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REPORT

ON THE

FIRE SERVICE

Houses of the Oireachtas



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Houses of the Oireachtas



WORKING PARTY ON THE FIRE SERVICE

REPORT TO THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Laid by the Government before each House of the Oireachtas, July, 1975.

Houses of the Oireachtas

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Tuiseal na Oireachtas

SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

The Operational Service

1. For each local fire authority area there should be a separate assessment of the strength and adequacy of the fire fighting service and a fire operations plan should be prepared. (paragraphs 6.6.3., 6.5.4., 6.8.1.).

2. A ten year investment programme for improvement in fire stations and appliances should be undertaken. (paragraphs 6.7.2., 6.8.3.). Capital investment should be financed in part by the State. (paragraph 6.11.3.).

3. The Minister for Local Government should have overall central responsibility for the fire fighting and fire prevention services provided by local authorities and should have certain specific functions. (paragraphs 6.10.2., 6.10.3., 6.10.4.).

4. The fire fighting and fire prevention functions of urban authorities (except county boroughs) should be transferred to the county councils. (paragraphs 6.2.2., 6.2.3.).

   The joint fire fighting service for Dublin City and County should be extended to cover Dun Laoghaire. (paragraph 6.3.10.).

5. There should be a review of the fire fighting provisions of the Fire Brigades Act, 1940. (paragraph 6.5.3.).

   Powers to require local authorities to provide combined fire fighting services should be strengthened. (paragraph 6.2.6.).

   Provision of a joint service for the county boroughs and their surrounding areas should be specially examined in the light of local assessments. (paragraph 6.3.9.).

6. Arrangements in regard to the provision of facilities for special fire fighting needs should be considered by the Department of Local Government and the local fire authorities. (paragraph 6.4.3.).

7. The Department of Local Government should promote standardisation in fire appliances. Appliances should be equipped with breathing apparatus and road rescue equipment. (paragraphs 6.8.4. and 6.8.6.).

8. Local fire authorities should maintain a service for dealing with road and other appropriate accidents and should have a general enabling power for dealing with local emergencies. (paragraph 6.12.2.).

9. There should be statutory protection for the position of local fire authorities and fire personnel in relation to calls on their services. (paragraph 6.12.3.).

10. The role of the Auxiliary Fire Service should be reviewed by the Department of Defence in consultation with the Department of Local Government. (paragraph 6.9.3.).

Fire Prevention

11. A Fire Prevention Council should be set up by the Minister for Local Government to promote fire safety. (paragraph 7.3.1.).

12. The onus on owners/operators of places of employment, or to which the public have access, to take all reasonable steps to guard against fire outbreak, and for the safety of persons in the event of fire, should be stressed, and should, if feasible, be reflected in legislation. (paragraph 7.3.4.).

    The role of the Trade Unions in promoting fire-mindedness in workers should also be stressed. (paragraph 7.3.5.).

13. Buildings to which the public have access, places of employment etc. should be brought within a comprehensive sytem of fire safety inspection and control, the system to be introduced progressively. (paragraphs 7.4.2., 7.4.3.).

14. Pending the introduction of the new system, existing statutory provisions should be strengthened in various specified ways. The sections of the proposed national building regulations dealing with fire standards and safety should be brought into operation at the earliest date possible. (paragraphs 7.5.1., 7.6.1., 7.7.1., 7.8.1., 7.10.1.).

15. A system of grant and loan assistance should be introduced to assist in financing works which are undertaken to improve fire safety in buildings. (paragraph 7.12.2.).

16. Each fire authority should operate a local fire advisory service. (paragraph 7.13.2).

17. The Dangerous Substances Act, 1972 should be brought into operation as soon as possible as regards controls on explosives and petroleum. The storage and transportation of other substances which present a risk of fire outbreak should also be subjected to control under the Act. (paragraph 7.14.3.).

18. Fire safety standards should be devised for certain categories of product and appliance. A system of fire safety merit marks to be displayed on goods which conform to fire safety standards should be considered. (paragraph 7.16.2.).

19. Standards should be introduced for fire fighting and fire prevention equipment used to give early warning and initial protection in case of fire. (paragraph 7.16.3.).

20. The Minister for Local Government should provide an advisory research service in relation to fire fighting appliances, equipment and techniques. (paragraph 7.17.2.).

21. The Minister for Local Government should have a responsibility to assess the efficiency of the fire protection work of local fire authorities. (paragraph 7.18.1.).

22. The Ministers for Local Government and Labour should establish formal liaison in relation to the fire prevention and fire safety activities of the two Departments. (paragraph 7.19.3.).

Structure and Qualifications

23. The existing structure of the whole-time service in each of the areas concerned should be reviewed with a view to any necessary strengthening of organisations and rationalisation in grade titles, functions and duties. (paragraph 8.2.3.).

24. A grade of Assistant Chief Fire Officer should be introduced in the retained service in place of the existing grade of Second Fire Officer. (paragraph 8.3.2.).

25. A new technological qualification should be devised for the senior grades. The Fire Service Training Council (see under Training) should advise on the appropriate qualification and how best it might be provided for within the third level educational system. (paragraphs 8.6.4. and 8.6.5.).

    Appointees to the senior grades should have a fire service background. (paragraph 8.6.6.).

26. Appropriate technical qualifications should be devised for the middle grades of Station Officer, Sub-Officer and related ranks. (paragraph 8.7.2.).

27. Eligible personnel should be able to seek promotion in any brigade in which a vacancy arises. (paragraph 8.10.3.).

    Retained firemen, who are qualified, should be eligible to compete for positions as whole-time firemen wherever vacancies arise. (paragraph 8.10.4.).

28. Entry to the Fire Service should be on the basis of a single tier entry system at fireman level. (paragraph 8.9.4.).

29. A standard code of conduct and discipline should be devised for all ranks. (paragraph 8.11.1.).

30. Recruit selection procedures should include appropriate assessment of personal as well as of physical fitness. (paragraph 8.5.2.).

31. The Chief Fire Officer should report directly to the Manager in relation to fire fighting and fire prevention matters. (paragraph 8.12.5.).

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Training

32. A Fire Service Training Council should be set up to advise on the manpower, educational and training needs of the service. (paragraph 9.2.1.).

    Training programmes to meet the needs of the different grades in the fire service should be devised as soon as possible. (paragraph 9.1.1.).

33. A national Fire Service Training Centre should be established to provide training facilities and courses for fire service personnel. (paragraph 9.3.10.).

    Costs incurred in sending personnel to attend courses at the Centre should be subsidised by the State. (paragraph 9.3.14.).

34. Training courses for retained firemen should be organised locally and at regional centres. (paragraph 9.2.5.).

35. Consideration should be given to the contribution which personal study, including programme learning, might make in preparing retained personnel for advancement in the service. (paragraph 9.2.6.).

Miscellaneous and Transitional Matters

36. Particular attention should be given to water resources in the preparation of local fire operations plans.

    The Chief Fire Officer should be consulted in the planning of water improvement schemes, and in regard to priorities. (paragraph 10.1.8.).

37. A system of fire service control (call-out) centres should be established. The emergency call system should be extended to all areas of the country as speedily as possible. (paragraphs 10.2.5., 10.2.7.).

    The contribution which modern mobilization systems might make to improved efficiency in the service should be examined by the Department of Local Government. (paragraph 10.3.4.).

    Fire appliances should be fitted with means of ensuring adequate communication on the fire ground. (paragraph 10.4.2.).

38. For a transitional period vacancies which arise in senior positions should be filled on an acting basis with the field of recruitment widened to include serving officers with suitable experience at senior level. (paragraph 10.5.2.).

39. As an interim measure the central training courses organised by the Department of Local Government should be maintained and, if possible, extended. (paragraph 10.5.5.).

Houses of the Oireachtas

PART I

Description of the System

Houses of the Oireachtas

Houses of the Oireachtas

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

To: Mr. James Tully, T.D., Minister for Local Government

1.1.1. We were appointed in November, 1972 with the following terms of reference: "To examine the recommendations made by McKinsey and Co. Inc. in relation to the organisation of the fire service in their report on "Strengthening the Local Government Service"; to advise the Minister for Local Government in the matter under the following heads, taking account of the Government decision as contained in the White Paper on Local Government Reorganisation that the county should remain the basic Local Government unit:

(*a*) Fire resources including premises and equipment;

(*b*) Fire prevention measures;

(*c*) Legislation;

(*d*) Financial implications;

(*e*) Staffing and training arrangements."

1.1.2. The recommendations made by McKinsey and Co. Inc. referred to in the terms of reference are given in Appendix A.

1.1.3. The members of the Working Party, and the organisations which nominated them, are as follows:

Mr. H. P. Clerkin	Chairman
Mr. C. A. O'Connor	County and City Managers Association
Mr. J. D. Hally	County and City Surveyors Association
Mr. H. O'Sullivan	Local Government and Public Services Union
Mr. S. Cleary	Local Government and Public Services Union
Mr. M. N. Kennedy	Department of Labour
Miss M. Kelly	Department of Labour
Capt. B. McMahon	Chief Fire Officers Association
Mr. M. P. Murphy	Institution of Engineers of Ireland
*Mr. C. Murphy	Department of Health
*Mr. T. Geraghty	Workers Union of Ireland
*Mr. J. T. Fouhy	Irish Transport and General Workers Union
Mr. J. McGrath	Department of Local Government
Mr. V. F. Walsh	Department of Local Government
†Mr. C. F. Cronin	Department of Local Government

*Members appointed to the Working Party in April, 1973.
†Replaced Mr. C. McDonnell in April, 1973.

1.1.4. Submissions from interested parties on the matters covered by the terms of reference were invited by advertisement in the public press. The work was facilitated by submissions made by various interests in response to this invitation, and by information on their fire safety arrangements made available by a number of particular organisations. A list of the bodies which assisted in these ways is given in Appendix C. We are grateful for their help.

1.1.5. Visits were made by groups from the Working Party to a number of local fire authorities. The purpose was to get information at first hand on the organisation and operation of the service as well as to give local officials an opportunity of explaining their problems and of putting forward their ideas for improvements in the service. The ready co-operation of the local authorities visited is acknowledged. They are listed in Appendix C.

1.1.6. A group comprising the Chairman and five members (Messrs, O'Connor, Hally, McMahon, Cleary and Geraghty) with the secretary, visited the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark and Scotland. The objective was to see how the fire service operates in some other countries with comparable features and the direction of any changes being contemplated. The group had extensive discussions and visited fire training schools and local fire authorities. The visits proved of considerable benefit to our deliberations. A summary of the main features of the organisation and structure of the fire service in the countries visited is given at Appendix 1. We are especially appreciative of the trouble taken by various state and other authorities in the countries concerned, and of the assistance and kindness extended to the visiting group.

1.1.7. A questionnaire was issued to each local authority seeking information on a range of matters bearing on the working of the fire service. The assistance of the local authorities is gratefully acknowledged.

1.1.8. We were asked to consider the possibility of submitting an interim report on fire prevention measures. Such a report, with recommendations, was submitted on the 7th March, 1973. A copy of the interim report is at Appendix B.

1.1.9. The Working Party met on 34 occasions.

1.1.10. We would like to express our appreciation of the services given us by our Secretary Mr. B. Aherne, and his assistant Mr. P. O'Dwyer. In the nature of things ours has been a prolonged review and a difficult one. The progress made, and the degree of consensus reached, was greatly helped by the quality of the secretarial services. We are grateful for their dedicated and painstaking efforts.

1.1.11. We have reached a wide measure of agreement on our recommendations. Five members—Messrs. Hally, McMahon, M. P. Murphy, O'Connor and Walsh—have indicated that they are unable to support certain recommendations and have submitted minority reports. These are included at the end of Chapter X of the Report. We have attached comment to Capt. McMahon's minority report in order to avoid the danger of misunderstanding being created in regard to certain views and recommendations in the main report.

1.1.12. We now report accordingly.

Signed:

H. P. Clerkin (Chairman)
J. D. Hally
James Fouhy
Tom Geraghty
Seán Cleary
C. F. Cronin
Harold O'Sullivan
Colm Murphy
M. N. Kennedy
Máiread Kelly
Charles A. O'Connor
V. F. Walsh
John McGrath

B. Aherne (Secretary)
19 December, 1974.

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Chapter II

THE TASK OF THE FIRE SERVICE

General

2.1.1. The task of the fire service may be considered in three main categories:

(*a*) the extinction of fires and the protection of life and property in case of fire;

(*b*) fire prevention, and

(*c*) miscellaneous and special services in which assistance is sought.

Saving of Life

2.2.1. Table 1 gives the available information on the number of people injured in fire, the number rescued and the number of fatalities in the ten years to 1972–73.

Table 1

Injuries, Rescues, Deaths from Fire

Year	Persons Injured	Persons Rescued	Fatalities
1963–64	32	not available	26
1964–65	28	,,	25
1965–66	22	,,	21
1966–67	13	,,	20
1967–68	10	,,	26
1968–69	7	,,	31
1969–70	9	34	32
1970–71	28	49	42
1971–72	48	49	38
1972–73	46	52	34

Note: The figures are based on local authority returns and relate only to instances in which the fire service was involved or was notified.

Extinction of Fires

2.3.1. A classification of fire brigade calls, by source of fire, attended in the period 1963–64 to 1972–73 is given in Appendix D. Fuller detail is available since 1966–67 than for earlier years.

The following are the main features:

(*a*) calls attended increased from 7,913 to 17,940 an increase of 126%;

(*b*) the increase is reflected in most source classifications, but the rate of increase varies widely;

(*c*) chimney fires account for almost one-third of all fires attended. They are mainly of minor scale and cause little damage but their number is a heavy demand on the fire service;

(*d*) fires associated with bottled gas and with use of electricity, although a small proportion of the total, show a notable upward trend;

(*e*) fires attributed to malicious causes are also a small proportion of the total, but show a seven-fold increase over the period which makes them the most rapidly growing classification;

(*f*) over one-third of all fires attended are shown in the "cause unknown" category.

2.3.2. A classification of fire calls by place of fire attended is given in Appendix E, for the same period. Again fuller detail is available for the period since 1966–67 than for the earlier years.

The main features are as follows:

(*a*) some of the classifications with the smallest number of fires—hotels, places of public resort, institutions and similar premises—are those in which the risk to life may be especially high;

(*b*) almost 50% of all fires attended were in private houses and over one-third were for chimney fires;

(*c*) next to houses the largest classification is that of bog/forest/grass fires, which account for over 15% of the total. This classification represents a heavy demand on the service in particular rural areas.

2.3.3. The statistics are based on local authority returns made to the Department of Local Government. They are believed to be reasonably accurate. No measures are applied, however, to ensure uniformity of interpretation locally in completing the returns. The proportion of cases in the unknown/miscellaneous categories is very high. It reflects the limited extent of current fire investigation practice.

