.2%)
Leading Firefighter written	1773 (1550)	853 (630)	48.1% (40.6%)

The results for the 1999 sub-officer examinations are shown in the table below with the previous year's in brackets. The practical tests took place in April, May and June and the written examination in October.

Examination	Number of Candidates	Number of Passes	Percentage of Passes
Sub-Officer practical	1014 (1012)	590 (576)	58.2% (56.9%)
Sub-Officer written	1546 (1586)	468 (587)	30.3% (37.0%)

The Station Officer examination took place in February 2000. The results, with the previous year's figures in brackets, were: -

Examination	Number of Candidates	Number of Passes	Percentage of Passes
Station Officer written	1115 (1290)	359 (360)	32.2% (29.5%)



Fires of Special Interest

41. The Inspectorate continues to monitor fires both here and abroad which may hold important lessons for the safety of the public and of firefighters. To meet the challenging targets for reduction in fire deaths and injuries there is a need to identify emerging trends and provide practical advice to those communities most affected. I intend in the coming year to strengthen our arrangements for monitoring these trends and to provide brigades with further support for community fire safety.

Arson Prevention

42. The Arson Control Forum has been established following the acceptance by Ministers of all the recommendations in the Home Office report *'Safer Communities – Towards Effective Arson Control'*.

43. It is likely that the programme of work will lead cultural changes for many of those agencies with an interest in arson prevention and detection. As part of this process I have agreed with Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary to issue revised guidance to the police and fire service on the detection, recording and prevention of arson. This will be followed by a joint thematic inspection involving both inspectorates that will focus on the adequacy of inter-agency arrangements to tackle arson and provide examples of best practice.

Part III

Community Fire Safety



New Foundations for Community Fire Safety

44. The first full year of the National Community Fire Safety Centre (NCFSC) has seen a great deal of activity with much more in the pipeline. An early priority for the Centre was to establish a national fire safety “branding” which would help to unify the different national and local fire prevention themes and create a more memorable public image. Following design research and development, a new logo was agreed which combines stark reality of the consequences of fire with a positive and inclusive message of prevention: **Fire kills - you can prevent it.** The logo has since been widely adopted on national and brigade material.

45. The foundations have been built for more integrated fire prevention campaigns, bringing together the efforts of advertising, press and promotional support, sponsorship and brigade activity in the community. The Chip Pan Fire Safety campaign in August and September 1999 achieved high levels of awareness and considerable public and media interest. The campaign led to opportunities for joint initiatives, such as the links to the Health Education Authority campaign targeted at young males who “drink and fry”. Other significant national partnerships included the support of Marks and Spencer’s family fire safety initiative, which was developed through the lead authority relationship with West Midlands Fire Service.

46. Sustaining the message is one of the major challenges of community fire safety, and in October 1999 the NCFSC launched the first *Community Fire Safety Year Planner* package. This identifies a wide variety of topical and seasonal events and opportunities for the year ahead, providing press stories which can be used to achieve more continuous coverage of fire prevention issues. The Year Planner was available at the Fire ‘99 conference and exhibition at Harrogate, where the NCFSC also displayed the prototype Community Fire Safety Toolbox module.

47. The early part of 2000 saw a continued emphasis on key fire safety awareness building. Following an initiative by London Fire Brigade to run a post office information campaign, the NCFSC funded the extension of the leaflet distribution to other areas of the country. This was followed by the pilot for a new campaign for Fire Action Plans, which was launched in the Yorkshire TV area with support from West and South Yorkshire, and other brigades within the catchment area.

The Fire Prevention Bill

48. A statutory duty to undertake Community Fire Safety is important if the fire service is to bring about the change in focus from cure to prevention. The proposal to introduce a statutory duty had been a recommendation of both the Audit Commission and the Community Fire Safety Task Force (in its *Safe as Houses* report). The recommendation was accepted by Ministers in 1998.



49. The Fire Prevention Bill was a Government supported Private Member's Bill introduced by Peter Pike MP. The purpose of the measure was to make fire safety promotion one of the fire authority's statutory duties ensuring as much priority is given to preventing fires as to dealing with them. It received its first reading on 15th December 1999 but ran out of Parliamentary time at the second reading stage. We are now considering options as to how we might progress our desire to make prevention work a statutory duty of fire authorities.

Part IV

Staffing and Other Resources

Establishment and strength of fire authority staff at 31 March 2000

	Wholetime		Control room		Retained		Non-uniformed	
	Establishment	Strength ¹	Establishment	Strength ¹	Establishment	Strength ²	Establishment	Strength ¹
FCDAs								
Greater Manchester	2155	2071	63	66	64	37	341	311
London	5682	5639	97	93	0	0	929	898
Merseyside	1420	1420	52	51	0	0	268	265
South Yorkshire	917	919	38	37	80	41	136	134
Tyne & Wear	1007	1017	38	37	24	17	197	188
West Midlands	2025	2033	65	63	10	10	463	428
West Yorkshire	1698	1680	51	51	150	167	209	194
TOTAL	14904	14779	404	398	328	272	2543	2418
ENGLAND								
Avon	668	661	32	31	212	150	89	88
Bedfordshire & Luton	315	307	18	23	161	105	66	66
Buckinghamshire	313	307	22	22	226	151	63	59
Cambridgeshire	269	263	23	24	380	294	94	98
Cheshire	617	632	25	24	182	137	76	75
Cleveland	615	589	26	26	72	69	68	71
Cornwall	181	182	15	14	420	398	68	70
County Durham & Darlington	406	402	26	29	168	124	59	58
Cumbria	277	277	17	17	474	376	60	61
Derbyshire	481	479	27	28	360	238	79	81
Devon	555	561	26	26	756	604	115	116
Dorset	292	293	20	19	356	293	73	74
East Sussex	427	424	25	26	300	197	88	84
Essex	919	923	38	43	430	370	168	156
Gloucestershire	229	224	21	21	296	265	60	62
Hampshire	756	768	30	32	628	529	191	186
Hereford & Worcester	358	346	21	21	369	282	76	71
Hertfordshire	576	552	26	26	284	211	85	98
Humberside	710	711	29	30	328	257	128	121
Isle of Wight	61	60	12	12	168	156	20	17
Isles of Scilly	9	9	0	0	33	35	1	1
Kent	952	942	40	40	714	537	171	164
Lancashire	1013	1008	41	41	402	304	140	138
Leicestershire	497	495	23	28	216	143	70	65
Lincolnshire	193	193	18	18	490	456	41	41
Norfolk	296	298	23	22	512	427	74	74
North Yorkshire	362	349	21	20	368	331	69	68
Northamptonshire	297	296	17	18	235	185	46	46
Northumberland	205	205	17	20	155	161	11	11
Nottinghamshire	578	581	26	26	252	200	97	86
Oxfordshire	235	235	18	20	336	247	56	55
Royal Berkshire	427	409	27	28	156	125	92	86
Shropshire	203	197	16	16	284	257	47	45
Somerset	179	175	19	18	390	341	62	61
Staffordshire	493	480	33	31	376	292	114	116
Suffolk	256	249	23	23	422	348	80	79
Surrey	710	706	25	25	144	107	118	93
Warwickshire	294	290	18	18	172	145	58	58
West Sussex	399	394	26	23	398	271	81	81
Wiltshire	216	215	18	18	303	257	62	61
TOTAL	16839	16687	928	947	12928	10375	3216	3141
WALES								
Mid & West Wales	501	493	36	36	713	656	129	123
North Wales	289	284	27	29	553	461	78	78
South Wales	966	975	54	54	447	257	187	179
TOTAL	1756	1752	117	119	1713	1374	394	380
GRAND TOTAL	33499	33218	1449	1464	14969	12021	6153	5939

Notes

1. In full time equivalents.

2. In twenty four units of cover.



Establishment and strength of local authority fire brigades

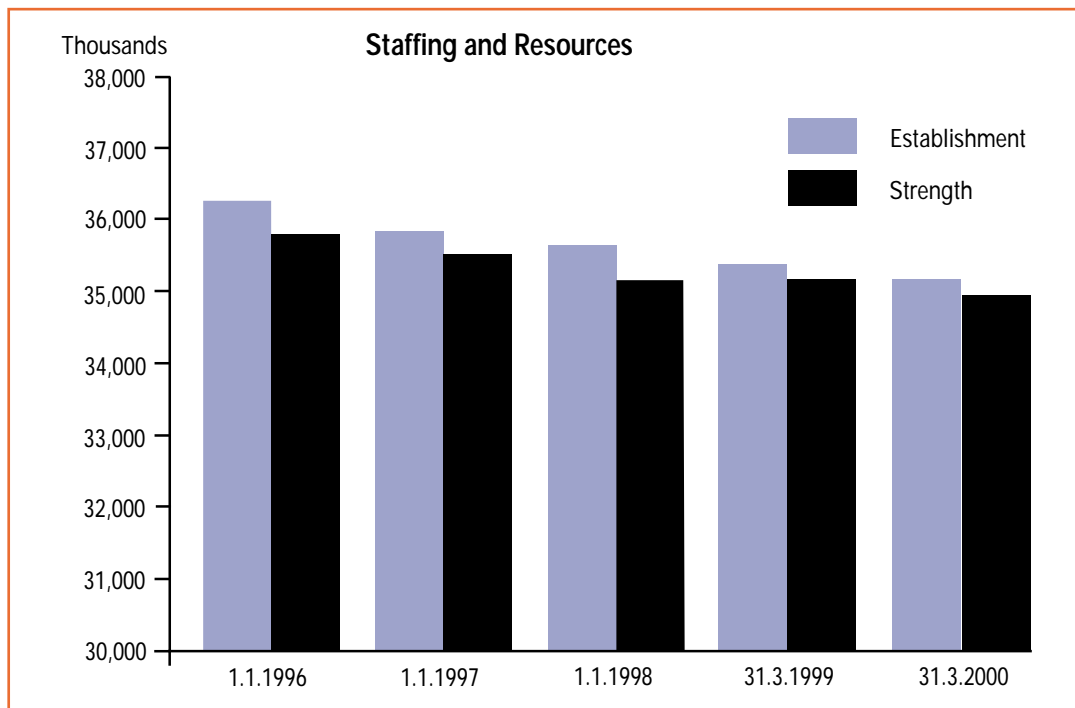
50. The table opposite shows the establishment and strength of individual local authority fire brigades in England and Wales on 31 March 2000.

Wholetime

51. At 31 March 2000 the total permanent wholetime establishment of local authority fire brigades in England and Wales was 34,948 compared with 35,417 last year, a decrease of 469 (1.3%). This establishment total includes non-operational posts, mainly officers specialising in fire control work and control room staff, but excludes junior firefighters. The number of staff in post (i.e. strength) was 34,682 at 31 March 2000, compared with 35,112 at 1 January 1999.

The overall pattern for both establishment and strength has remained broadly constant in recent years. The trend from 1996 is shown in the following chart.

Wholetime establishment and strength, 1996-00

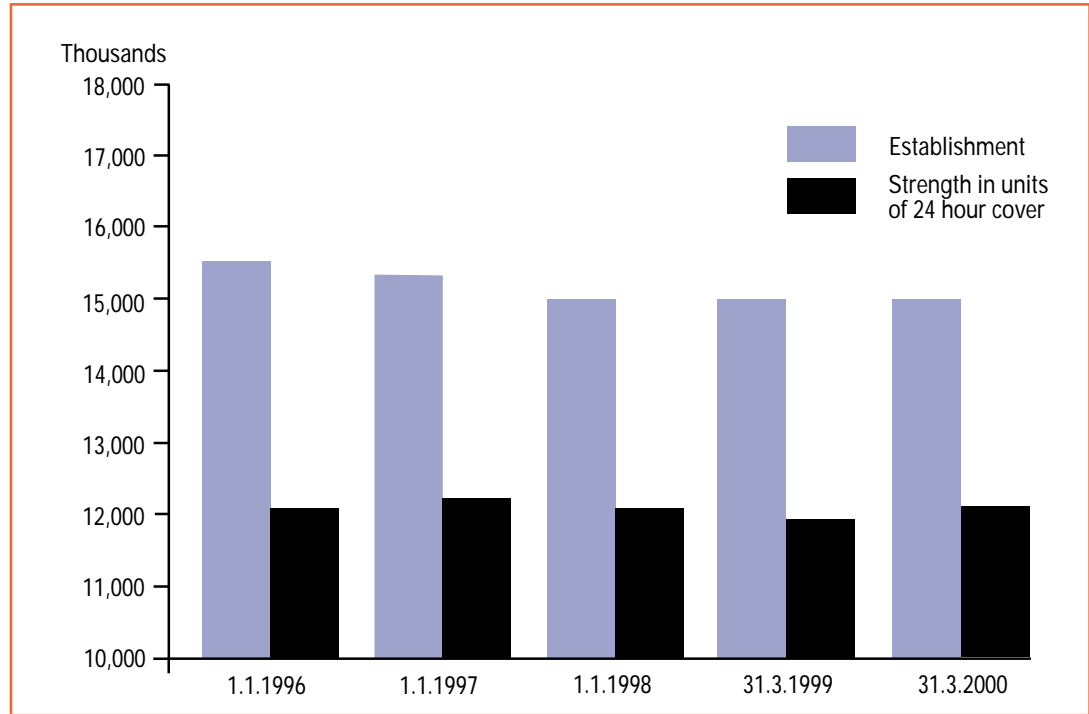


Part-time (retained)

52. Over the past 12 months, there has been an increase of 6 (0.04%) in the part-time establishment of local authority brigades from 14,963 at 31 March 1999 to 14,969 at 31 March 2000. The number of retained firefighters actually employed at 31 March 2000 was 14,698. Together with the 317 wholetime staff with retained obligations, the combined total of 15,015 compares with 14,989 on 31 March 1999. The trend in retained establishment and strength since 1996 is shown in the following chart. (None of these figures takes account of the relatively small numbers of junior firefighters, volunteers and members of private brigades and local fire units, nor retained control room staff.)



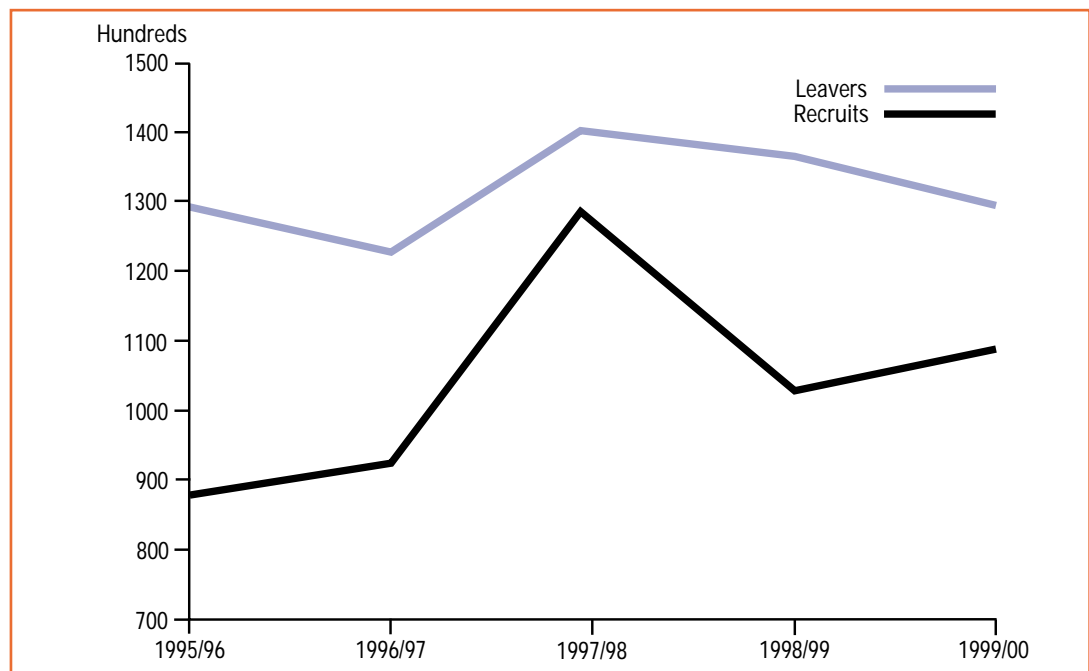
Part-time establishment and strength, 1996-00



Recruitment and wastage

53. A breakdown of recruitment and wastage figures is given in the table at the end of this part of my report. The main trends over the last five years are illustrated below.