Property Losses

2.4.1. The material loss to the nation from fire is difficult to assess definitively from the limited information available.

Table 2 summarises the information viz:

(*a*) Estimates of material losses based on local authority returns for each financial year from 1963–64 to 1972–73.

(*b*) Estimates of insured losses supplied by the Department of Industry and Commerce and based on returns made by insurance companies for each of the calendar years 1963–1972 under the requirements of the Insurance Acts.

Table 2

Value of Fire Losses

Material Losses		Insured Losses	
	£		£
1963–64	1,919,854	1963	3,108,154
1964–65	1,964,096	1964	2,548,660
1965–66	1,394,901	1965	3,978,786
1966–67	2,551,538	1966	3,207,219
1967–68	2,499,674	1967	4,271,639
1968–69	4,694,882	1968	4,490,342
1969–70	5,400,533	1969	7,863,267
1970–71	6,122,284	1970	8,514,559
1971–72	6,964,755	1971	10,556,010
1972–73	6,644,500	1972	8,456,579

Material Losses include, generally, property and contents. The figures are based on the subjective evaluation of fire service personnel and can only be taken as a rough guide.

Insured Losses are understood to include insured business losses arising from fire in addition to losses of property and contents. The figures include losses resulting from other categories of special peril indemnified in the Insurance Company Fire Departments including, for example, explosions and storms. As a measure of fire losses alone, therefore, the figures are inflated to an extent which is uncertain.

2.4.2. The trend in fire losses conveyed by the figures in Table 2 is significantly exaggerated through the effects of inflation.

Table 3 shows the fire loss figures for each year from 1967 to 1972 as a percentage of G.N.P.

Table 3

Estimated Fire Loss as % of G.N.P.

	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972
Material Losses*	0·22	0·32	0·35	0·36	0·36	0·30
Insured Losses	0·37	0·34	0·52	0·51	0·56	0·38

*Figures derived from related financial year data.

General Comment on Fire Losses

2.5.1. The indications are that as a proportion of G.N.P. material fire losses have been fairly stable, in the region of 0·30 to 0·36% for the past five years. Insured fire losses rose sharply between 1968 and 1971 to reach between 0·5 and 0·6% but returned in 1972 to the proportions obtaining in 1967–68 and previous years i.e. between 0·3 and 0·4%.

2.5.2. It is clear, even from the limited statistics available, that annual fire losses are a heavy economic burden on the community. One measure of the burden is the alternative investment which might be undertaken with the £9 million pounds or so which must now be diverted each year to make good fire losses. Possible alternative uses might include provision each year of houses for 1,500–1,600 additional families or of some 1,000–1,200 additional jobs in industrial employment.

2.5.3. The level and trend in fire losses are an indication of the order of potential benefit from investment in improving the fire prevention and fire fighting service.

The Increasing Risk

2.6.1. The challenge to the modern fire service is only partly reflected in the figures discussed in the preceding paragraphs. Economic and social change have greatly increased the risk of fire both in absolute terms; in terms of the scale and complexity of problems confronting fire service personnel, and in terms of potential loss.

2.6.2. A predominantly rural population is becoming urbanised, increasing concentration and the risk of fire spread. Industrial development and modern technology have introduced many products and production processes with a high fire risk. The location of large industry, sometimes involving processes and materials with high fire risk, in relatively small towns and rural areas has added a new dimension to the local fire risk and to possible demands on the local fire fighting capacity.

2.6.3. There has been a very large increase in the production, transportation and use of energy in the form of electricity, gas and oil, all of which are frequently associated in international experience with major fire outbreaks.

2.6.4. Shopping centres, department stores and supermarkets, and high rise buildings used as offices or flats, reflect changes in business methods and in living styles and mean higher efficiency and greater comfort in many respects. In such buildings, or building groups, fire outbreak can have most serious consequences for large numbers of people. In such buildings, also, many of the biggest property losses occur.

2.6.5. Apart from the growing danger of more and bigger fire outbreaks, modern fire situations can be very complex. There is often the risk of incidental or consequential effects which can be a greater threat to occupants and to firemen than fire itself. The increasing storage of inflammable and other dangerous substances is one aspect of this problem. Another is the increasing use of materials which may give off dense smoke or toxic fumes under the influence of fire, or may assist in the spread of flame.

2.6.6. To meet the new and increased risks, fire fighting equipment and fire protection devices such as alarm systems and sprinkler systems, have grown in sophistication and importance and their use is spreading.

Fire Prevention

2.7.1. The term "fire prevention" can be taken to refer to measures designed to prevent fire outbreak or, more widely, to include measures designed to provide protection in the event of fire. In this report the term is used in the wide sense, except where otherwise indicated.

2.7.2. Fire fighting is a measure of last resort and fire prevention is rightly regarded as a task of equal importance for the fire service. This reflects a growing awareness of fire risk in modern social, commercial, and industrial life, and a realisation that fire fighting, however well organised, cannot guarantee against major losses and tragedies.

2.7.3. Although they are not quantifiable, the benefits of an efficient fire prevention programme are obvious and must be valued highly. They include the saving of life; the avoidance of personal injury and social disruption; the safeguarding of jobs and of economic output; preservation of property from destruction; reduced demands on a fire fighting organisation; a greater sense of security in the population at large.

2.7.4. The broad definition of fire prevention includes the following kinds of measure:

(1) precautions in the design and construction of buildings to reduce the risk of fire breaking out and to restrict spread of fire;

(2) the provision of adequate means of escape for occupants of buildings;

(3) the provision of special fittings such as fire alarms, detection and automatic sprinkler systems, to give early warning of fires and initial protection;

(4) measures such as fire drills and first-aid fire fighting to ensure that suitable action is taken by occupants when a fire occurs;

(5) measures designed to promote fire safety in the production, transportation, storage and use of hazardous substances;

(6) publicity measures aimed at imparting information on fire hazards and promoting fire safety.

The Growing Need for Prevention Work

2.7.5. Some measure of the task which faces a fire prevention service in relation to new development alone may be obtained from consideration of the volume of new investment in building and construction, and the level and trend in planning applications coming before local authorities for permission for new development. The relevant information is contained in Tables 4 and 5 (See also Appendix H).

Table 4

Volume of Investment in Building Construction

	Current prices £m	Constant 1960–61 prices £m
1969–70	178·13	112
1970–71	201·38	114·7
1971–72	248	125·4
1972–73	290·50	131·44
1973–74	377·95	151·37

Source: Department of Local Government.

Table 5

Planning Applications

	Total Number of Planning Applications received by Local Authorities	Total Number of Planning Permissions granted
1969–70	27,480	20,786
1970–71	29,588	22,077
1971–72	32,518	24,254
1972–73	38,882	28,393

Source: Local Authority Returns.

2.7.6. To ensure satisfactory standards of fire safety in new buildings is a major task of regulation and inspection. That task must be expected to grow further in line with economic expansion. Added to this is the problem of ensuring that older buildings also are not a fire hazard. This is the more difficult task. The older buildings may have been provided to a level of fire safety not acceptable by today's standard. Hazard may have been increased by structural changes over the years. The adjustments needed to bring such buildings to an acceptable standard of fire safety may be difficult and costly to carry out.

2.7.7. It is clear that the operation of a comphrehensive system of fire prevention requires considerable resources in organisation and personnel. Existing fire prevention activity is discussed in Chapter IV.

Miscellaneous and Special Services

2.8.1. The service responds to a variety of calls of an emergency nature, other than fire calls. This role was not planned but arose because the fire service was the only organised body of men available locally who could respond quickly, and was equipped and trained for emergency operations.

2.8.2. The most common types of emergency situations to which the fire service normally responds are:

(1) road accidents;

(2) rescue of persons trapped in buildings and other precarious situations or threatened by flooding;

(3) pumping of water from houses and other buildings and any situation in which a water-pump may be needed;

(4) miscellaneous emergency rescue operations, whether of humans, animals, or property.

2.8.3. Table 6 shows the number of special services calls answered by the fire service each year from 1966-67 to 1972-73.

Table 6

Number of Special Services Calls answered by Brigades

Year	Number of Special Services Calls	Percentage of Total Calls %	Total Calls Answered
1966–67	1,296	10·3	12,561
1967–68	1,493	10·6	14,066
1968–69	1,838	11·4	16,183
1969–70	1,592	8·9	17,765
1970–71	1,754	9·4	18,689
1971–72	1,777	8·4	21,082
1972–73	1,977	8·4	23,562

Source: Local Authority Returns.
Note: These statistics do not include ambulance service calls.

2.8.4. There is a downward trend in the number of special services calls as a proportion of all calls. But the number of special calls increased from 1,296 in 1966–67 to 1,977 in 1972–73, making an increase of 53%. These calls are a significant part of the overall fire service operations.

Ambulance Service

2.9.1. In a number of the principal cities—Dublin and Dún Laoghaire, Cork and Limerick—the fire service operates an ambulance service. In Dublin and Limerick the ambulance service is provided on an agency basis for the Regional Health Boards concerned. In the other areas the position appears to be that only part of the costs of operating the ambulance service—generally costs relating to attendance at accidents—are met by the health authorities.

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2.9.2. Table 7 gives information on the number of ambulance calls answered by the fire service in the areas concerned each year from 1966–67 to 1972–73.

Table 7

Ambulance Calls on Fire Service 1966–67 to 1972–73

	Dublin	Cork	Limerick	Dún Laoghaire
				Calendar Year
1966–67 ..	11,300	1,614	6,413	653
1967–68 ..	13,000	1,544	6,974	620
1968–69 ..	15,000	1,741	6,066	695
1969–70 ..	16,500	1,973	6,619	754
1970–71 ..	18,000	2,168	6,432	921
1971–72 ..	19,200	2,399	6,718	1,042
1972–73 ..	21,900	2,530	6,258	1,039

Source: Local Authority Returns.

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Chapter III

THE ORGANISATION OF THE FIRE SERVICE

Background and Development

3.1.1. The present day fire service is provided by local (sanitary) authorities i.e. County Borough Corporations (4), Borough Corporations (7), Urban District Councils (49) and County Councils (27), pursuant to the Fire Brigades Act, 1940.

3.1.2. Before 1940 the service depended, apart from some provisions in local Acts, on the Towns Improvement Act, 1854, which enabled fire fighting and related equipment to be provided in towns of 1,500 population and upwards at the discretion of the local authority. The power was exercised in a limited number of cases only.

In rural areas Section 90 of the Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act, 1907, which was adoptive, enabled local authorities to enter into agreements for the common use of fire fighting equipment and for mutual assistance. Persons in rural areas calling for assistance from an urban fire service were liable to have to meet the costs involved in bringing the brigade to the scene.

3.1.3. By 1940 the number of mobile fire appliances maintained by local authorities was still only 24. The threat, and advent, of war underlined the need for an overhaul of the system.

3.1.4. The Fire Brigades Act, 1940 was the basis for the first countrywide fire fighting system. It made it mandatory for sanitary authorities, urban and rural, to make reasonable provision for the prompt and efficient extinguishing of fires in their areas, and for the protection and rescue of persons and property from injury by fire. In doing this they were to take account of all relevant considerations, including their financial resources.

3.1.5. A sanitary authority could discharge this duty either by maintaining a fire brigade (in which case it became a fire brigade authority) or by arranging with another sanitary authority (or with persons) maintaining a fire brigade to cover its district.

3.1.6. The Minister for Local Government was empowered to inquire, on complaint, into the adequacy of the provision made by a local authority and could, in certain circumstances, require local authorities to co-operate in the provision of a fire service.

3.1.7. For practical reasons most urban (sanitary) authorities have entered into agreements by which their areas are covered by county council fire brigades. There are now 34 fire brigade authorities, comprising four county boroughs, twenty-six county councils and four borough, or urban district, councils.

3.1.8. Within the local authority structure the fire service is traditionally part of the engineering services and operates under the general supervision of the county or city engineer. The fire service is under the immediate direction of a chief fire officer.

The Organisation of the Local Fire Service

3.2.1. The local fire service is organised either on—

(*a*) a whole-time basis or

(*b*) a part-time (retained) basis with some whole-time personnel.

3.2.2. The whole-time fire service is confined to the major urban areas, namely, Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Dún Laoghaire. Elsewhere the part-time system applies, but variations are to be found:

(*a*) the whole-time personnel may comprise a chief fire officer and one or more second fire officers only, or,

(*b*) the whole-time complement may include additional personnel.

The system at (*b*) is operated in the cities of Waterford and Galway, and to a lesser degree, in some other towns including Drogheda, Dundalk, Sligo, Navan, Clonmel. Elsewhere throughout the country the system operated is that outlined at (*a*).

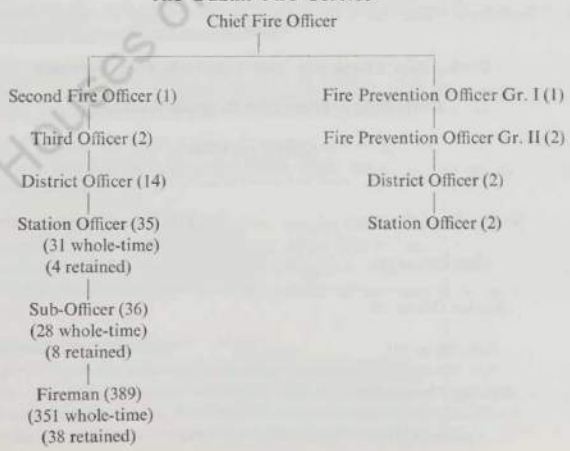
The Whole-time Organisation

3.3.1. *Dublin:* In 1969, Dublin County was merged in the area of operation of the Dublin City fire service. The unified service is, in terms of number and equipment, by far the largest and strongest fire service in the country, covering 28% of the total population and a large proportion of the country's economic and commercial activity.

3.3.2. The structure and strength of the Dublin fire service at 31st March, 1973, is shown in Table 8:

Table 8

The Dublin Fire Service



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3.3.3. The Second Fire Officer is next in general command to the Chief Fire Officer and carries a rank similar to that of Chief Fire Officer in other areas. Third Officers are normally engaged on administration duties and recruit training. The Second and Third Fire Officers with the Chief Fire Officer, comprise the senior cadre engaged mainly on administrative work. They also undertake operational duties as appropriate e.g. attendance at large fires.

3.3.4. District Officers and Station Officers carry the main bulk of operational duties, with the latter officers in charge of stations, operating the "watch", conducting standard training drills, and deputising for District Officers during periods of leave. Depending on the scale of an outbreak, an officer in one or other of these grades is normally in charge at a fire and reports on it. Sub-Officers normally man the central control room; conduct standard drills under supervision; do operational work in certain instances and deputise for Station Officers during periods of leave.

3.3.5. The central fire station is at Tara Street. Six other stations are maintained on a full-time basis. In addition, four stations are maintained by retained personnel in the north county area.