Recruitment/leavers



Gender of fire authority staff at 31 March 2000

	Wholetime			Control room			Retained			Non-uniformed		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
FCDAs												
Greater Manchester	2070	1	2071	6	60	66	55	1	56	125	275	400
London	5687	67	5754	31	71	102	0	0	0	498	447	945
Merseyside	1415	5	1420	3	48	51	0	0	0	108	154	262
South Yorkshire	908	11	919	6	31	37	64	3	67	71	68	139
Tyne & Wear	1013	4	1017	8	30	38	23	0	23	74	152	226
West Midlands	2023	11	2034	1	65	66	8	0	8	119	309	428
West Yorkshire	1674	6	1680	21	30	51	170	3	173	98	119	217
TOTAL	14790	105	14895	76	335	411	320	7	327	1093	1524	2617
ENGLAND												
Avon	653	8	661	16	15	31	199	2	201	41	60	101
Bedfordshire & Luton	298	7	305	2	18	20	121	5	126	28	52	80
Buckinghamshire	302	5	307	1	21	22	183	10	193	28	44	72
Cambridgeshire	259	4	263	3	21	24	356	8	364	48	64	112
Cheshire	632	0	632	9	16	25	175	4	179	31	60	91
Cleveland	588	1	589	2	24	26	89	0	89	35	45	80
Cornwall	181	1	182	11	5	16	415	4	419	40	33	73
County Durham & Darlington	399	3	402	1	28	29	158	0	158	33	30	63
Cumbria	275	2	277	5	12	17	433	6	439	32	35	67
Derbyshire	467	12	479	10	18	28	380	4	384	32	67	99
Devon	554	7	561	7	19	26	693	17	710	60	59	119
Dorset	293	1	294	5	15	20	331	6	337	48	33	81
East Sussex	416	8	424	14	12	26	240	3	243	39	54	93
Essex	920	3	923	2	41	43	458	2	460	76	104	180
Gloucestershire	220	4	224	6	15	21	281	12	293	31	36	67
Hampshire	764	4	768	12	20	32	613	15	628	88	94	182
Hereford & Worcester	348	5	353	3	20	23	336	5	341	40	38	78
Hertfordshire	576	5	581	9	17	26	261	5	266	35	66	101
Humberside	707	4	711	13	17	30	308	5	313	32	88	120
Isle of Wight	59	1	60	8	4	12	160	2	162	8	11	19
Isles of Scilly	9	0	9	0	0	0	34	1	35	1	1	2
Kent	941	1	942	4	36	40	759	21	780	56	143	199
Lancashire	1002	6	1008	1	42	43	389	9	398	44	115	159
Leicestershire	491	4	495	8	20	28	219	4	223	20	43	63
Lincolnshire	191	2	193	0	20	20	475	14	489	19	31	50
Norfolk	295	3	298	5	18	23	438	5	443	41	44	85
North Yorkshire	343	6	349	3	18	21	367	12	379	29	52	81
Northamptonshire	292	3	295	5	13	18	216	5	221	22	28	50
Northumberland	202	3	205	1	19	20	182	4	186	11	0	11
Nottinghamshire	576	5	581	6	20	26	336	8	344	36	66	102
Oxfordshire	233	2	235	4	16	20	309	22	331	27	38	65
Royal Berkshire	408	1	409	10	18	28	157	5	162	41	56	97
Shropshire	195	2	197	11	5	16	298	3	301	20	29	49
Somerset	175	0	175	4	16	20	367	4	371	25	41	66
Staffordshire	473	7	480	4	27	31	365	10	375	57	87	144
Suffolk	246	3	249	4	20	24	390	6	396	54	68	122
Surrey	692	14	706	0	25	25	131	4	135	38	70	108
Warwickshire	285	4	289	4	14	18	172	5	177	27	39	66
West Sussex	379	15	394	3	23	26	319	5	324	38	52	90
Wiltshire	212	3	215	5	13	18	314	5	319	21	50	71
TOTAL	16551	169	16720	221	741	962	12427	267	12694	1432	2126	3558
WALES												
Mid & West Wales	493	2	495	11	25	36	678	10	688	58	88	146
North Wales	281	3	284	2	27	29	544	13	557	33	54	87
South Wales	969	6	975	2	52	54	428	4	432	82	105	187
TOTAL	1743	11	1754	15	104	119	1650	27	1677	173	247	420
GRAND TOTAL	33084	285	33369	312	1180	1492	14397	301	14698	2698	3897	6595