3.3.6. Each station has one or more fire fighting appliances. An appliance is normally manned by an Officer (District Officer, Station Officer, or Sub-Officer) and a crew of 5 men. Each full-time station also has an ambulance which is operated by a crew of two.

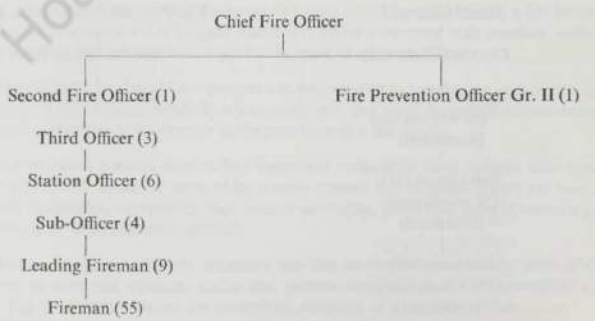
Other Whole-time Brigades

3.3.7. The structure and strength of the Fire Service at 31st March, 1973, in other areas in which a whole-time system is operated is shown in Table 9.

Table 9

Cork, Dún Laoghaire and Limerick Fire Services

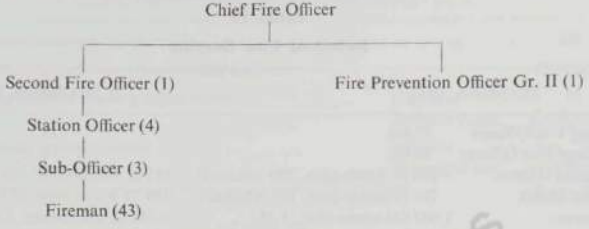
Cork Corporation Fire Brigade Authority



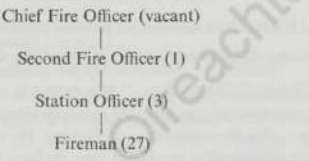
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Table 9—*continued*

Dún Laoghaire Corporation Fire Brigade Authority



Limerick Corporation Fire Brigade Authority



3.3.8. In these areas also the Second Fire Officer has a function as next-in-command to the Chief Fire Officer but there are variations in the supervisory and control duties exercised by the Second Fire Officers in different areas. The position of Second Fire Officer in Dublin is recognised as having a higher level of responsibility and a wider range of functions, and carries a higher status. The same is true of the grade of Third Officer which features in the structure of the Dublin and Cork services only.

3.3.9. There is a broad, but not a close, correspondence between the work of the grades of station officer and sub-officer in the three areas and in Dublin, while firemen perform closely similar work in all areas. The rank of leading fireman is peculiar to the Cork service.

3.3.10. Two stations are maintained in Cork city; the headquarters station at Sullivan's Quay and a sub-station in the north city suburbs. Single stations are maintained in Limerick city and Dún Laoghaire.

3.3.11. The number of mobile fire appliances operated by each brigade varies from three to seven. An appliance is normally manned by an officer (Station Officer or Sub-Officer) and a crew of 5 men. In Cork city the appliance responding to chimney fires is under the command of a leading fireman. Each brigade also has a number of ambulances, manned by crews of two firemen.

The Retained Organisation

3.4.1. Apart from senior officers—comprising the grades of Chief Fire Officer and Second Fire Officer—the retained service is manned, with few exceptions, by people whose main livelihood is not the fire service. Retained fire service personnel are paid an annual retainer and a time fee for time spent on operational duties, and training sessions.

3.4.2. Table 10 shows the structure and strength of the retained fire service at 31st March, 1973, and, for comparison purposes, at 31st March, 1963.

Table 10

Retained Fire Service

	31st March, 1973.	31st March, 1963
Chief Fire Officers	21 (*a*)	21
Second Fire Officers	20 (*b*)	8
Station Officers	196 (6 whole-time, 190 retained)	181 (2 whole-time, 179 retained)
Sub-Officers	197 (3 whole-time, 194 retained)	189 (2 whole-time, 187 retained)
Firemen	1,507 (20 whole-time, 1,487 retained)	1,444 (3 whole-time, 1,441 retained)

Notes:
(*a*) At 31st March, 1973, four posts were filled in a part-time acting capacity by Chief Assistant or Assistant County Engineers.
(*b*) In 1973/74, sixteen additional appointments at Second Fire Officer level were made.

3.4.3. The general function of the Second Fire Officer is to assist the Chief Fire Officer. In practice his duties vary from area to area. He generally takes charge at fire fighting operations and is usually responsible for supervision of training. He usually has fire prevention duties and/or a block of administrative work. He may perform some or all of the duties of the Chief Fire Officer in his absence.

3.4.4. It is the function of the Station Officers and Sub-Officers to operate the fire stations under general supervision. They are responsible for mobilization arrangements. They conduct fire fighting and other operations under supervision or in their own right; report on incidents attended; and keep records. They are responsible for station and appliance maintenance and conduct drills and training sessions.

3.4.5. The fireman's duties involve attendance at fires and other fire service operations including accidents and rescue operations, attendance at drills, station and maintenance duties.

3.4.6. The number of stations in a county varies from 3 to 12. Each station has at least one appliance and usually some supplementary pumping or other equipment. A station is usually manned by a complement of 6 to 10 personnel under a Station Officer.

3.4.7. Details of the organisation of the fire service in Tipperary (S.R.) County are given in Appendix F by way of example of the structure and operation of a retained fire brigade.

Physical Resources

3.5.1. Local authorities were asked to submit information for the Working Party on the number and condition of existing fire stations and plant; on the need for improvement, whether to make good existing deficiencies or to provide for future needs; and on the level of investment needed. The information supplied is summarised in the tables Nos. 11 and 12 following.

Table 11

Information on Fire Stations

(*a*) Number of existing fire stations		201
(*b*) Estimated cost of improving existing stations		£674,800
(*c*) Existing stations needing replacement	Number	84
	Estimated cost	£4·655 m.
(*d*) Additional stations needed	Number	40
	Estimated cost	£1·558 m.

Table 12

Information on Fire Plant

(*a*) Number of existing fire appliances		303
(*b*) Additional Fire appliances needed in period 1974/1984	Number	124
	Estimated Cost	£1·350 m.
(*c*) Appliances needed to replace existing equipment in period 1974–1984	Number	200
	Estimated cost	£2·739 m.

The Auxiliary Fire Service

3.6.1. The Auxiliary Fire Service is part of the Civil Defence system which is basically the responsibility of the Minister for Defence.

3.6.2. There are about 900 members in the Auxiliary Fire Service. The service operates 35 fire appliances for training purposes. The appliances are the property of the Minister for Defence and may be used to back up the local authority service in dealing with major outbreaks, or to replace appliances undergoing repairs.

3.6.3. At local level the Auxiliary Fire Service is under the control of the Civil Defence Officer. These officers are appointed by the Department of Defence on the recommendation of the local authority. In some cases the local Chief Fire Officer is the Civil Defence Officer, but this is not the general pattern.

3.6.4. The primary purpose of the Auxiliary Fire Service is to supplement the local authority fire fighting capacity in emergency conditions. This role implies a close association between the services. In practice the degree of association and co-operation appears to be uneven and, in general, quite limited.

3.6.5. In most areas difficulties have arisen in maintaining a good working relationship between the voluntary and the paid services. In practice the AFS is little used in actual fire fighting operations. Any attempt to change that position significantly would be likely to meet opposition from firemen. The Working Party understands that there are problems in

the lack of a command structure within the Auxiliary Fire Service itself, and in operation of the arrangements for training. The arrangements for training are linked with those relating to the regular fire service which are the concern of the Minister for Local Government.

3.6.6. There are differences of opinion at local level as to the importance and role of the Auxiliary Fire Service under modern fire fighting conditions.

Other Fire Fighting Arrangements

3.7.1. Some major public and private undertakings maintain a fire fighting capacity of their own.

3.7.2. *Army Fire Service*: The Army maintains a fire fighting unit in the Curragh Training Camp, Co. Kildare. Its strength is 16 personnel and equipment consists of one fire appliance and 1 Land Rover/Pump. In all military posts and barracks a standard fire picquet of 4 men are on call on a 24-hour basis. These fire picquets have fire extinguishers, standpipes and similar equipment.

3.7.3. *Forest Fire Fighting Arrangements:* Most fires in or near forest areas are dealt with by forest staff and voluntary helpers. Fire fighting equipment provided includes shovels, beaters, slashers, axes, portable sprayers and pump reservoirs. If necessary the local authority fire fighting services are called upon to assist at forest fires. Fire prevention publicity is undertaken by the Forest and Wildlife Service of the Department of Lands mainly by means of warning notices during danger periods, in the national newspapers and other publications; use of radio and television advertising; lectures and distribution of fire prevention literature.

3.7.4. *Aer Rianta:* Aer Rianta operates a joint security and fire service at Dublin, Shannon and Cork Airports. It includes a fire and rescue service for aircraft in accordance with international standards; a fire service for other airport fires e.g. in buildings, and fire prevention activity.

The strength of the joint service is 237 personnel, comprising three officers, 39 ranking officers and 195 police/firemen. Fire and rescue vehicles and equipment are maintained at each Airport. Emergency planning provides for liaison, *inter alia*, with the local authority fire service.

3.7.5. *Harbour Areas:* The Dublin Port and Docks Board maintain a small mobile fire fighting unit and one of the Board's tugs is fitted with a fire pump and related equipment. Stocks of fire fighting foam are also maintained. There is a direct fire alarm link with the Dublin central fire station.

A number of other harbour authorities maintain some fire fighting capacity, mainly of a first-aid nature.

3.7.6. *Irish Refining Company Ltd.:* A fire brigade of 28 members is maintained at Whitegate on a rota system of availability for call-out. A range of fire fighting facilities for the use both of water and of foam, and specialist facilities such as breathing apparatus, are employed. Regular exercises on live fires are provided. All mechanical work at the refinery is subject to a strict system of safety control and safety assessments are carried out on an ongoing basis by a special committee.

3.7.7. *Gulf Oil Terminals (Ireland) Ltd.:* A range of fire fighting equipment for the use of water and foam, and specialist equipment such as breathing apparatus and escape equipment, is provided at Bantry. Four tugs are available, and equipped for fire fighting. There is a joint fire and security service. A full time fireman is engaged on station, maintenance and training work. A system of patrols is worked on a rota basis by thirteen plant protection operators. All other operations and maintenance personnel have 12 hours basic training in fire theory and practice annually. There is a permit system of control on work operations at the terminal.

3.7.8. A limited number of the larger industrial concerns operate a fire fighting unit of staff members. In general they rely on extinguishers or other first-aid equipment, but small fire fighting appliances are maintained in some cases.

Financial Costs and Arrangements

3.8.1. The cost of the fire service is met by the fire brigade authorities. Urban authorities whose areas are covered by a county fire service contribute to the cost of that service on an agreed basis.

3.8.2. Current expenditure on the fire service including salaries, maintenance of buildings and appliances is met entirely from the local rates.

3.8.3. Capital expenditure on the provision of fire stations and the purchase of appliances is usually financed from borrowing for which the sanction of the Minister for Local Government is required by the local authorities.

3.8.4. There is no system of state subsidy or grant in support of capital expenditure by local authorities on the fire service. In this respect the fire service differs from most other local authority capital programmes.

3.8.5. The expenditure on the fire service in the period 1970–71—1972–73 on Revenue and Capital account is summarised in the following tables 13 and 14.

Table 13

Revenue Expenditure

	1970–71 £	1971–72 £	1972–73 £
Salaries and Wages ..	1,346,000	1,597,000	1,990,000
Equipment	121,000	152,000	190,000
Loan Charges	91,000	106,000	127,000
Miscellaneous	222,000	228,000	313,000
Totals	£1,780,000	£2,083,000	£2,620,000

Source: Local Authority Returns.

Table 14

Capital Expenditure

	1970–71 £	1971–72 £	1972–73 £
Fire Stations	102,000	132,000	179,000
Equipment	49,500	84,000	100,000
Totals	£151,500	£216,000	£279,000

Source: Department of Local Government.

Functions of Minister for Local Government

3.9.1. The Minister is the appropriate Minister in respect of the Fire Brigades Act, 1940. On that account he has a general concern with the operation of the service but his specific statutory functions are limited.

3.9.2. In practice the Minister can exercise influence over the fire service in various ways:—

Financial Control: As already indicated borrowing by local authorities for investment in the fire service is subject to the sanction of the Minister. Arising from this control it has been the practice for the Department to vet purchasing proposals and plans for buildings. This control has been used in a limited way to promote standardisation in, for example, fire fighting appliances and fittings.

Advisory Function: The Department has been recognised as having a general advisory role in relation to the operation of the local fire service. In practice the exercise of this function has been limited, not least by the fact that there is only one technical fire adviser in the Department.

Training: The Department has taken certain initiatives in regard to the training of retained fire service personnel. These are further described in Chapter V.

Personnel: The Minister exercises a number of statutory functions in relation to the staffing of the fire service in such matters as the creation of additional offices, declaration of qualifications for offices, recruitment procedures, discipline, remuneration, superannuation and other general conditions of service. He has also established the Local Government Manpower Committee to advise on the manpower needs of the local authority service in general.

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Chapter IV

FIRE PREVENTION LAW AND PRACTICE

Legislative Provisions

4.1.1. As indicated in Chapter III most urban authorities have, for practical reasons, entered into agreements by which fire fighting in their areas is handled by the county councils. The fact that a local authority does not maintain a fire brigade does not affect its fire prevention functions. Urban authorities are responsible, therefore, for fire prevention activity in their areas, even where fire fighting is handled by the county council. Local authorities have general powers under the Local Government Act, 1955 to enter into agreements for the discharge of functions on behalf of one another.

4.1.2. Provisions relevant to fire prevention are spread over a large number of statutes including the following:

Dangerous Substances Act, 1972.
Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1963.
Licensing Acts, 1830–1962.
Road Traffic Act, 1961.
Office Premises Act, 1958.
Gaming and Lotteries Act, 1956.
Factories Act, 1955.
Forestry Act, 1946.
Fire Brigades Act, 1940.
Public Dance Halls Act, 1935.
Game Conservation Act, 1930.
Cinematograph Act, 1909.
Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890.
Dublin Corporation Act, 1890.
Petroleum Acts, 1871–1879.
Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878.
Cork Improvement Act, 1868.

Details of the relevant provisions are given in Appendix G. The principal features are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Fire Brigades Act, 1940

4.2.1. The Act introduced the concept of the potentially dangerous building. It enables local authorities to inspect such buildings and if necessary to serve notice requiring that their use be discontinued in whole or in part until specified works have been carried out.

Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1963

4.3.1. Development, other than exempted development, is subject to the control of local (planning) authorities. Planning permission is required before development may be undertaken. The Act confers powers on local authorities to attach conditions to a planning permission in structural matters such as the character and design of buildings, the purpose for which they may be used, lay out and means of access.