Ethnic origin of fire authority staff at 31 March 2000

	Wholetime					Control room					Retained					Non-uniformed					
	White	Black	Asian	Other	Total	White	Black	Asian	Other	Total	White	Black	Asian	Other	Total	White	Black	Asian	Other	Total	
FCDAs																					
Greater Manchester	2055	12	3	1	2071	64	0	1	1	66	56	0	0	0	56	396	0	2	2	400	
London	5496	167	19	72	5754	99	2	1	0	102	0	0	0	0	0	729	146	37	33	945	
Merseyside	1413	4	1	2	1420	51	0	0	0	51	0	0	0	0	0	257	3	2	0	262	
South Yorkshire	905	9	1	4	919	37	0	0	0	37	67	0	0	0	67	135	3	0	1	139	
Tyne & Wear	1015	1	0	1	1017	38	0	0	0	38	23	0	0	0	23	225	0	1	0	226	
West Midlands	1968	41	4	21	2034	64	2	0	0	66	8	0	0	0	8	410	9	4	5	428	
West Yorkshire	1669	7	2	2	1680	51	0	0	0	51	173	0	0	0	173	213	0	3	1	217	
TOTAL	14521	241	30	103	14895	404	4	2	1	411	327	0	0	0	327	2365	161	49	42	2617	
ENGLAND																					
Avon	654	6	0	1	661	31	0	0	0	31	201	0	0	0	201	99	1	1	0	101	
Bedfordshire & Luton	297	4	1	3	305	19	1	0	0	20	125	0	1	0	126	77	0	2	1	80	
Buckinghamshire	303	4	0	0	307	21	1	0	0	22	193	0	0	0	193	72	0	0	0	72	
Cambridgeshire	256	3	0	4	263	24	0	0	0	24	364	0	0	0	364	109	0	0	3	112	
Cheshire	628	2	1	1	632	25	0	0	0	25	179	0	0	0	179	91	0	0	0	91	
Cleveland	584	1	4	0	589	26	0	0	0	26	89	0	0	0	89	80	0	0	0	80	
Cornwall	181	0	0	1	182	16	0	0	0	16	417	1	1	0	419	73	0	0	0	73	
County Durham & Darlington	400	2	0	0	402	29	0	0	0	29	158	0	0	0	158	63	0	0	0	63	
Cumbria	277	0	0	0	277	17	0	0	0	17	438	0	1	0	439	67	0	0	0	67	
Derbyshire	474	3	2	0	479	26	0	2	0	28	382	2	0	0	384	95	0	0	4	99	
Devon	559	2	0	0	561	26	0	0	0	26	708	2	0	0	710	119	0	0	0	119	
Dorset	293	0	0	1	294	20	0	0	0	20	334	1	1	1	337	81	0	0	0	81	
East Sussex	420	1	2	1	424	26	0	0	0	26	242	0	1	0	243	93	0	0	0	93	
Essex	920	2	1	0	923	43	0	0	0	43	459	0	1	0	460	179	1	0	0	180	
Gloucestershire	220	2	0	2	224	21	0	0	0	21	293	0	0	0	293	65	0	2	0	67	
Hampshire	765	2	1	0	768	32	0	0	0	32	628	0	0	0	628	178	1	2	1	182	
Hereford & Worcester	350	3	0	0	353	23	0	0	0	23	340	1	0	0	341	77	1	0	0	78	
Hertfordshire	575	1	0	5	581	25	0	0	1	26	264	2	0	0	266	101	0	0	0	101	
Humberside	704	2	1	4	711	30	0	0	0	30	312	1	0	0	313	120	0	0	0	120	
Isle of Wight	60	0	0	0	60	12	0	0	0	12	162	0	0	0	162	19	0	0	0	19	
Isles of Scilly	9	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	35	0	0	0	35	2	0	0	0	2	
Kent	939	2	1	0	942	39	1	0	0	40	777	1	2	0	780	198	0	1	0	199	
Lancashire	1004	3	1	0	1008	43	0	0	0	43	394	1	3	0	398	158	0	1	0	159	
Leicestershire	487	4	4	0	495	28	0	0	0	28	223	0	0	0	223	57	3	2	1	63	
Lincolnshire	191	2	0	0	193	20	0	0	0	20	487	2	0	0	489	49	0	0	1	50	
Norfolk	294	4	0	0	298	23	0	0	0	23	441	0	1	1	443	84	0	1	0	85	
North Yorkshire	348	0	1	0	349	21	0	0	0	21	379	0	0	0	379	81	0	0	0	81	
Northamptonshire	292	0	0	4	296	18	0	0	0	18	220	0	1	0	221	48	2	0	0	50	
Northumberland	204	0	0	1	205	20	0	0	0	20	186	0	0	0	186	11	0	0	0	11	
Nottinghamshire ¹	573	4	1	0	578	26	0	0	0	26	335	9	0	0	344	101	0	1	0	102	
Oxfordshire	235	0	0	0	235	20	0	0	0	20	329	2	0	0	331	64	0	1	0	65	
Royal Berkshire	403	2	2	2	409	28	0	0	0	28	161	1	0	0	162	94	1	2	0	97	
Shropshire	197	0	0	0	197	16	0	0	0	16	301	0	0	0	301	48	0	1	0	49	
Somerset	174	0	0	1	175	20	0	0	0	20	371	0	0	0	371	66	0	0	0	66	
Staffordshire	473	6	0	1	480	31	0	0	0	31	373	1	0	1	375	142	2	0	0	144	
Suffolk ²	249	0	0	0	249	24	0	0	0	24	395	0	1	0	396	79	1	0	0	80	
Surrey ³	672	4	0	0	676	25	0	0	0	25	134	1	0	0	135	108	0	0	0	108	
Warwickshire	283	5	1	0	289	18	0	0	0	18	174	3	0	0	177	62	0	4	0	66	
West Sussex	393	0	0	1	394	26	0	0	0	26	322	2	0	0	324	90	0	0	0	90	
Wiltshire	212	3	0	0	215	18	0	0	0	18	317	1	1	0	319	69	0	1	1	71	
TOTAL	16552	79	24	33	16688	956	3	2	1	962	12642	34	15	3	12694	3469	13	22	12	3516	
WALES																					
Mid & West Wales	494	1	0	0	495	36	0	0	0	36	688	0	0	0	688	145	1	0	0	146	
North Wales	284	0	0	0	284	29	0	0	0	29	553	1	1	2	557	86	0	0	1	87	
South Wales	970	3	2	0	975	54	0	0	0	54	431	0	0	1	432	186	0	1	0	187	
TOTAL	1748	4	2	0	1754	119	0	0	0	119	1672	1	1	3	1677	417	1	1	1	420	
GRAND TOTAL	32821	324	56	136	33337	1479	7	4	2	1492	14641	35	16	6	14698	6251	175	72	55	6553	

Notes:

Staff omitted from the ethnic breakdown as their origin was not disclosed

1. 3 wholetime
2. 42 non-uniformed
3. 30 wholetime



Equal Opportunities

54. In the autumn of 1998 the Home Secretary announced that, as part of a strategy for race equality, he would set targets for the recruitment, retention and career progression of ethnic minorities in the Home Office and its services, including the fire service, with the aim of making such organisations more representative of the communities they serve. Subsequently, following a joint request from fire service organisations, he announced that employment targets would also be set for women.

55. The last twelve months has seen a number of key initiatives and I am pleased to report that the fire service has responded with great vigour and purpose to the challenges that it has been set.

56. In June 1999, following a series of detailed consultations between the Home Office, the Joint Strategic Committee on Personnel's Equal Opportunities Task Group (EOTG) and chief fire officers, each brigade was set targets for the recruitment of ethnic minorities over a ten year period. Retention and career progression targets for ethnic minorities were published shortly afterwards. The EOTG also drew up targets for the recruitment, retention and promotion of women and these have been promulgated to the service.

57. In September 1999, the report of the Inspectorate's thematic review "Equality and Fairness in the Fire Service" was published. Responding to the findings, the Central Fire Brigades Advisory Council was invited by Ministers to produce a timetabled action plan to take forward the report's recommendations, with the aim of achieving measurable improvements within 18 months. The resulting action plan, "*Toward Diversity - Promoting Cultural Change*", was published by the EOTG in 2000. It set 29 action points for implementation by May 2001.

58. During the year the Home Office published the reports of studies it had commissioned in three brigades that examined the views of ethnic minorities and women on the fire service as an employer. The findings will benefit brigades with developing recruitment strategies aimed at attracting applicants from under-represented groups.

59. Statistics gathered from each brigade's annual returns continue to show increases in the numbers of women in the fire service. There has been an overall increase of 17% in the number of women employed in the fire service. There has also been a 12% increase within the operational fire service in the number of personnel from ethnic minorities, from 1998 to 31 March 2000. 30 brigades have increased minority ethnic representation within their uniformed workforce, and 17 brigades have increased minority ethnic representation in the non-uniformed sector.

Number of women and members of ethnic minority groups employed by brigades in England and Wales on 31 March 2000. Figures for 31 March 1999 are shown in brackets.

	Men				Women			
Wholetime ¹	33,084	(33,398)			285	(258)		
Retained	14,397	(14,421)			301	(244)		
Total	47,481	(47,819)			586	(502)		
	White		Black		Asian		Other	
Wholetime ¹	32,821	(33,132)	324	(315)	56	(74)	136	(135)
Retained	14,641	(14,593)	35	(24)	16	(16)	6	(13)
Total	47,462	(47,725)	359	(339)	72	(90)	142	(148)

Note:

¹ Excluding control room staff.

Discipline

60. The annual statistics show a significant decrease in both the number of cases investigated and those where awards were imposed, once again demonstrating the high standards of conduct set by the service.