4.3.2. The Act provides also for the making of national building regulations by the Minister. The regulations may include standards in relation to fire precautions, including resistance of structures to the outbreak and spread of fire, the protection of occupants and means of escape in the event of fire. The regulations are referred to further in Paragraph 4.17.1.

The Factories Act, 1955

4.4.1. The principal provision relating to fire is that which requires that there should be certificates in respect of certain factories showing that they have adequate means of escape.

4.4.2. The legislation is the responsibility of the Minister for Labour. It is the task of the local authorities to issue the certificates or to refuse to issue them. The Department of Labour has issued advice on procedure and general standards to local authorities.

4.4.3. The Act contains a number of other provisions relating to fire safety in factories. The Minister for Labour may make regulations as to the provision of means of escape in factories. The local authorities may make bye-laws for the same purpose provided they do not conflict with any regulation made by the Minister. No regulations or bye-laws have been made.

Office Premises Act, 1958

4.5.1. The Act includes provisions, mainly relating to maintenance of free access to existing means of escape, aimed at ensuring the safety of workers in the event of fire. The application of these provisions is limited in that the Act relates only to offices in which there are more than five persons engaged on clerical work and in the definition of clerical work.

4.5.2. The Minister for Labour, the Minister concerned, is enabled to make regulations on fire warnings and fire preventive facilities in offices to which the Act applies. No regulations have been made.

4.5.3. Enforcement of the Act is the responsibility of the local authority except for government offices and offices in factories, for which the Minister for Labour is the enforcing authority.

Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878

4.6.1. Local authorities are empowered to make bye-laws controlling building and building materials in the interests of the stability of structure and prevention of fire. The bye-laws may provide for the submission of plans to the local authority and for the removal of unauthorised buildings.

4.6.2. The bye-laws are subject to confirmation by the Minister for Local Government. They will be replaced in due course by the building regulations, already referred to, for which provision is made in the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1963.

Other Legislation of General or Special application

4.7.1. The following are some examples of additional provisions relevant to fire safety which are to be found in various Acts.

4.7.2. In urban areas in which the local authorities have adopted the relevant provisions of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890 buildings used as places of public resort must be to their satisfaction as to construction and suitability of means of entry and exit.

4.7.3. In Dublin and Cork local legislation provides for additional control by the local authorities over theatres and places of public resort. In those areas bye-laws prescribe detailed requirements for construction, layout, equipment and fittings, seating and means of exit. They also provide for the keeping of fire fighting equipment in such buildings, for the assignment of fire duties and the holding of drills. In Dublin, the Corporation may require that structural works be carried out on a theatre or place of public resort if they consider it necessary to remedy defects which could result in special fire risk.

4.7.4. A public dance hall is required to be licensed annually by the District Court. In considering an application, regard must be had to the suitability of the premises. If the period of the licence is to be more than a month the local authority must be informed in advance and may give evidence at the hearing.

4.7.5. Gambling in halls and fun-fairs is subject to a somewhat similar control by the District Courts, where the relevant legislation has been adopted by the local authority. Extensive use has been made of this provision by a limited number of local authorities as a means of securing fire safety measures in premises concerned.

4.7.6. A District Court licence is required for the use of a place for such public entertainment as singing or music. This again is confined to areas in which the local authorities have adopted the relevant legislation. The provision is availed of by local authorities in a limited number of areas as a means of securing fire safety.

Dangerous Substances Act, 1972

4.8.1. The Act, which is the concern of the Minister for Labour, provides for new controls, including a licensing control on explosives and the keeping of petroleum. It enables similar controls to be exercised over other dangerous substances and the conveyance of such substances to be regulated. Local authorities and harbour authorities are the main licensing bodies.

4.8.2. The Act enables the Minister for Labour to set up tribunals to hold formal investigations into incidents, including fires, involving a substance held under a licence.

4.8.3. This Act has not yet been brought into operation. At present the storage of petroleum in quantity is controlled under a licensing system which is operated by local authorities in towns; by harbour authorities within their areas and, in rural areas, by the District Court.

Fire Prevention Activity and Limitations

4.9.1. Fire prevention activity arising under the various statutory provisions described can be considered under a number of headings.

Measures Covering New Buildings, or Material Structural or Use Changes

4.9.2. The principal activities under this heading relate to the examination of applications for planning permission under the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1963, and the administration by local authorities of building bye-laws in those areas in which bye-laws are in operation. Bye-laws have been made in some twenty, mainly urban, areas but little use seems to be made of them nowadays outside Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway, as a means of enforcing structural and safety measures. Reliance is placed instead on the powers provided by the Planning and Development Act.

4.9.3. It has been held that the powers of local authorities under that Act to attach conditions to planning permission in structural matters do not extend to such protective measures as the fitting of fire resistant doors, extinguishers or sprinkler systems. The local authority may recommend such provision to the applicant for planning permission but recommendations of that kind are not enforceable under the Act.

4.9.4. The extent to which the fire service is consulted on planning applications varies considerably from area to area. In some cases most applications are referred to the Chief Fire Officer. In others it appears that only a small proportion are referred. There is a lack of uniformity in practice among local authorities in this matter.

4.9.5. The total number of planning applications dealt with by the local authority fire service in 1972–73 was 7,078. Details for each area are given in Appendix H for each of the years from 1969–70 to 1972–73.

Measures of General Application to the User of Buildings when occupied

4.10.1. Activity under this head consists mainly of inspections by local fire service personnel of premises regarded as potentially dangerous buildings under sections 7 and 8 of the Fire Brigades Act, 1940, the service of fire precautions notices, and follow-up action.

4.10.2. While the term "potentially dangerous building" is widely defined the extent of inspection work carried out is limited. It is not mandatory on local authorities to carry out inspections and the interpretation of the responsibility represented by these powers varies widely. In most areas inspections are confined in the main to premises which carry an obvious risk, or are the subject of complaint. There is no general endeavour to seek out suspect buildings.

4.10.3. It has been brought to attention that there are deficiencies in the legislation which make it difficult to take effective action in some cases. It may be difficult, according to the circumstances, to identify the party on whom to serve a fire precautions notice.

Buildings may continue in use while an appeal against the fire precautions notice to the District Court, which may be protracted, is determined. Penalties for contravention of a fire precautions notice are not adequate to ensure compliance in many cases. Where contravention occurs there is nothing to prevent the continued use of the building.

It has been held that a fire precautions notice may not extend beyond structural matters to include, for example, requirements regarding drills and evacuation procedures.

4.10.4. There is no estimate of the number of potentially dangerous buildings in the country. Based on returns furnished by local authorities Table 15 gives a classification of certain categories of buildings in each area, the number of inspections carried out, and the number of cases in which changes were required.

Table 15

Information on Buildings

Category	Number of Buildings returned	Number Inspected for Fire Risk	Number in which fire protective measures were recommended
Hospitals, Schools and Institutions	5,242	966	778
Hotels, Guest Houses and Multiple Occupancy	30,640	2,212	2,078
Large Buildings and Commercial Offices	10,819	629	568
Places of Public Entertainment	2,643	1,878	1,712
Licensed Premises	11,831	636	487

Special measures relating to certain classes of buildings

4.11.1. The activity consists of inspections of premises which are subject to licensing by the Courts and attendance at related Court hearings to tender recommendations on fire safety considerations. Premises concerned include public dance halls, cinemas, licensed premises, amusement halls and premises used for public singing, music or other entertainment.

4.11.2. The relevant legislation, which is detailed in Appendix G, does not in general provide specifically for consideration of fire safety factors. The attachment to licences of requirements in this regard is at the discretion of the Courts, which are the licensing authorities.

4.11.3. Applicants for licences are not required in all cases to give advance notice to the local authority so that there may not be opportunity for inspection of premises before hearing. Responsibility for enforcing the conditions of a licence rests generally with the Gardai.

Measures relating to places of work

4.12.1. The main activity relates to the issue by local authorities of certificates of means of escape in factories. It involves inspection of premises and possibly the prescribing of works which need to be undertaken before a certificate can be issued, with follow-up action. The

scope of a certificate is limited and does not extend to such matters as the provision of sprinkler or other fire protection systems.

4.12.2. The Department of Labour has indicated that at the end of 1973, certificates of means of escape were outstanding in respect of some 800 factories. It would appear that in some of the outstanding cases inspections have been made by local authorities and that the non-issue of certificates is partly due to delay on the part of owners in meeting specified requirements, and partly, to lack of adequate staff for local authority fire prevention work.

4.12.3. As already indicated the fire safety provisions of the office premises legislation are limited, the main emphasis being on the maintenance of free access to existing means of escape. The Minister for Labour and the local authorities share the enforcement functions. In general it does not seem that offices are inspected in any systematic way for compliance with the fire safety provisions of the Act. It is understood that the Act is under review in the Department of Labour.

Main features of the Statutory System

4.13.1. Fire prevention is governed by a number of different Acts and procedures. As regards new development, local authorities may use their powers under the Planning and Development Act to promote fire safety in structural matters. In a limited number of areas, mainly urban, building bye-laws are in operation. New building regulations of general application are proposed.

4.13.2. In the case of existing development, local authorities have powers of inspection and control of what are described as potentially dangerous buildings. There are further provisions in some cases under special legislation. A number of additional fire prevention responsibilities have been imposed on local authorities from time to time. They include responsibility for inspecting some (but not all) offices and for the issue of certificates of means of escape for factories.

4.13.3. The statutory procedures for the licensing, mainly by the Courts, of certain categories of buildings which the public frequent provides an opportunity for local authorities to seek to have account taken of fire safety considerations. However, there is a lack of uniformity in the statutory provisions and in the procedures, including the hearing of evidence on fire considerations.

4.13.4. There is a division of responsibility as regards fire safety between the Minister for Local Government as the appropriate Minister for the Fire Brigades Act and the Minister for Labour as the Minister responsible for the Factories Act and the Office Premises Act, arising from his general concern with safety and welfare of people at work.

4.13.5. Reference has already been made to a number of more particular deficiencies in the terms and operation of the statutory provisions on fire prevention. These are taken into account as appropriate in our later recommendations.

Comment on the level of Activity

4.14.1. We are satisfied from the available evidence that the level of fire prevention activity by local authorities does not measure up to the need. This applies to measures arising from

the exercise of existing statutory powers in relation to new development; to the use of the general powers in relation to potentially dangerous buildings, and to the investigation of means of escape from factories.

4.14.2. We believe that the situation is due to a number of considerations. A low level of awareness of the importance of fire prevention work and uncertainty among some local authorities as to the extent of their fire prevention responsibilities have been among the primary influences.

4.14.3. The multiplicity of statutes containing provisions directly or indirectly bearing on fire prevention and divided ministerial and enforcement responsibilities are complicating factors. The lack of a unified statutory code on fire prevention and the limitations of the available fire protection standards are seen as further deficiencies and constraints in the present system.

4.14.4. A routine, or special, fire safety inspection by a local authority may involve one or several visits to a premises, as well as reporting, correspondence, discussions and negotiations and ultimately, Court proceedings. Although the position has improved as a result of the special training course which is referred to further in Chapter V too few trained personnel are engaged on fire prevention work to enable the local authorities to undertake such work on the scale which is needed.

Fire Protection Association of Ireland

4.15.1. The Association was established in 1965 following discussions between the Minister for Local Government and the Irish Standing Committee of the Fire Offices Committee of Insurance Companies operating in this country. Its function was to undertake a fire safety campaign by means which include drawing on the publicity and safety material produced by the corresponding Association in the United Kingdom.

4.15.2. Associate membership is open to any person or body interested in improving standards of fire protection. Membership was never higher than 350 and has declined to 250 approximately. Income, which depends on associate membership fees, amounts to about £500 per annum.

4.15.3. The Association is managed by a Council of nine of whom four members and the chairman are nominated by the Minister and four members by the Fire Offices Committee. At present there are several vacancies on the Council. Secretarial services, on a part-time basis, and office facilities are provided by the Department of Local Government.

4.15.4. The Association's impact has been limited and it is now only partly operational. It has neither the resources nor the organisation to mount and maintain a sustained promotional effort.

4.15.5. The Association has proposed that it should be reorganised and provided with an independent office and whole-time staff. It has suggested that, apart from subscriptions, the Association should be supported by the Minister for Local Government and by insurance interests, and that an annual budget of the order of £20,000 would be needed.

4.15.6. The Fire Offices Committee has proposed that a new Fire Protection Association be set up solely by the fire insurers, who would meet the cost of establishment and operation. Its function would be to promote fire safety at both technical and management levels, nationally and locally. The new Association would have links with the government departments concerned, the fire service, and industry and there would be appropriate representation on a governing council.

Fire Protection Standards

4.16.1. In 1967 the Department of Local Government published an updated version of fire protection standards. These set out minimum standards for good fire prevention practice as regards structural requirements, general fire precautions and internal fire protection. The standards were intended as a guide to fire officers in carrying out fire prevention work, and are widely used for that purpose. They were also intended for the benefit of architects, builders and others concerned with construction. There have been significant changes in building and construction since the fire protection standards were made and new materials are constantly being introduced.

National Building Regulations

4.17.1. The Minister for Local Government is empowered under the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1963, to make national building regulations. The regulations will contain, among other things, detailed requirements as regards structural fire precautions, means of escape from fire, access for fire fighting appliances, and standards for chimneys, hearths, flues and heating appliances.

In structural matters the regulations will prescribe standards expressed in terms of performance, types of material, methods of construction, or otherwise.

4.17.2. The regulations will provide comprehensive and uniform standards of fire protection for all areas. They will apply to all new buildings except for exemptions which include government buildings and certain categories of minor buildings including greenhouses, tool sheds where these are detached. They will apply in part to buildings to which alterations or extensions are made or where change of use takes place.

4.17.3. The regulations will be administered by local authorities. The Minister will have power to dispense with or relax any requirement of the regulations in a particular case if he considers it justified. This power to dispense with or relax requirements may be devolved on local authorities to such extent as may be specified in the regulations, subject to a right of appeal to the Minister.

4.17.4. The penalty on summary conviction on a charge of contravention of the building regulations will be a maximum of £100. There is also a liability to a further fine not exceeding £20 a day in respect of a continuing offence.

4.17.5. The Working Party is informed that work is well advanced with the drafting of the new regulations in the Department of Local Government.

Interim Report of the Working Party

4.18.1. In the interim report on fire prevention which we submitted on 7th March, 1973 we stressed the urgent need, as an interim measure, of improvement in the capacity of local authorities to undertake fire prevention measures under existing legislation, and the need to bring home to people an awareness of fire risk and the need for precautions. We therefore recommended in support of the recruitment of additional personnel for fire prevention work by local authorities and of the special training of such staff.

4.18.2. An interim publicity campaign was also recommended with particular reference to local seminars and fire prevention to be provided for management and other groups by local fire service personnel.

4.18.3. A copy of the Interim Report is given in Appendix B.

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Chapter V

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

Total Strength of the Service

5.1.1. The total strength of the fire service, at 31st March, 1973, by main grades (with numbers of retained personnel indicated in bracketed figures) is summarised in Table 16.

Table 16

Chief Fire Officer	25*
Second Fire Officer (Dublin)	1
Fire Prevention Officer, Gr. I	1
Fire Prevention Officer, Gr. II	4
Third Fire Officer (Dublin)	2
Second Fire Officer (Cork)	1
Second Fire Officer (Dún Laoghaire)	1
District Officer (Dublin)	16
Second Fire Officer (Other)	21
Third Fire Officer (Cork)	3
Station Officer	246 (194)
Sub-Officer	240 (202)
Leading Fireman	9
Fireman	2,021 (1,525)
	2,591 (1,921)

Note: Of the twenty-five C.F.O. posts in the fire service, four posts were filled at 31st March, 1973 in a part-time acting capacity by Chief Assistant or Assistant County Engineers.

Recruitment Process

5.2.1. There are different levels of recruitment to the service. The principal level is that of fireman. The average annual rate of recruitment of firemen over the last ten years has been 44 for whole-time and 87 for retained men.

5.2.2. In the whole-time service a fireman may be promoted, with or without competition, up to the grade of Third Officer in Dublin and Second Fire Officer elsewhere. In the retained service, a fireman may be promoted to the grade of Station Officer. In the retained service also there is the possibility of advancement to the grade of Second Fire Officer through open competition.

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5.2.3. There are no national qualification standards for firemen. Educational and other standards are fixed by the individual local authorities, and may vary. For example, the minimum educational standard for full-time firemen, is national school seventh standard, as a rule. There are no specified educational qualifications for retained firemen.

5.2.4. The grade of Second Fire Officer in the retained service is an entry grade, in that candidates from outside the fire service are eligible to compete. Qualifications for the grade have been declared by the Minister for Local Government, and apply nationally. The main qualifications are that candidates must have a good standard in general education, knowledge of water supply systems and building construction, and experience in the control of men. All of the twenty officers serving in the grade at 31st March, 1973 had previous fire service experience in either whole-time or retained brigades, on appointment.

5.3.1. The highest recruitment level is to grades for which professional qualifications have been declared by the Minister for Local Government and which are, therefore, filled on the recommendation of the Local Appointments Commission. They are the grades of Chief Fire Officer, Second Officer (Dublin Corporation) and Fire Prevention Officer (Grades I and II).

5.3.2. The qualifications for these senior grades require that candidates have a degree in engineering (or, for the grades of Fire Prevention Officer Grades I and II in architecture) or equivalent qualification. Candidates for the position of Chief Fire Officer are required in addition to have experience in engineering work; knowledge of water supply systems and building construction and experience in the control and discipline of men. Candidates for the position of Fire Prevention Officer Grade I must have at least four years architectural or engineering experience as well as administrative experience. Candidates for Fire Prevention Officer Grade II must have at least two years architectural or engineering experience.

5.3.3. Because of the requirement for those higher grades that candidates hold an engineering degree or equivalent and the lack of appropriate training facilities, personnel entering the fire service at a lower level are not in a position to compete for positions higher than that of Third Officer in Dublin or Second Fire Officer elsewhere.

Recruitment Situation

5.4.1. Generally speaking the recruitment of firemen, whether full-time or retained, does not present major problems. Local shortages have arisen but the general pattern is that establishments are maintained without undue difficulty.

5.4.2. Recent improvement in pay levels has made the position of retained fireman more attractive. However, material considerations are not the only ones. The personal qualities demanded of a fireman; the challenges presented and the opportunity to be part of an essential, and in many ways unique, public service, are an important part of the attraction of the position, particularly for many retained firemen.

5.4.3. Difficulties have arisen in recruitment to the higher grades. Because of the high academic qualifications, recruits to the higher grades are almost invariably from outside the fire service. In the past one of the main sources of supply has been the Army Corps of

Engineers. More recent appointments have included engineers who were already in the local authority service.

5.4.4. Information made available by the Local Appointments Commission shows that of the twelve positions as Chief Fire Officer which became vacant in the period 1970–1973 eight were filled at the first attempt, two by existing Chief Fire Officers transferring from other areas. In the remaining four cases it was necessary to advertise the vacancies on a number of occasions, eight occasions in one case, before the Commission was in a position to recommend an appointment. In all there were thirteen abortive competitions for Chief Fire Officer positions in the period, including one for which there was no candidate.

5.4.5. All County Chief Fire Officers are on the same level of remuneration and status, which is equivalent to that of Chief Assistant County Engineer. Only the position of Chief Fire Officers in Dublin and Cork city within the local authority service, and the position of Fire Adviser to the Minister for Local Government outside it, represent advancement possibilities. The evidence is that the number of engineers, or other professional people with requisite qualifications, outside the fire service who are both interested in that service and have the kind of experience needed to assume a senior appointment in it is extremely limited. Under present day conditions a variety of other employment and advancement opportunities is open to such men.

Training: The Whole-time Brigades

5.5.1. Training of recruit firemen is undertaken locally by each fire brigade authority. There is no officer training in any of the whole-time brigades.

5.5.2. *Dublin:* In Dublin each batch of recruits undertakes a basic training programme of ten-week duration under the supervision of a Third Officer assisted by other officers released from regular duties. The course consists of six weeks training on operational fire fighting and four weeks on ambulance service training. The general content of the programme consists of sessions of theoretical and practical instruction in:

—fire fighting techniques; the means by which different types of fires can be controlled and put out,

—the use of different types of fire appliances,

—control and watch room work.

Much time is given to training drills and exercise with pumps, hoses, ladders, knots, lines and various kinds of fire extinguishers and other equipment.

5.5.3. Training in fire fighting is at present provided in the new fire station at Kilbarrack. Ambulance training is provided in the Civil Defence School run by the Department of Defence at Ratra House in the Phoenix Park. The number of trainees attending a course is usually about 30 and courses are held about once a year.

5.5.4. Following the initial training period of ten weeks, the recruit continues as a trainee until a twelve months cycle has been completed through station drills and practical work. Subsequent continuation fireman training takes the form of unprogrammed station drills of a routine nature for some three hours weekly.

5.5.5. *Cork Corporation Fire Brigade Authority:* In Cork, each batch of recruits undertakes a basic training programme of 8 weeks duration under the general supervision of a Second Officer and under the direct supervision of a Third Officer. Instruction sessions are conducted by various brigade officers. Five courses were held over the past five years, with an average of six trainees per course. The training programme is broadly similar in content to that in Dublin. Recruits attend night classes for ambulance first-aid training.

5.5.6. *Limerick Corporation Fire Brigade Authority:* In Limerick training is carried out for new recruits by the Station Officer under the supervision of the Chief Fire Officer. In view of the small numbers involved recruit training is usually carried out as part of the normal weekly training schedule for firemen, comprising various familiarisation, drill and maintenance exercises.

5.5.7. *Dún Laoghaire Corporation Fire Brigade Authority:* In Dún Laoghaire each batch of recruits undertakes a basic training programme of six to eight weeks duration. The programme is conducted by the Station Officer or Sub-Officer under the general supervision of the Chief Fire Officer and Second Fire Officer. These training programmes are held about once a year, with an average of two to three trainees per programme. The fire content of the programme is broadly similar to that in Dublin.

Training: The Retained Brigades

5.6.1. The training of personnel is a matter for each fire brigade authority and practice varies widely from county to county. The Chief Fire Officer has overall responsibility for the training. Training sessions are usually conducted by a Second Fire Officer or by Station or Sub-Officers attached to the various brigade units.

5.6.2. There are no standard training sessions or procedures, either for recruits or for established firemen, nor are there adequate training facilities. Training sessions appear to take, on average, about four hours per month, in two to four sessions.

5.6.3. A training session may cover any, or a number, of the following aspects:

Maintenance—Stations, appliances and equipment.

Drills—Foot, ladder, pump, hydrant, foam.

Fire Prevention—Evacuation drills.

Special—Use of breathing apparatus; crash, rescue and first-aid procedures.

Training at Central Level

5.7.1. For some years, up to 1966, the Department of Local Government, by arrangement with Dublin Corporation, organised central training courses for Station Officers of retained brigades. In 1968 a new series of training courses for Station Officers and Sub-Officers of retained brigades was introduced and has since been maintained.

5.7.2. The purpose of these courses is to give the officers concerned training which will help them to carry out their functions within their own brigades; to help to standardise fire drills, and to enable suitable officers to be selected for further training as local brigade instructors.

5.7.3. Of the 396 Station Officers and Sub-Officers in the retained brigades, 238 have attended the central training course of 2 weeks duration. Of these, 116 were recalled for further courses of one week's duration designed to prepare them to act as instructors in their own brigades. Fifty-two of the 116 instructors attended an additional, more advanced, course consisting mainly of instruction in the use of breathing apparatus. Lecturers for these central courses are provided mainly from the Dublin Fire Service and, to some extent, by other fire brigade authorities.

5.7.4. It was hoped that the services of personnel qualified as instructors would be widely availed of in local training programmes. In practice it seems that the services of the instructors are mainly confined to the stations to which they are attached. Only in a minority of cases do they provide instruction in other stations in the county.

5.7.5. The Department of Local Government makes a contribution of 70% towards the cost of sending personnel to the central training courses. The Department has, in addition, financed the production of two training films on fire drill which were distributed to fire brigade authorities. The expenditure by the Department on the training courses and on the production of films since 1969–70 has been as follows:

1969–70	£2,804
1970–71	£4,410
1971–72	£2,774
1972–73	£5,366
Total	£15,354

Fire Prevention Training

5.8.1. In the academic year 1973–74 a special course in fire prevention training organised by the Department of Local Government, in conjunction with Galway Fire Brigade Authority, was held in the Regional Technical College in Galway.

5.8.2. The course was designed as an interim measure to provide training for fire prevention personnel, particularly personnel newly appointed to the retained service at Second Fire Officer level in response to requests from the Minister for Local Government to local authorities for an intensification of fire prevention work.

5.8.3. The syllabus for the course followed the lines of well-established courses in fire prevention. Subjects covered included physics, chemistry, mathematics, building construction and codes, fire engineering, fire legislation and practical survey and inspection work.

5.8.4. Twenty fire service personnel attended the course, of whom thirteen were sent forward by county fire brigade authorities and seven by authorities having whole-time brigades.

The Institution of Fire Engineers

5.9.1. The Institution is a U.K. based Association, with affiliated branches in a number of countries. It has the principal objects of promoting, encouraging and improving the science and practice of fire extinction, fire prevention and fire engineering. It is not a chartered institution.

5.9.2. Membership of the Institution is a widely recognised professional fire service qualification. Candidates for the Membership examination must be engaged in fire engineering for five years or more and have passed the Graduateship examination of the Institution (or be exempted from it).

5.9.3. For the Graduateship examination, candidates must have at least 3 years experience in fire engineering as well as having achieved an acceptable level of competency. As a step towards the Graduateship examination, the Institution awards a Preliminary Certificate based on an examination, for personnel who are engaged in and are being regularly trained, whole-time or part-time, in fire engineering.

5.9.4. A branch of the Institution was formed in Ireland in 1972, and courses have been organised for student members in schools of technical education in Dublin and Cork in 1972–73 and 1973–74 to prepare candidates in academic subjects for the Institution's examinations. The candidates were mainly serving fire service personnel in the Dublin and Cork city brigades.

Details of the examination results in the two years were as follows:

	Preliminary Certificate		*Graduate Certificate*		*Membership examination*	
	Sat	Passed	Sat	Passed	Sat	Passed
1972–73	47	27	7	6	—	—
1973–74	40	22	25	6	6	4

5.9.5. The Institution's examination syllabus indicates that the content and standard of the Membership examination is that which would normally represent an appropriate technical and academic qualification for a senior appointment in fire engineering. Membership of the Institution has not been established as an acceptable or alternative equivalent to an engineering or architectural degree for the purpose of meeting the qualification laid down for the senior positions in the fire service in this country.

Senior Grade Training

5.10.1. There are no organised training courses or facilities for senior fire service officers. Each fire brigade authority must decide on the initial and continuing training needed and how it is provided for. In a number of cases fire brigade authorities have sent Chief Fire Officer appointees to attend officer training courses in the United Kingdom.

5.10.2. In many cases Chief Fire Officers were, on appointment, left to their own devices as regards training and equipping themselves for the position. In this situation the level of competency was largely dependent on experience and on personal study and effort.

5.10.3. A number of officers in the senior grades, including Second Fire Officers in the retained service, have succeeded, through private study and correspondence courses, in

passing the Graduateship examination of the I.F.E. A smaller number has been successful in undertaking the Membership examination. The following table shows the number of serving wholetime fire service personnel, who have passed these examinations by grade:—

Rank	Membership (M.I. Fire E)	Graduate (G.I. Fire E)	Preliminary Certificate
Chief Fire Officer ..	4	1	—
Second Fire Officer ..	1	4	9
Station Officer ..	2	—	2
Sub-Officer	—	—	8
Fireman	—	7	28

Local Government Manpower Committee

5.11.1. The Minister for Local Government has set up an Advisory Committee called the Local Government Manpower Committee. The Committee has the task of advising the Minister on the manpower needs of local authorities generally and on the promotion of measures to meet those needs, with particular reference to such aspects of recruitment, training and development of staff as the Minister may refer to them from time to time. The manner in which the existing and future training programme for the fire service might be co-ordinated with the training programme for the service at large is one of the matters on which the Minister has asked the Committee to report as a matter of urgency.

5.11.2. The Committee is made up of representatives of the Department of Local Government, the Department of the Public Service, the County and City Managers Association, the Local Government and Public Services Union, the Institute of Public Administration, An Foras Forbartha and the Institution of Engineers of Ireland.

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PART 2

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Chapter VI

THE OPERATIONAL SERVICE

General

6.1.1. The public has been well served by the fire fighting service provided and operated by local authorities under the Fire Brigades Act, 1940. The service has, in consequence, won the respect and confidence of people generally.

6.1.2. There have been fundamental changes in the past 30 years in fire service concepts and practices; in the conditions in which the service has to operate and the problems it has to deal with. In consequence of these changes there are deficiencies, of different degrees of seriousness, in the existing fire services in regard to organisation, resources, staffing, training, financing and legislation, but particularly in the area of fire prevention.

6.1.3. These defects will need to be made good if there is to be continued confidence in the capacity of the service to deal with the demands being made upon it, and the greater demands to be expected in the future. The necessary improvements will call for new organisational arrangements and for considerable investment, as well as for strengthened and extended legislation.