During the year ending 31 March 2000 a total of 361 cases were investigated under the Fire Services (Discipline) Regulations; 49 less than in the previous year. From this total, 245 (68%) were not proceeded with or the cases were dismissed. This compares with 242 (59%) for 1998/99. In the remaining 116 cases (168 in 1998/99) the following awards were imposed:

	1998/99	1999/00
Dismissal	(18)	12
Requirement to Resign	(8)	8
Reduction in Rank	(15)	7
Stoppage of Pay	(42)	47
Reprimand	(62)	49
Caution	(55)	40
	(200) ¹	163 ¹

Note:

¹ In some cases more than one disciplinary award was imposed.

In the year ending 31 March 2000, six appeals were made to the Secretary of State under the provisions of the Fire Services (Discipline) Regulations. In addition there were 14 cases outstanding. Of these, two remained to be determined. Details of appeals and the Secretary of State's decision over the last five years are as follows:

	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00
Appeal Received ¹	4	6	14	9	6
<u>Decisions:</u> ²					
Withdrawn	1	0	1	0	2
Allowed	0	0	2	1	0
Lesser penalty	0	1	1	1	2
Dismissed	3	5	9	6	0
Not yet determined	0	0	1 ³	1	2

Note:

¹ Figures relate to the period 1 April to 31 March

² The Secretary of State's decision has been attributed to the year in which the appeal was received

³ Appeal to the House of Lords pending

Finance

61. The total expenditure on the fire service in England and Wales in the financial years 1997/98, 1998/99 and 1999/00 is shown below:

Financial Year	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00
Expenditure (£m)	1,464 (outturn)	1,549 (provisional outturn)	1,648 (estimated outturn)

Note:

Figures comprise of capital and current expenditure.

The breakdown of the total of £1,489m of current expenditure in 1998/99:

	Amount (£m)	%
Wholetime firefighters' salaries and wages	822	55
Running expenses	225	15
Pensions	205	14
Civilian staff's salaries and wages	104	7
Retained staff's salaries and wages	66	4
Control room staff's salaries and wages	36	2
Other employee costs	32	2

Note:

¹ Total expenses on pensions has been offset by income from employees' contributions and transfer values.

² Running expenses have been offset by other income.

³ Figures have been rounded up so may vary slightly.



The totality of current local authority expenditure on the fire service can be itemised as follows:

	£m	£m
Employee costs		
Salaries and wages		1027.5
Pensions (gross)		
Commuted element	64.0	
Recurring element	241.3	
Transfer values	8.7	
Refunds of contribution	0.3	
Total Pensions		314.3
Other employee costs		32.0
Running costs (gross)¹		244.7
Total gross expenditure		1,618.5
Income Pensions		
Pension contributions	92.2	
transfer values	17.3	
Other (set against running cost expenses)²	19.8	
Total pension income		(129.3)
Total net expenditure		1,489.2

Note:

¹ Running cost expenses include - premises and related expenses, supplies and services, transport and related expenses, central departmental and technical support services, agency and contracted out services.

² Other income includes - sales, fees and charges, interest receipts and income from recharges.

Part V

Fire and Operational Statistics



Fire and operational statistics

62. The following table shows the total number of incidents attended by brigades - fires, false fire alarms and special service incidents - during the years 1995 to 1999. The total number of incidents attended in 1999 rose to 965,200, mainly due to the 23 per cent rise in small outdoor secondary fires (from 158,800 to 194,700). The number of fire false alarms in 1999 rose by 2% to 404,700.

Total incidents attended by fire brigades, 1995-99 England and Wales

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Type of incident					(provisional)
Fires	516,200	444,900	397,600	345,700	396,700
Fire false alarms	446,900	430,000	430,300	397,500	404,700
Special service incidents ¹	185,800	186,000	163,600	158,000	163,800
Total incidents	1,148,900	1,060,900	991,500	901,200	965,200

Note:

¹Special service incidents (for example road traffic accidents and incidents of flooding or spilling of toxic substances) are counted according to financial years.

The tables and commentary that follow give fuller information, where available. However, more detail about fires involving property and casualties in 1999 was published in Home Office Statistical Bulletin "Fire Statistics, United Kingdom, Issue 20/00" in November 2000.

Fires

63. The number of fires attended by local authority fire brigades during the years 1995 to 1999 is shown in the following table. In 1999 there were 396,700 fires attended, 15 per cent more than in 1998. Between 1998 and 1999, the more serious fires (those involving property or casualties) increased by 9 per cent to 191,400. This rise represents the first increase in three years. The number of "small" fires rose sharply by 23 per cent to 194,700; the relatively wet summer of 1998 was the likely cause of the exceptionally low numbers of outdoor fires in that year.

Number of fires, 1995-99 England and Wales

Type of fire	1995	1996	1997 ¹	1998	1999 (provisional)
Fires involving property or casualties	175,100	179,800	175,800	175,100	191,400
Chimney fires	15,900	18,300	14,000	11,800	10,600
Small fires, including grass and heathland	325,200	246,800	207,900	158,800	194,700
Total fires	516,200	444,900	397,600	345,700	396,700

Note:

¹Total may not agree with sum of individual components due to rounding.

Total fatalities

64. The table below shows the number of fire deaths (including firefighters) reported in fires attended by the fire brigades from 1995 to 1999. The graph overleaf shows that the long-term trend (from 1989) for the fire deaths in England and Wales is falling. Information to revise the data (e.g. from a death certificate) may be received some time after the event, hence the revisions to earlier data and the uncertainty associated with the estimated numbers for 1999. The indications are that the estimated number of fire related deaths have fallen in 1999 to 534. This compares with 538 in 1998, 605 in 1997, 588 in 1996 and 627 in 1995. The 1999 total deaths provisional figure includes the 31 fatalities resulting from the Ladbroke Grove rail incident (October 1999).

Number of fatalities resulting from fires, 1995-99 England and Wales

Location of fire	1995 (revised)	1996 (revised)	1997 ¹ (revised)	1998 ¹ (revised)	1999 ¹ (estimated) ²
Deaths in all locations	627	588	605	538	534 ²
Deaths in Accidental Dwelling Fires	394	393	402	371	315
Deaths in Accidental Dwelling Fires as a % of all locations	63%	67%	66%	69%	59%

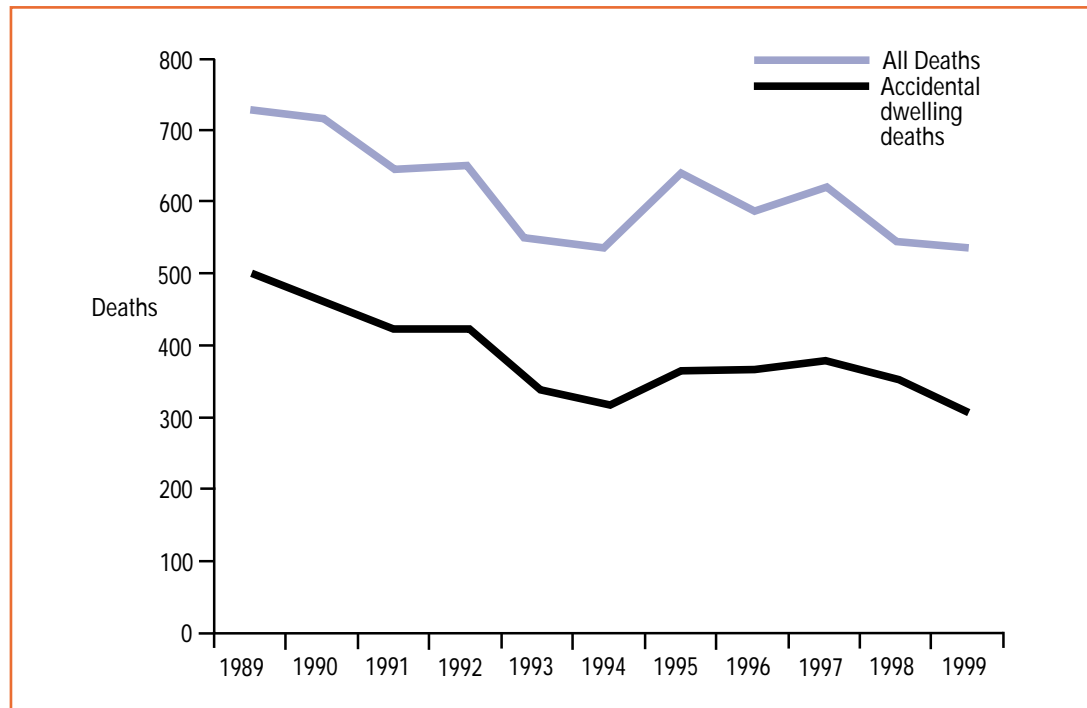
Note:

¹The 1999 data are estimated to account for revisions from later data (e.g. from death certificates) yet to be received.