6.1.4. The main justification for the measures which we recommend is a saving in human life and suffering which is certain though difficult to quantify. Major economic considerations also arise—the loss and the disruption of employment which fires cause and the resources which have to be diverted from other purposes to rectify fire losses. At stake also in important respects is the level of morale, and hence of efficiency, in the fire service itself.

The Local Fire Authority

6.2.1. We have taken account of the stipulation in our terms of reference that regard be had to a Government decision that the county should remain as the basic local government unit. We have taken this to mean, firstly, that the fire service should continue to operate as a local government service and, secondly, that the main local government services will be organised on a scale not greater than that of the county area. We do not regard the stipulation as precluding the possibility that certain elements of the fire service might be organised on a larger scale if there were particular arguments favouring such arrangements.

6.2.2. With few exceptions urban local authorities have neither the resources nor suitable areas of operation for the provision of a modern fire fighting service on a viable basis. The vast majority of the urban authorities have made agreements by which their areas are covered by the fire fighting service of an adjoining county. We consider that the economic and practical realities of the situation should be formally accepted. **We recommend** that, with the exception of the county boroughs (which are discussed later), the fire fighting functions of urban authorities should be transferred to the county councils. The transfer

would have the effect of reducing the number of local authorities maintaining fire brigades from 34 to 30.

6.2.3. Fire fighting and fire prevention are interdependent and overlapping activities. Fire prevention work has a direct influence on the number of fire outbreaks and on the nature of outbreaks. Information which comes to light in the course of fire prevention work may be of critical importance to fire fighting operations in particular buildings. Lessons learned in fire fighting operations may be of general or particular value in further fire prevention work. With suitable training, fire fighting personnel can make a significant contribution to fire prevention. We consider that fire fighting and fire prevention should be seen as twin functions of a unified fire service. For this reason, and because we believe that it would facilitate the establishment of a proper fire prevention unit in each county **we recommend** that with the exception of the county boroughs, fire prevention responsibilities also should be transferred from the urban to the county authorities, so making it possible to establish the unified service at the county level. The number of local authorities involved in fire prevention work would be reduced from 87 to 30.

6.2.4. We believe that a fire fighting system based on the county is compatible with the maintenance of an adequate and effective service. However, if that objective is to be achieved certain weaknesses in the existing system will need to be made good. This applies particularly to arrangements for meeting special fire fighting demands, to training and to communications.

6.2.5. Some counties may find difficulty in remedying existing deficiencies and in strengthening to meet new needs. There are various possibilities for meeting this problem within the framework of a county system—

Agency arrangements: At present a local authority, instead of maintaining a fire brigade, may make an agreement with another local authority to cover its area. It is on foot of agreements of this kind that responsibility for fire fighting in most boroughs and urban districts rests with the county councils. Such agreements have not, however, been made between county councils.

Assistance agreements: It is fairly common to find agreements between local authorities maintaining fire brigades to assist each other either generally, or in particular areas or circumstances. They often relate to areas which for reasons of topography or communications would be more sensibly covered from an adjoining county. We think there may be advantages in many cases in broadbased agreements for assistance of a unilateral or mutual kind between local authorities maintaining fire brigades. These would be formal agreements showing the degree of aid and support envisaged, the circumstances in which it would be provided, the procedures to be followed and the details of responsibility and control.

Joint Service: An agency or assistance agreement may not meet the needs of particular situations. There should, therefore, be power for fire authorities to make and operate a joint service covering planning and control, equipment, financing and operation. Provision should, if necessary, be made for the establishment of joint local authority bodies to control the operation of a shared fire fighting service where this is decided on.

6.2.6. **We recommend** that the Minister for Local Government should have power to require fire authorities to enter into assistance agreements or joint service arrangements if he believes it to be necessary, and the fire authorities do not act voluntarily.

The Position of the Whole-time Brigades

6.3.1. *Dublin:* Because of the population density, the port and airport, the concentration and general diversity of development, the Dublin area presents special fire problems. The dangers are added to by the pace of change in the city, by obsolescence in buildings and changes in the use of buildings.

A joint fire fighting service, under one Chief Fire Officer, has been in operation for Dublin city and county, excluding the borough of Dún Laoghaire, since 1969.

6.3.2. *Cork:* From the point of view of fire danger the Cork area has many of the features referred to in the preceding paragraph in relation to Dublin, though generally on a lesser scale. On similar reasoning it must be regarded as an area which presents special fire problems and protection needs. Many serious fire risks, and most of the new high risk projects, will be located outside the city boundary.

6.3.3. At present there are separate Chief Fire Officers, and separate fire fighting services for the city and county with a limited co-operation agreement between the two areas. Adequate cover for the city and its environs, including the harbour area, can only be provided by a strong, well-equipped, highly organised fire fighting service. We are doubtful that the existing facilities and organisation would be equal to the demands which must be planned for.

6.3.4. *Limerick and Waterford:* In both these areas also there is considerable risk of major fire outbreaks because of the density of population and development; the problems of old buildings and changed uses; industrial, port and airport development. In both cases there is the prospect of large-scale further urban expansion and, in the case of Limerick, the possibility of major industrial-complex development based on the estuary.

6.3.5. At present there is one Chief Fire Officer serving the separate fire authorities in Waterford city and county. The service for the two areas is under his unified control. In Limerick there are separate Chief Fire Officers, and separate fire fighting services, for the city and county.

6.3.6. As in the case of Cork we think the need is plain for a high capacity service for those areas involving a strengthening in existing arrangements and resources.

6.3.7. The joint service in operation in Dublin city and county has considerable advantages from the point of view of the capacity of the service, the most effective mobilization and deployment of resources, and the possibilities for improved training of personnel. The other county borough areas, and the areas around them, need the benefit of similar advantages. As a general approach, therefore, we favour joint services being established for each of the county boroughs and for the whole, or part, of surrounding counties.

6.3.8. The particular joint service in operation in Dublin is facilitated by a system of joint management which exists for the city and county. We see no reason to change the organ-

isation of fire fighting there. In other areas it might be more appropriate, or necessary, to think in terms of a joint fire brigade authority of the kind referred to in paragraph 6.2.5. being established to operate a joint service. On the other hand we are aware, for example, that the system in operation in the Waterford area by which one Chief Fire Officer serves both the city and the county fire authorities, works well there. We are reluctant, therefore, to advocate a particular organisational form for the joint fire fighting service which we think should be introduced for the other areas. Account must be taken of local circumstances and relationships as well as of relevant planning and topographical considerations.

6.3.9. **We recommend** that the form of organisation best suited for provision of a joint fire fighting service for the county boroughs and their surrounding areas, and the appropriate areas of operation of such services, should be determined in each case in the light of the local assessments which we recommend in paragraph 6.6.3.

6.3.10. In keeping with our general recommendations in regard to the transfer of fire fighting responsibilities from urban areas to the county authorities, we think that the fire cover for Dun Laoghaire would be more sensibly and effectively provided by extending the Dublin city and county joint service to that area than by the continued maintenance of a separate service for the borough. **We recommend** accordingly.

Special Fire Fighting Needs

6.4.1. It is an inherent limitation in a county fire fighting system that it cannot sustain locally a capacity sufficient for all contingencies. The recommendations which we have made for assistance agreements and for joint service arrangements are designed to reduce this problem. Additional measures will be needed to ensure that stand-by arrangements are fully satisfactory and that modern appliances and equipment, suitable for dealing with fires of exceptional scale and complexity, are available in adequate strength within reasonable reach of all such fire risks.

6.4.2. Special equipment suitable for dealing with exceptional fires would serve a regional need. The demands on it would be limited, though they would tend to increase. We think it important that a reserve capacity of this kind should be provided. It can best be provided in the large urban centres by way of suitable additions to the fleet and equipment of the whole-time brigades.

6.4.3. **We recommend** that the need for, disposition, and procurement of such special facilities should be considered by the Department of Local Government in consultation with the local authorities as part of the review of resources in each area which we advocate.

The Responsibility of the Local Fire Authority

6.5.1. The basic responsibility of the local fire authority is set out in Section 2 (1) of the Fire Brigades Act, 1940. It is that reasonable provision shall be made for the prompt and efficient extinguishing of fires in buildings and other places and for the protection and rescue of persons and property from injury by fire.

6.5.2. We consider that certain consequential obligations, which are implicit, should be formally recognised. They include the responsibility to provide adequate premises, equipment and appliances; to assemble and act on information about fire conditions in buildings

and structures in the area; to see to the training of fire brigade personnel; to take the necessary steps to ensure that water supplies are adequate for fire fighting.

6.5.3. **We recommend** that there should be a review accordingly of the provisions of the Fire Brigades Act, 1940, relating to fire fighting. There should also be a critical review of provisions in the Act which may be inappropriate in modern legislation. Examples are the explicit limitation of the local authority responsibility by reference to its financial resources and the exoneration which it enjoys from liability from the consequences of failure to comply with the Act.

It is recognised that a local authority cannot be expected to make provision beyond the constraints within which it operates and that it is not free, for example, to borrow without central control. On the other hand it must be accepted that the modern community is entitled to the protection of an adequate fire fighting service. We believe that, particularly with the help of co-operation arrangements and of central financial assistance on the lines which we recommend elsewhere, it will be feasible to maintain in all areas a service which will be reasonable and satisfactory in relation to risks involved.

6.5.4. **We recommend** that a fire operations plan should be prepared by each local fire authority showing the resources, including the water supply available, the cover provided, the back-up services within and outside the area, arrangements for dealing with large outbreaks and special risks, and the training programme. The plan should also include provision for dealing with fire arising from aircraft or other accidents and with fires on ships or fixtures on water, as appropriate.

6.5.5. We have referred in Chapter III to fire fighting facilities maintained by some organisations outside the local authority system. The operations plan should indicate co-operation arrangements to be established with such organisations. The arrangements should be the subject of formal undertakings covering all appropriate requirements including the need to ensure that adequate facilities are maintained and suitable training standards observed in the operation of "independent" fire fighting units.

6.5.6. It has been brought to attention that the provisions of the Fire Brigades Act governing control of operations at a fire can give rise to difficulty, for example where a full-time brigade attends a fire in a retained brigade area, or where specialist equipment is brought to a fire from outside an area. We consider that the statutory provisions should be modified to provide greater flexibility, and in particular to allow of control arrangements being settled in co-operation agreements between local authorities and in agreements, on the lines referred to in the preceding paragraph, between local authorities and other organisations.

Assessment of the Service in each area

6.6.1. It is not part of our task to make a detailed assessment of the strength and adequacy of the fire service in each area. Such an assessment is, however, necessary as a basis for the fire operations plans which we have recommended in par. 6.5.4. It should identify needed improvements in the organisation and resources of local brigades, as well as the extent of the need for assistance agreements and joint service arrangements, and for special provision for dealing with fires of exceptional size or complexity. The assessment of required manpower strength should take account of the necessity to allow for the systematic release of personnel

for training under the arrangements which we propose in Chapter IX without impairing operational efficiency.

6.6.2. The assessment should take account of appropriate standards of fire cover by which areas are graded according to fire risk, the objective being to maintain an acceptable relationship between the degree of risk and the time taken to respond to a fire call. This aspect is further referred to in paragraph 6.10.3.

6.6.3. **We recommend** that an assessment on the foregoing lines should be carried out for each area as soon as possible, and that priority be given to the whole-time brigades in view of the special problems facing those areas and the recommendations which we have made in relation to them. We consider that the assessment should take the form of a report from the local authority to the Minister for Local Government with a statement of their proposals for remedying any deficiencies brought out in the assessment.

6.6.4. The Department should assist in regard to the form and preparation of the reports. The Department should evaluate and co-relate the reports; promote the preparation by all local fire authorities of adequate fire operations plans, including any joint arrangements that may be needed; and arrange the provision of such financial and back-up facilities as may be needed at national level to support necessary strengthening and modernisation programmes.

6.6.5. The advancement of this work will be dependent on the strengthening of the Department's technical staff on the lines recommended in par. 6.10.5.

Fire Service Resources

6.7.1. *Fire Stations:* Our conclusion from assessment of the information submitted by Chief Fire Officers, and from our local visits, is that minimal station needs have been reasonably provided for in virtually all cases. In many instances, however, the accommodation is old and improvised. Some is inadequate and unsuitable. There is a feeling of congestion in most fire stations with little and, in many cases no, provision for lectures or training, or for the storing of equipment.

6.7.2. The information submitted by the Chief Fire Officers in regard to the present situation is summarised in paragraph 3.5.1. The estimates of need and cost will require to be further considered as part of the local assessment which we have recommended for each area. We think however that they are a reasonably good guide. **We recommend** that subject to checking and necessary modification, they should be adopted as a basis for a ten year investment programme in improvement and modernisation of stations. Priority should be given to making good deficiencies in large centres and where existing provision is particularly deficient.

6.7.3. There should be as much consistency and standardisation as possible in fire station design, while allowing for local circumstances and special cases. **We recommend** that the Minister for Local Government should give guidance to local authorities on station design, by issuing guidelines.

6.7.4. New fire stations should include, in addition to accommodation for vehicles and equipment, suitable provision for training and drills. Provision should also be made for

lectures and study having regard to the activities planned for particular stations in the light of our recommendations in Chapter IX on training arrangements. Adequate facilities for clean-up after operations, including showers, should be a normal feature in new stations.

6.7.5. It has been suggested that social and recreational provision for firemen should be made in fire stations. We think it is reasonable and right to envisage some provision of this kind, in both wholetime and retained brigade stations.

6.7.6. **We recommend** that all local authorities should have close regard to the importance of adequate and suitable land provision for fire stations being made in the advanced planning of areas ear-marked for urban expansion.

6.8.1. *Appliances and Equipment:* The impression from our assessment of the position is that unsatisfactory conditions as regards the availability of facilities and trained personnel for the maintenance of appliances are widespread, not least in the full-time brigades. The situation gives some grounds for concern in view of the danger that the effectively available strength of the fleet in some areas could be dangerously reduced while maintenance is carried out under existing conditions or, even, that operationally unreliable appliances might be used in fire fighting.

We recommend that the local assessments which we have recommended in paragraph 6.6.1. should include a critical review of the adequacy and suitability of the arrangements for maintenance and repair of appliances in each area and that steps should be taken urgently to remedy deficiencies.

6.8.2. The age of the fire appliance fleet as a whole is too high for maximum reliability and efficiency. The position in this regard varies from area to area. In some areas ongoing modernisation programmes have been in operation for some time. There is need for programmes of this kind in all areas.

6.8.3. The information supplied by Chief Fire Officers in regard to needs and proposals in this regard have been summarised in paragraph 3.5.1. We would envisage these needs being further assessed as part of the particular assessment which we have recommended for each area. Subject to that **we recommend** that the estimates should be accepted as basis for a ten year programme for investment and modernisation in the appliance fleet, with priority attention to areas of special need.

6.8.4. There is substantial standardisation in appliance types as between different areas. There would, however, be advantages in uniformity and economy from a fuller degree of standardisation. This can be achieved without interfering with the discretion of Chief Fire Officers in matters of detail. **We recommend** that the Department of Local Government should promote such further standardisation of appliances as may be feasible and advantageous and should devise and apply guidelines for the purpose.

6.8.5. Standardisation is especially important in the case of such fittings as fire hydrants (including hydrant markings and pits) in view of the probable greater movement of appliances between areas in the future.

6.8.6. There are differences of opinion in the service in regard to the merits of different types of special equipment, including breathing apparatus, and the training needed for their use. This is another area where standardisation is desirable. **We recommend** that all modern fire fighting units should be equipped with, and capable of using, breathing apparatus and that they should be adequately equipped for dealing with road accidents. We consider that the Department of Local Government should issue general advice on appropriate provision and should promote standardisation in this area generally.

Auxiliary Fire Service

6.9.1. The existing system is described in Chapter III. In general, the association between the AFS and the regular fire service is uneven and in some cases unsatisfactory. Particular features are the variation in the interest and involvement of Chief Fire Officers in AFS work and the unsatisfactory operation of the arrangements for training.

6.9.2. The regular fire service has developed considerably since the AFS was established, as part of the Civil Defence organisation, in 1951. There will be a further strengthening and development in the service if our recommendations are implemented. We believe that with the help of co-operation arrangements, and other improvements which we recommend, the regular service will be capable of dealing with all peace-time contingencies.

We do not consider, therefore, that there is a substantive peace-time role for the AFS in fire fighting. Any attempt to develop a role of that kind for the AFS would be likely to meet with significant opposition from within the regular service.

6.9.3. It is recognised that there is a valuable pool of voluntary service in the civil defence system. It is a resource which could assume a critical importance under certain extreme, but conceivable, conditions. It is not for us to say whether the retention of the AFS as it exists is the best way to provide for such conditions as regards fire fighting. That is a matter of civil defence policy and is outside our terms of reference. We think it appropriate, however, and **recommend,** that the Department of Defence, in consultation with the Department of Local Government, should review the role of the AFS taking account of present day conditions and of the recommendations which we make for the development of the regular fire service.

Functions of the Minister for Local Government

6.10.1. At present the statutory responsibility for providing a fire service for their area rests with the local authorities. We do not recommend any change in this primary responsibility.

6.10.2. In view of his responsibility for local authority matters generally **we recommend** that the Minister for Local Government should have overall central responsibility for the fire fighting and fire prevention services provided by local authorities. He should have a general responsibility to promote efficiency in the fire fighting service. The main justification for this is that the local fire fighting services, in the aggregate, constitute a national service in an area of vital public interest and concern. Moreover, the retention of a fire fighting system based on the county unit underlines the need for central intervention to ensure necessary uniformity and standardisation throughout the service as a whole. There will be need for an impetus to be given to the necessary co-operation arrangements on lines already

recommended. If our recommendations are adopted, the State will have a substantial financial stake in future in the local fire service.

6.10.3. The Department should provide an ongoing appraisal, advisory and information service on all aspects of the organisation, equipment and operation of the fire fighting service. This should include devising and recommending standards of fire cover; and introducing standardised procedures and requirements in regard to training, and drills. It should also advise on design, performance, and uniformity requirements of fire service equipment.

6.10.4. The Department should oversee the review by local fire authorities of the resources of each area as recommended in par. 6.6.3. It should also oversee the preparation of the fire operations plans recommended in par. 6.5.4. as well as the preparation and implementation of the recommended replacement and modernisation programmes for fire stations, appliances and equipment.

6.10.5. We recognise that implementation of these recommendations will mean an expanded advisory role for the Department. It will necessitate a strengthening in the Department's organisation for dealing with fire service matters. An immediate need is to supplement the post of Fire Adviser in the Department with a technical inspectorate in order to establish and maintain liaison with local fire service authorities over the range of functions envisaged for the Department. **We recommend** that this should be done as soon as possible.

Financing arrangements

6.11.1. The programme for replacement and modernisation of stations and equipment will call for substantial capital investment. In absolute terms the investment needed will vary widely from area to area depending on the existing conditions, the geographical area, the degree of urban development and the extent of special fire risks. The burden on the poorer counties is likely to be especially heavy in relation to local financing capacity.

6.11.2. Although it will continue to operate on local lines the fire service fulfils an indispensable national function. It would be unreasonable that the full cost of the recommended investment and strengthening of the service should fall on local finances.

The main local government capital services, including housing, sanitary services and roads, are all heavily subsidised by the State. In the case of housing the entire cost of the programme is to be borne by the State by 1977. We consider that future capital investment in the fire service should attract a measure of financial support from central funds.

6.11.3. **We recommend** that State support for capital investment in the fire service should be introduced by way of subsidy on loan charges. As in the case of sanitary services, it is considered that the rate of subsidy might be in the range of 40% to 60% with the higher rate applying to the poorer counties. The subsidy should apply to the construction and fitting costs of stations in all areas, and to the purchase of fire fighting and other equipment.

It should apply to existing as well as new loans.

Special Services Calls

6.12.1. Non-fire calls on the brigades can be disruptive of fire fighting and fire prevention

work. They can, temporarily, lead to inadequate fire cover being available, particularly in rural areas. On the other hand the fire brigade is, in many cases, the only readily available and reasonably equipped organisation that can be called on to deal with local emergencies.

6.12.2. We consider that the fire service should continue to deal with local emergencies where there is a danger to life or other serious personal risk or where the brigade is specially suited to act. It should not be expected to provide a universal relief service.

We recommend that the local fire authority should maintain a service for dealing with road accidents and other accidents and incidents where there may be a danger of loss of life or serious injury, and where the fire service is the only available organisation equipped to provide assistance.

We recommend that the local fire authority should have a general enabling power for dealing with other local emergencies and appropriate distress situations. Action in these cases should be discretionary, depending, in particular, on demands for fire prevention and fire fighting and on the need to maintain basic fire cover at all times. It should be open to fire authorities to make a financial charge for services provided in this category, particularly where the service might have been provided, as an alternative, by private enterprise.

6.12.3. **We recommend** that there should be statutory provision protecting adequately the position of local fire authorities and of fire service personnel, in any question of liability for damages arising from action taken in response to calls for assistance, including non-fire calls.

Ambulance Service

6.13.1. Since 1971 health functions have been separated from local government and have become the responsibility of the Regional Health Boards. We have considered whether in the circumstances the ambulance services provided by the local fire authorities in Dublin, Dún Laoghaire, Cork and Limerick should in future be operated directly by the health authorities, as in the rest of the country.

6.13.2. Although it is somewhat anomalous, we favour on the whole the continued provision of an accident and emergency ambulance service by the fire brigade authorities in these areas. They should not be expected to provide other ambulance services. The existing arrangement facilitates the training of fire service personnel in first aid and increases the variety and interest of fire service work. The arrangement is familiar to, and convenient for, the public.

6.13.3. **We recommend** that:

(1) the local fire authorities concerned should be recouped by the health authorities all costs involved in connection with the provision of an ambulance service on their behalf, and

(2) the arrangements should be such as to ensure that the effective fire fighting strength is adequate at all times.

Chapter VII

FIRE PREVENTION

General

7.1.1. A serious weakness in the fire service is in the area of fire prevention. The need for a greatly intensified programme calls for action on a number of fronts.

7.1.2. The case for fire prevention work was discussed in Chapter II. Compared with the cost of maintaining a fire brigade and the losses incurred through fire, the cost of an intensified fire prevention programme will be modest. It can be expected to yield a material saving of major proportions, not to mention the saving in human lives and suffering.

The Primary Emphasis

7.2.1. We make various suggestions in this chapter for extending and strengthening the law relating to fire prevention. In our view, however, the main emphasis must be on increasing and maintaining awareness of fire risks and on encouraging a sense of personal responsibility in guarding against them.

7.2.2. Fire risk is a constant danger throughout the community and there must be a real effort to develop and maintain an awareness of the danger in the community at large. It must also be the aim to alert the various sectors of the community—proprietors and management, the different elements of the work force, household heads and other interests—to particular dangers facing them, to underline their responsibilities and to advise them in safety measures. Particular emphasis needs to be placed on educating children and youth at all educational levels in fire safety. There is need too for emphasis on fire safety in training of professional personnel in disciplines connected with the design, construction and fittings of buildings.

Fire Prevention Council

7.3.1. **We recommend** that this task, which is of fundamental importance, should be entrusted to a Fire Prevention Council. We envisage the Council as an independent corporate body to be set up by the Minister for Local Government. It should have representation of the Departments of Local Government and Labour, the Local Authorities, Insurance, Industry and such other interests as are especially concerned with fire safety. The membership should include a person with special knowledge of modern publicity techniques.

7.3.2. The Council should establish and maintain a publicity programme based on intensive and varied use of all appropriate publicity media. It should organise seminars, conferences and courses in fire prevention, arrange displays and prepare and distribute information and propaganda material. The Council should advise the Minister for Local Government in the exercise of his functions in relation to fire prevention, referred to in paragraph 7.18.1. It should give practical assistance to local authorities in their fire prevention work

and should advise in the preparation of the system of safety standards and marks recommended in paragraph 7.16.2. for certain categories of goods.

7.3.3. The Council should have adequate staff and finance to fulfil its functions energetically. We consider that the costs should be shared equally by the Department of Local Government and the fire insurance companies.

7.3.4. To underline the concept of personal responsibility **we recommend** that the onus on the owner/operators of places which are places of employment, or to which the public have access, to take all reasonable measures to guard against fire outbreaks and for the safety of persons in the event of fire outbreak, should be stressed and should, if feasible, be reflected in legislation.

7.3.5. **We recommend** that the role of the Trade Unions in promoting fire-mindedness in workers should also be stressed.

Statutory Controls on Buildings and their Uses

7.4.1. Various defects in the existing statutory controls were mentioned in Part I of this Report. Several different Acts contain relevant provisions (the position will be complicated when the national building regulations become operative). There are no fire safety regulations of general application relating to existing buildings. There are deficiencies in a number of the existing provisions.

7.4.2. We consider that all buildings to which the public have access, all institutions and places of employment and residences other than private dwellings should be brought within a comprehensive system of fire safety inspection and control. **We recommend** that legislation should provide for this to be done. The legislation should provide for the designation of buildings as "controlled buildings". The owners or operators of a controlled building would have to obtain a certificate of fire safety from the local fire authority within a specified time of the building becoming a controlled building, as a condition of continuing its use. The certificate should be for a stated period and should be subject to renewal.

7.4.3. It would be a mistake to introduce a system which is beyond the available resources to implement. The system of fire safety certificates which we recommend can only be introduced progressively as the necessary resources are built-up. It is likely to take a number of years to complete the process. The Minister should be empowered to bring in the system progressively by regulation, applying it to categories of building according to a system of priorities beginning with the places where fire could have especially serious consequences. These include institutions and places to which the public have access in large numbers.

7.4.4. We make recommendations in the following paragraphs for the strengthening of existing control provisions with a view to making them more effective in the period which must elapse before the system of fire safety certificates which we advocate can become fully operative.

Fire Brigades Act, 1940

7.5.1. **We recommend** that the Act should be strengthened to remedy deficiencies which have emerged in its operation, with particular reference to the following:

(i) The local fire authority should have power to inspect any building or other structure (including timber buildings or marquees), or area and not just buildings which are potentially dangerous within the meaning of the existing Act. The power to serve notice requiring that specified works be carried out should be correspondingly widened.

(ii) It should be open to a local fire authority to include in a fire precautions notice provisions relating to such matters as fire extinguishers, alarm and sprinkler systems, fire safety notices and drills.

(iii) In the case of buildings at special risk, or where fire could have especially serious consequences, it should be open to the local fire authority to require that a fire plan be prepared for the building. The plan would include provision for maintenance and use of fire safety equipment and for drills and safety measures generally; for the assignment to an appropriate official of the establishment of specific responsibility for fire safety measures; and for a register of drills and fire safety checks to be kept and a return furnished periodically to the local fire authority.

(iv) The provisions of the Act relating to the service of fire precautions notices should be modified to meet difficulties which have arisen in regard to identification of "proprietors" for the purpose.

(v) The existing penalties for failure to comply with the provisions of a fire precautions notice are not effective and should be raised to a level at which they will constitute a realistic incentive. It is appropriate to envisage a range of penalty, with a requirement that the Court have regard to the circumstances and the estimated cost of compliance with a fire precautions notice. There should also be a realistic range of penalty per day for continuing offences.

(vi) Local fire authorities should keep a register of fire precautions notices served, and the register should be open to public inspection.

Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1963

7.6.1. **We recommend** that doubts about the powers of planning authorities to attach fire conditions to planning permission in non-structural matters (i.e. the provision of fire fighting equipment and the provision of alarm and sprinkler systems) should be removed. It is felt however that it would not be appropriate, or feasible, to use this form of control to stipulate fire drills or other procedural safety measures.

Building Regulations

7.7.1. **We recommend** that the sections of the building regulations dealing with fire standards and safety should be brought into operation at the earliest date possible.

7.7.2. Special concern has been expressed about fire hazard in timber and timber framed buildings. While the regulations will apply to fixed timber structures, they will not apply to mobile structures which are now widely used for residential purposes. Premises of this kind, and marquees, are also commonly used for commercial, entertainment and recreational purposes. We believe that the fire risks associated with these is as great, or greater, than those associated with traditional forms of buildings. **We recommend** that fire safety standards should be prescribed for mobile structures and marquees which are used for the purposes described above, or to which the public have access.

Factories Act, 1955

7.8.1. Pending the application to factories of the system of fire safety certificates **we recommend** that

(*a*) local authorities should set a time limit for compliance with the terms of a notice under section 45 of the Act, and should formally refuse to issue the certificate of means of escape if the notice is not complied with.

(*b*) if the local authority considers that measures additional to those required to meet the provisions of section 45 of the Factories Act are needed, they should so inform the person on whom the notice is being served with an indication that if the additional works are not carried out the matter will be pursued by way of a fire precautions notice under the Fire Brigades Act, 1940.

Office Premises Act, 1958

7.9.1. The provisions of the Act relating to means of escape do not constitute a satisfactory basis for effective fire safety control in offices. The position is complicated by the division of enforcement responsibility between the Minister for Labour and the local authorities.

7.9.2. Pending application to offices of the system of fire safety certificates, local fire authorities should rely on the strengthened power of inspections and control which we recommend for them under the Fire Brigades Act, 1940 to promote better fire safety in offices.

The lines of demarcation between the responsibilities of the Inspectorate of the Department of Labour and of the local fire authorities as regards inspections under the Act, should be clearly and fully defined for operational purposes.