²Includes 31 deaths resulting from the Ladbroke Grove rail incident (October 1999).



Trends in fire deaths in England and Wales, 1989-99



Rescues

65. The table below shows numbers of people rescued from fires in England and Wales over the period 1995 to 1999. About 7,000 people were reported as rescued from fires in 1999. Nearly 60% were rescued by fire brigades.

Rescues from fires, 1995 - 99 England and Wales

Year	Total	Rescued by brigade	Rescued without brigade assistance
1995 ¹	6,200	3,600	2,600
1996 ¹	6,200	3,700	2,500
1997 ¹	6,400	3,700	2,700
1998 ¹	6,500	3,700	2,800
1999 ^{1,2}	7,000	4,000	3,000

Note:

¹ Figures are based on sample data weighted to the brigade total. They include additional late call and heat and smoke damage incidents. Totals may not agree with sum of individual components due to rounding.

² Figures for 1999 are estimated.

Fire false alarms

66. In 1999, the number of fire false alarms rose to 404,700. This rise follows a substantial fall in 1998. For the seventh year running malicious false alarms (those that fire brigades thought were knowingly given) fell to 70,500. The marked changes since 1995 in the numbers for good intent (fall) and apparatus (rise) are partly the



result of brigade coding changes. Clarification of calls to be included in “apparatus” applied by some brigades during 1996 resulted in some calls being classified to the apparatus category rather than to good intent.

**Number of fire false alarms, 1995 - 99
England and Wales**

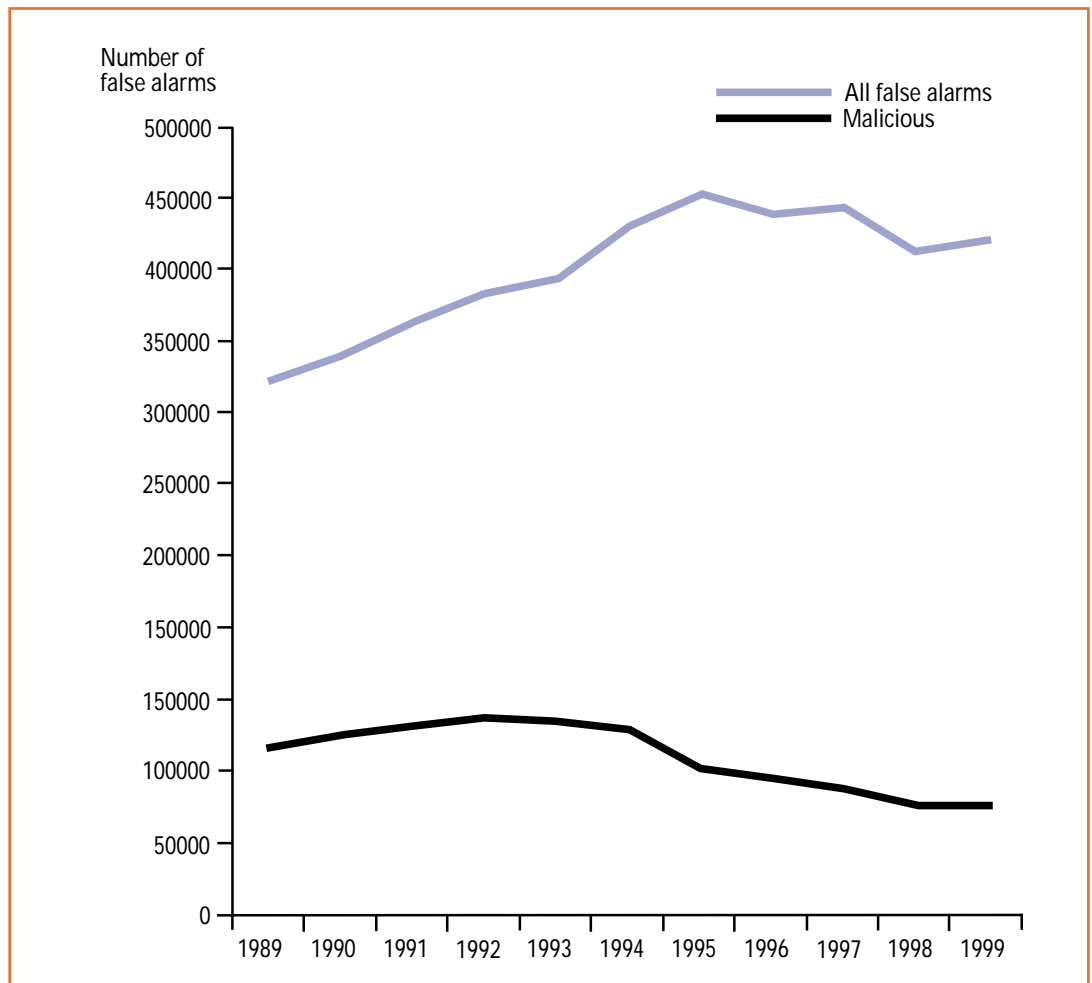
Year	Total	Malicious	Good intent	Due to apparatus
1995 ¹	446,900	102,700	204,800	139,300
1996	430,000	98,400	143,300	188,300
1997	430,200	88,800	136,500	204,900
1998	397,500	74,200	116,200	207,100
1999 ^P	404,700	70,500	114,900	219,200

Note:

¹Total may not agree with sum of individual components due to rounding.

^P Provisional

England and Wales



Criminal Statistics

67. The information in this section relates to the offences of giving a false fire alarm and arson. Briefly the sequence of events is that after the offence occurs, it may be notified to the police (and recorded as a “notifiable offence”). If more than one offence per incident is notified it is the most serious, or first reported that is recorded. Arson is usually the more serious offence but there will be some cases where another offence is recorded. The police may either initiate prosecution proceedings or issue a formal caution.

Giving a false alarm

68. The following table shows details of prosecutions, cautions and types of sentence in the years 1995 to 1999 for giving a false alarm. Prosecutions and cautions only represent a small proportion of the number of malicious false alarms made. The maximum penalty for this offence is three months’ imprisonment and/or a fine (a maximum of £2,500 in 1999). The number of persons prosecuted in 1999 increased to 90 from 64 in 1998. The total had previously fallen each year from 111 in 1995. There was a slight rise in the number cautioned from 31 in 1998 to 38 in 1999. In 1999, 21 people were given a discharge for this offence, 20 people were fined, with an average fine of £172 and 22 persons were given a community sentence.

Prosecutions¹ under section 31 of the Fire Services Act (giving a false alarm), 1995-99 England and Wales

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999 (provisional)
Proceeded against	111	90	77	64	90
Found guilty	87	69	59	43	69
Cautioned	60	38	24	31	38
Sentenced by type:					
Discharge	27	21	21	14	21
Fine	23	20	12	13	20
Average fine	£122	£172	£153	£150	£172
Community sentence ²	24	22	23	11	22
Immediate custody ³	7	4	2	2	4
Other sentences	6	2	1	2	2
Total sentenced	87	69	59	42	69

Notes:

¹ Where proceedings involve more than one offence, the principal offence is shown in the table (see appendix 2 of Criminal Statistics, England and Wales 1998).

² Probation order, supervision order, community service order, combination order, attendance centre order or curfew order.

³ Excludes fully suspended sentences of imprisonment.



Deliberate fires

69. Fires considered by brigades to be deliberate or suspected deliberate, represent over 45 per cent of all recorded major fires and the total damage from such fires represents about half of all known fire losses. Many of these incidents are later confirmed as arson and those responsible, where identified, are prosecuted or cautioned.

Arson

70. The following table shows the number of offences recorded and cleared up since 1995. In 1999/00, the number of arson offences recorded by the police was 53,800 and the number cleared up was 4,800 (i.e. a clear-up rate of 9%). Arson has a lower clear-up rate than the average for all offences. The figures for 1998/99 are not comparable to those for previous years because of changes in April 1998 to the rules under which the police count crimes. Under the previous rules the number of offences in 1998/99 would have been 39,636. The falls in detection rate in 1998/99 and 1999/00 are likely to have been partly attributable to the changes in counting, as well as new guidance on detection that was issued in April 1999. Together these changes are thought to have resulted in more minor arsons being recorded (fewer of which have been detected) and the exclusion of detections by means of a prison visit.

Notifiable offences of arson¹ recorded by the police, 1995-99 England and Wales

	1995	1996	1997	1998/99	1999/00
Number of arson offences	29,985	31,068	31,516	47,273	53,794
Of which:					
Number cleared up	4,800	4,870	5,004	4,758	4,755
Percentage of total	16%	16%	16%	10%	9%

Notes:

¹For further information on definitions see Criminal statistics, England and Wales 1998.

The number of people found guilty or cautioned for arson over the period 1995 to 1999 is shown in the following table. In 1999, the total found guilty or cautioned remained at around 2,400 the same as in 1998. The total in 1997 was 2,500. In all the years shown around a half of those found guilty or cautioned for arson were males aged under 18.

Those found guilty or cautioned of arson offences¹ by age and sex, 1995-99

England and Wales

Number of persons

	1995	1996	1997	1998 (provisional)	1999
Males					
10 to 11	209	152	174	224	210
12 to 14	653	533	547	572	701
15 to 17	462	452	449	406	462
18 to 20	203	233	267	225	195
21 and over	685	597	754	671	582
Total	2,212	1,967	2,191	2,098	2,150
Females					
10 to 11	13	6	11	11	9
12 to 14	61	56	65	57	74
15 to 17	41	46	55	56	39
18 to 20	28	11	30	17	23
21 and over	136	142	148	164	153
Total	279	261	309	305	298
Total found guilty or cautioned	2,491	2,228	2,500	2,403	2,448
Of which:					
Endangering life	413	411	432	474	416
Not endangering life	2,078	1,817	2,068	1,929	2,032

Notes:

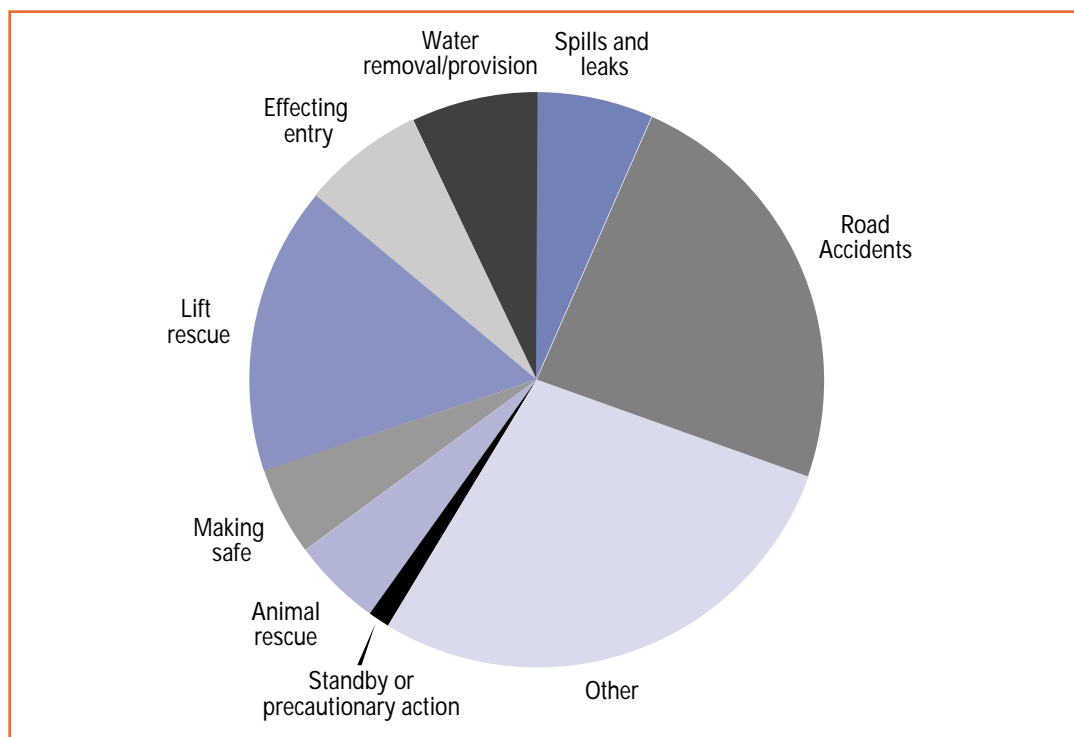
¹ Where proceedings involve more than one offence, the principal offence is shown in the table (see appendix 2 of Criminal Statistics England and Wales 1998).

Firefighters killed and injured

71. There were four firefighters deaths while on duty in 1999/00. Of these, one was while attending a special service incident and the other three were during training. In the same period, some 77 personnel sustained major injuries while attending fires and special service incidents, during training and on routine activities.

Special Services

72. The pie chart and following tables provide details of the special service incidents attended in 1999/00. The total recorded in 1999/00 was 3.67 per cent higher than in 1998/99.



Number of special service incidents, 1995/96-1999/00 England and Wales

Type of special service	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00
Road accidents total:	31,810	32,170	34,263	34,823	36,663
of which:					
involving rescue of persons	7,429	8,091	8,249	8,823	9,039
not involving rescue of persons	24,381	24,079	26,014	26,000	27,624
Other total:	153,975	152,690	129,368	123,197	127,149
of which:					
Spills and leaks	14,035	13,623	14,068	13,679	12,748
Water removal/provision	18,182	15,149	13,631	13,759	14,049
Effecting entry	27,172	27,510	15,887	14,871	13,890
Lift rescue	24,648	23,289	24,241	23,889	24,343
Making safe	3,764	4,504	7,643	4,379	6,446
Animal rescue	6,934	6,510	6,624	6,242	6,187
Standby or precautionary action in a potentially hazardous situation	2,256	2,384	2,277	1,961	2,115
Other, including not specified*	56,984	59,721	44,997	44,417	47,371
Total special service incidents	185,785	184,860	163,631	158,020	163,812

Notes:

* Detail for 1999/00 are given in the following table

Most brigades were able to give some details of their *other* special service incidents attended in 1999/00. The results are shown below, indicating for each type the number of brigades that reported any such incidents.

Details of other* special service incidents, 1999/00 England and Wales

Type of call	Number	(N ^o of brigades reporting)	
Service of brigade not required (including false alarm special service incidents)	18,237	(45)	Of which 38 were able to give a further breakdown showing 8% malicious
Provision of advice etc:	6,029	(47)	Of which 39% involved an officer and equipment
Rescue/release of people	8,101	(49)	
Removal of objects from people	4,525	(49)	
Assisting police investigating crime	2,633	(50)	
Industrial accident (persons trapped or injured)	308	(41)	
First aid	1,671	(45)	
Aircraft accidents	236	(37)	
Railway accidents	70	(20)	
Recovery/retrieval of objects	520	(45)	
Suicide	804	(48)	
Farming accident	31	(17)	
Sports activities accident	119	(14)	
Other not specified	4,087	(37)	
Total other special service incidents	47,371	(50)	

Notes:

*Type of incident other than as shown in previous table

Part VI

Other Activities



Fire Service Research and Training Trust

73. The trust is a registered charity. Despite the relative modesty of the Trust's resources it has been able, in exceptional circumstances, to make fairly large sums available for particular projects. Some standing grants have been paid on an annual basis for a number of years, the actual amounts being determined each year. Those currently being paid are to the Institution of Fire Engineers to cover grants to students for further education, to assist with publishing costs of the IFE Journal and to provide technical scholarships, and to the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association to meet the costs of the Inter-Brigades Quiz and First Aid Competitions.

Two Trust meetings were held in 1999. In addition to the IFE and CACFOA, the Trustees also awarded grants to other organisations, including the Fire Services Youth Training Association, the National Community Fire Safety Centre and the British Red Cross Fire Victim Support Service.

In 1999 the members of the Trust were: Mr R F D Shuffrey CB CVO (Chairman), Mr W Baird, Sir Kenneth Holland CBE QFSM FIFireE, Mrs M S T Langton OBE, Mr F Shaw, Dr D Peace (Honorary Treasurer) and Miss J Kittredge (Secretary) Fire Service Sports and Athletics Association.

Fire Service Sports and Athletics Association

74. The Association has had another successful year on the sporting front and continues to expand its activities. The National Executive Committee has set in train a policy of fairness in sport, which should be published during the coming financial year. The Association is particularly keen to support the growing number of women within the Service and provide opportunities for them to compete in both individual and team sports.

The Association continues to be grateful for the continued support it receives from Fire Authorities, Chief Officers and Firemasters and the volunteers that give up so much of their own time to promote fire service sport.

National Competitions

75. On behalf of the Home Office and Scottish Home and Health Department, The Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association organised four major events during the period 1 April 1999 to 31 January 2000.

National Firefighters' Quiz

The Final of the above (formerly known as the Technical Quiz) was held at the Fire Service College, Gloucestershire, on 26 April 1999. The event is still held on alternative years for wholtime and retained personnel; the quiz in 1999 being for retained members of the Fire Service.



The results were as follows:-

Winners	- Burnwash Fire Station	- East Sussex Fire Brigade
Finalists	- Hexham Fire Station	- Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service
	- Brackley Fire Station	- Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service
	- Burslam Fire Station	- Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service

The Question Master was CFO. M. Eastwood (Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service), the Adjudicator being CFO Terry (Avon Fire Brigade) and the Chief Guest was HMI Robert Baillie who presented the trophies.

This was the eighteenth occasion that the Firefighters' Quiz had been held at the Fire Service College and the Association acknowledges the excellent support given by the College. The Association also recognises and appreciates the continued financial support of the Quiz given by the Fire Service Research and Training Trust.

First Aid Competition

76. The Final of the First Aid Competition for Local Authority Fire Brigades was held on 11 June 1999 at the Fire Service College. Fourteen teams took part and as in previous years the competition was of a very high standard.

The competition was attended by dignitaries from the Home Office and representatives from St. John's Ambulance, The Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association and the Fire Research and Training Trust. The results were as follows:-

Team Results

	Winners	- Strathclyde "A"
	Second	- Staffordshire "A"
	Third	- South Wales
Champion Reserve	Stn.O. Biggs	- Staffordshire
Highest Scoring No. 1	Lff Kimber	- Staffordshire
Highest Scoring No. 2	Ff. Widowson	- West Yorkshire

The overall points champions were Strathclyde "A" who received the "St. John the Baptist" Trophy. Staffordshire "A" received the "Saved" Trophy.



The Guest of Honour was Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Mr. Graham Meldrum who presented the trophies to the winning teams and individuals.

This competition is a qualifying round for the prestigious St. John Grand Priors Competition and the teams from Strathclyde and Staffordshire represented the British Fire Service at the 1999 event which was held at the Pavilion Gardens, Buxton, Derbyshire. Both teams were excellent ambassadors for the Fire Service and both came a creditable 6th and 7th in their respective lanes (Strathclyde in Lane "A" and Staffordshire in Lane "B").

British National Extrication Challenge

77. The 1999 Annual Conference was held at the Strathclyde Fire Brigade Training Centre, Glasgow on 30 July, followed by the Challenge on 31 July and was organised with assistance from the Car Users Entrapment and Extrication Society (CUEES). The Challenge, which requires the rescue of a "live" casualty from a Road Traffic Accident scenario within a 20 minute time limit, was also held at the Training Centre where a large number of spectators witnessed a very professional and competitive challenge.

Thirty six teams competed and the results were as follows:-

First	- Reigate - Surrey
Second	- Northfield - West Midlands
Third	- Strathclyde "A"
Best Team Captain	- Northfield - West Midlands
Best Team Medic	- Shropshire
(George Maycock Memorial Trophy)	
ICET Innovation Award	- South Yorkshire

The team from Surrey will now go on to represent Britain in the World Extrication Challenge which will be held at Gullane, Scotland and also at an International Challenge in North America - both events being held during 2000.



National Fire Safety Youth Quiz

78. The Final of the Youth Quiz, which effectively promotes an awareness of Fire Safety amongst young adults, was held, for the eighth time, at the Fire Service College on 22 May 1999.

The Quiz, which was organised with assistance from Mr. Peter Cowland (Fire Protection Association), attracted approximately 1,648 teams, drawn from 31 counties, with a total entry of over 8,000 competitors. The results were as follows:-

First	- Penistone Scouts	- South Yorkshire
Second	- St Benedicts School	- Cumbria
Third	- 1st Chorleywood Scouts	- Hertfordshire
Fourth	- Glan-y-More Comprehensive School	- Mid & West Wales

The trophies were presented by the Chief Guest Heather Pearce (*"Ff Sally Field" from London's Burning*). The Question Master was CFO Malcolm Eastwood (*Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service*) and the Adjudicator was CFO Williams (*South Wales Fire Service*).

Fire Services National Benevolent Fund (FSNBF)

79. The financial results for the year showed a revenue deficit of £410,678. At the year-end the balance sheet showed net assets of £29,310,726 which included investment gains during the year of £3,317,714. 1999 was a record year for fundraising, with receipts totalling £3,501,541. With the ever increasing competitive nature of charity fundraising, the Charity Trustees authorised a substantial increase in fundraising and publicity expenses which totalled £652,129.

FSNBF (Marketing) Limited commenced trading in August 1999 with the intention of promoting the Fund's mascot, Blaze Bear, and other similar products.

During the latter half of the year, the Charity Trustees took a decision to initiate two studies, one which embraced the future management and organisation of the Fund, including the inter-relationship of those at brigade, group, Charity Trustee and staff levels. The second study covered Fairness at Work and in particular with regard to the Fund's staff. Both reports were received during the first half of 2000 and are currently being studied by the Charity Trustees.

In 1999 the total sum given by way of grants was £1,219,819 and the Fund had a total of 1,294 cases representing 1,399 beneficiaries. Additionally, 6,932 grants were given at local level by brigades by individuals to alleviate hardship.

It is pleasing to be able to report that the Therapy Centre at Jubilee House operated at 95% occupancy throughout the year. Both the Convalescent Centres at Marine Court, Littlehampton and Harcombe House, Chudleigh, had occupancies in excess of 60%.



The Policy Study Group, set up in 1998 to make recommendations to the Charity Trustees on how the Fund should conduct itself in the Millennium, had not completed its work by the end of 1999. It is anticipated that the Group's proposals will be considered by the Charity Trustees during the Autumn of 2000.