Buildings Subject to Court Licensing

7.10.1. **We recommend** that where applications for the licensing of premises to which the public have access are being heard, the local authorities should be notified in reasonable time, and their evidence should be taken by the Courts in all cases. **We recommend** that arrangements be made to ensure the enforcement of fire safety conditions attached to such licences.

We recommend also that the system of Court licensing of public dance halls should be extended to discotheques and other clubs of the kind.

7.10.2. When the system of fire safety certificates is introduced and applied to these categories of premises the production by the applicant of a certificate should be essential in all cases for the issue of a licence by the Court.

Statutory Control: The Overall Approach

7.11.1. The aim and substance of our recommendations as regards statutory controls in buildings and other places may be summarised as follows:

(1) in the case of new development, improved controls under existing legislation, with the additional control of the building regulations to be introduced as soon as possible.

(2) increased powers to local authorities to inspect premises and require measures to be taken under the Fire Brigades Act, 1940. Increased emphasis on fire safety in the licensing of certain categories of premises by the Courts.

(3) the progressive introduction of a system of fire safety certificates for all appropriate categories of buildings and other premises.

Financial Aspects

7.12.1. In the case of older buildings, in particular, the cost of structural works necessary to meet the requirements of the local fire authority may be high relative to the income being derived from the use of the building. In many cases the cost may be beyond the capacity of the owner or occupier to undertake. There is the prospect of severe personal hardship as well as loss of employment and of economic output arising from the closure of such premises.

7.12.2. We consider that structural works which are in the essential interests of fire safety are not less important than forms of building development and extension for which financial assistance is provided from public funds, for example in the housing, industrial and tourism sectors.

We recommend that a system of grant assistance and, in the case of major works, capital loans towards the cost of structural works carried out under a fire precautions notice, or otherwise with the agreement of the local fire authority, should be introduced.

7.12.3. We consider that the necessary capital for this scheme should be provided by the Department of Local Government through the local fire authorities, that the rate of grant should be 25% and should be shared by the Department and the local fire authority. We think that the scheme of financial assistance might be confined, initially, to structures provided before the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1963, came into operation, but this restriction, and the level of grant aid, should be reviewed from time to time in the light of experience.

Local Advisory Service

7.13.1. Local fire authorities must have adequate statutory powers to compel compliance with necessary fire safety standards in buildings and other premises. Such powers must, however, be used with discretion. The wholesale issuing of fire precautions notices, apart from creating a large volume of legal proceedings and heavy burdens on the Courts in dealing with appeals, could lead to bad relations between owners and occupiers, generally, and the local fire authorities, and to an undermining of essential public support for fire prevention. Every effort must first be made to achieve the necessary results through persuasion and through appeal to enlightened self-interest and responsibility.

7.13.2. **We recommend** that each local fire authority should operate a fire advisory service, with the help of the Fire Prevention Council which we have recommended. People in the local community should be encouraged to use the advisory service to obtain advice on an informal basis about fire risks and fire safety measures in their premises or in their homes.

7.13.3. When the building regulations become operative, new development will be subject to a dual, and substantially overlapping, control under the regulations and under the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1963. The arrangements which will need to be made to harmonise the operation of these two controls should include provision to ensure that uniform practice prevails in the assessment for fire safety of new development projects, and that the Chief Fire Officer is consulted in all appropriate cases. The need for consulta-

tion would apply, for example, to projects of special fire interest, projects where there may be need for safety measures beyond the normal and cases where departures from general standards may be proposed.

Dangerous Substances

7.14.1. Of their nature many dangerous substances constitute a special kind of fire risk. Other kinds of risk, for example, explosion and health risks, are often involved as well. Depending on the nature of the substances and the conditions of storage, there can be acute hazard for firemen in the event of fire outbreak.

7.14.2. The need is recognised for a single piece of legislation to deal comprehensively with dangerous substances, including a special licensing control on the use of premises for the storage of such substances, and the regulation of their transportation.

The necessary statutory framework for such a system is contained in the Dangerous Substances Act, 1972, referred to in paragraph 4.8.1. The Minister for Labour is the appropriate Minister under the Act.

7.14.3. **We recommend** that:

(1) The Act should be brought into operation as soon as possible, in relation to explosives and petroleum, and that the storage and transportation of other substances which present a particular risk of fire outbreak, or of special hazard in the event of such outbreak, should be made subject to control and regulation under the Act.

(2) In the meantime local fire authorities should make full use of their powers, including the improved powers which we recommend under the Fire Brigades Act, 1940, to give priority attention to fire safety in buildings in which dangerous substances are stored.

(3) Local fire authorities should maintain an index of dangerous substance information on premises which are the subject of licence under the Act.

(4) As and when buildings used for the storage of dangerous substances become subject to the system of fire safety certificates recommended, the holding of a certificate should be essential in all cases for the issue of a dangerous substances licence under the 1972 Act.

Safety in Materials and Products

7.15.1. *Building Design and Construction Materials:* Facilities should be provided for the assessment of building design and construction materials, including the testing of existing and new materials, in relation to the fire sections of the building regulations which are to be introduced. We envisage that tests carried out at the request of commercial or construction interests should be subject to a suitable charge.

7.16.1. *Product Standards:* Many commercial products and appliances are actually or potentially a bad fire risk. They include certain types of furniture, fittings and decorations which comprise or contain materials which are highly flammable or which give off dense smoke or toxic fumes under the influence of fire; clothing materials of a kind which can add

to the consequences of personal exposure to fire; types of electrical and gas fittings and appliances including heaters, and a variety of modern products, such as adhesives, aerosols and the like, which are highly flammable. The risks are increased by lack of public knowledge and awareness of them. On the other hand, considerations of economy, design, comfort or convenience will in the judgement of the public outweigh the fire hazard in many instances, even where the hazards are properly understood. In this situation action is needed to provide basic protection for the public against undue risks; to encourage the use of low-risk goods, and to promote public awareness of the need for safety precautions.

7.16.2. **We recommend** as follows:

(*a*) Basic fire safety standards should be devised and enforced for products and appliances which are in common use in the home or in places of public resort and which are a known fire risk. The standards should be such as to ensure that an unacceptable fire risk is not presented under normal conditions of use.

(*b*) As a further measure, a distinction should be made at the point of sale of goods between those which conform to high standards of fire safety and others. Consideration should be given to the introduction of a system of fire safety merit marks for display on products and appliances which conform to specified fire safety standards.

7.16.3. **We also recommend** that formal standards should be introduced for fire fighting and fire protection equipment such as first-aid extinguishers, detector systems, and sprinkler systems which are widely used to give early warning and initial protection in case of fire.

7.16.4. In view of the general concern of the Minister for Industry and Commerce with the commercial sector, and the need to avoid duplicating systems of control and enforcement in relation to products, we consider that the implementation of measures to give effect to the recommendations in paragraphs 7.16.2. and 7.16.3. should be by way of general consumer protection legislation.

7.16.5. It should be a primary emphasis in the publicity work of the Fire Prevention Council to heighten public awareness of the fire hazards associated with the various types of products and appliances; to promote their safe use, and to publicise the use and significance of fire safety standards.

Fire Fighting Research

7.17.1. It is important that the fire service should have the benefit of research aimed at improving fire fighting appliances, equipment, and techniques. It should be the aim to draw as much as possible on the extensive research being carried out in these areas abroad. It may be necessary to supplement this material by limited research in this country to deal with special problems.

7.17.2. **We recommend** that the Minister for Local Government with the assistance of the inspectorate which we have recommended should provide an advisory research service in relation to fire fighting appliances, equipment and techniques and should arrange for such supplementary research in this country as may be required.

Functions of the Minister for Local Government

7.18.1. **We recommend** that the Minister for Local Government should have a responsibility to assess the efficiency of the fire prevention work of local fire authorities. He should be concerned in this regard to promote a necessary uniformity in fire prevention practice and procedure as well as considering the need for new or additional measures, including the periodic review of the fire sections of the proposed Building Regulations. The Minister should assemble from local fire authorities the statistical information necessary to enable him to discharge these functions.

Functions of the Minister for Labour

7.19.1. We envisage that the system of fire safety certificates which we recommend should apply in due course to factories and offices as well as to other categories of buildings. We consider that, at that stage, provisions in legislation relating to work places which would duplicate or overlap the fire safety certificate system, including the provision for certificates of means of escape from factories, should be repealed.

7.19.2. We envisage, however, that the Minister for Labour on foot of his general concern with the safety and welfare of workers should otherwise continue to exercise his advisory and control functions in regard to risks, including fire risks associated with work processes and machinery and with the use of substances in work places.

7.19.3. **We recommend** that the Ministers for Local Government and Labour should establish formal liaison in relation to the fire prevention and fire safety activities of the two Departments.

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Chapter VIII

STRUCTURE AND QUALIFICATIONS

General

8.1.1. We have as a principal objective, having regard to our terms of reference, to give advice on the types of qualification and training appropriate to various strata of the service, and to suggest how these needs might be provided for. We have not attempted to develop our conclusions into specific programmes and arrangements. This we see as a further task for a specialist training body, on which we also make recommendations.

8.1.2. In this Chapter we begin with a consideration of the structure of the fire service and go on to consider functions and duties appropriate to the different strata in the structure and, then, the question of qualifications. We follow with consideration of the recruitment and promotion situation. Training implications are dealt with in Chapter IX.

Structure of the whole-time service

8.2.1. The structure of the whole-time service has been described in Chapter III. It comprises in all eight grades from Fireman to Chief Fire Officer, plus two grades of specialist Fire Prevention Officer.

The full complement of grades is not found in any of the whole-time services. The grade of District Officer is peculiar to Dublin, and that of Leading Fireman to Cork. The grade of Third Officer is found in Dublin and Cork only.

8.2.2. More fundamentally, there are differences between brigades in the qualifications and functions of offices which carry similar titles. This applies to the offices of Second and Third Officer, but there are variations also in the duties performed at the middle grade levels of Station Officer and Sub-Officer. In some cases—District Officer and Sub-Officer in Dublin are examples—there seems to have been a shift in the function of the grades since they were originally introduced.

8.2.3. **We recommend** that the assessment of the strength and adequacy of the service in each area which we recommend elsewhere, should, in the case of the whole-time service, extend to a review of the existing structure. These reviews should be co-ordinated by the Department of Local Government with a view to any necessary strengthening of organisations; and to rationalisation in grade titles, functions and duties both within the whole-time service, and between it and the retained service. This will involve a study in detail of the organisational needs of the service in each of the areas concerned which, we believe, can best be carried out by the local fire authority, the Department, and the staff.

8.2.4. It is recognised that a common grading structure cannot be applied in detail throughout the full-time service. There are distinctive features and differences of scale and kind in

each of the areas and the structure will have to be adapted to meet these. It is possible, however, and useful for our consideration of qualifications and training, to regard the structure of the whole-time service as comprising three strata, each covering a broad band of responsibilities and each comprising one or a number of grades as follows:

(*a*) the senior grades comprising the grades of Chief Fire Officer and one or more "Assistants" at different levels of responsibility.

(*b*) the middle grades comprising the grades of Station Officer and Sub-Officer and related grades;

(*c*) the Fireman grade.

The functions which we consider appropriate to the three strata are set out in paragraphs 8.4.1. to 8.4.7.

Structure of the Retained Service

8.3.1. Although circumstances have changed since it was introduced we believe that a five-rank structure on the lines now existing i.e. Chief Fire Officer, Second Fire Officer, Station Officer, Sub-Officer and Fireman, is fundamentally suited to the needs of the retained service. There is, however, need to review the role of the Second Fire Officer within the structure.

The Second Fire Officer is required under his terms of appointment to undertake such duties as may be assigned to him. His position is not clearly or consistently defined. There are variations in his responsibility and in his relationship to the Chief Fire Officer.

8.3.2. We see the Second Fire Officer as the second-in-command of the local service and as assistant or deputy to the Chief Fire Officer. We consider that the grade should carry a range of responsibilities appropriate to that role in such areas as training and fire prevention. He should act for the Chief Fire Officer in the latter's absence. There would be a broad correspondence between the duties of this office as we envisage it and functions in an appropriate senior grade in the whole-time service. **We recommend** therefore that a grade of Assistant Chief Fire Officer should be introduced in the retained service in place of the existing grade of Second Fire Officer and that the status of the new position should be related to a corresponding level in the whole-time service.

8.3.3. It has been suggested that a number of different classes of firemen should be introduced, perhaps as many as three classes. The gradings would depend mainly on length of service and experience. The aim would be to increase interest among firemen and to give some recognition to seniority. Having considered the matter we do not believe that such functional distinctions as exist between firemen necessitate, or justify, a grading system of this kind. We do not consider that there is a strong case for the introduction of a grade of Leading Fireman in the retained service.

8.3.4. Subject, therefore, to the change which we recommend in the position of the Second Fire Officer we see no need to alter the existing structure of the retained service.

Functions within the Service

8.4.1. It is convenient for our present purposes to consider the structure both for the whole-

time and retained service in three functional strata—the senior grades, the middle grades and the fireman grade.

8.4.2. *Senior Grade Functions*—The functions discharged by the senior grades include the following:

> organisation and control including control of fire operations, within the local authority system, of the fire service for the area; advising on the necessary strength of the service; devising and supervising implementation of programmes in training and fire prevention; carrying out inspections other than routine ones and conducting related correspondence, negotiations and enforcement proceedings; advising on fire aspects of development proposals including applications for planning permission referred to the service for advice; control and supervision of other grades.

8.4.3. *Middle Grade Functions*—The functions discharged by the middle grades include the following:

> operating a watch or station; taking charge of responses to calls; conducting fire fighting operations and writing reports thereon; conducting or supervising training; supervising station work; carrying out fire prevention inspections.

8.4.4. *Fireman Functions*—The fireman's function is to fight fire under supervision; to attend at fires and training; to carry out station duties; to assist in fire prevention work and attend other calls.

8.4.5. We regard the foregoing as a valid account of a general kind of the work which should be done at different levels in the service. The basic functions and responsibilities are broadly similar in the whole-time and in the retained service. This applies to senior full-time positions. It applies also, in essentials, to the intermediate grades even though there may be significant differences as regards particular duties and responsibilities. For example, in the retained service, Station Officers and Sub-Officers have a special function in communications and mobilization since it is at their houses, normally, that fire calls are received. On the other hand there is less emphasis at this level in the retained service on station work, and on drills and training, and there are no watches to be operated.

8.4.6. The fireman in the retained service operates in different circumstances. He does not have experience of ambulance operations. Accepting that these differences exist and that they are significant, the function of the fireman is basically the same, whether he be whole-time or retained.

8.4.7. We have included in the fireman's functions a reference to fire prevention work. Firemen have been little involved in such work in the past. We believe that with suitable training whole-time firemen can play an important supporting role in an intensified fire prevention programme. It is better that they should be involved in such work than that they should be engaged to an unnecessary degree on station duties of a repetitive and uninspiring nature.

Qualifications and Suitability

8.5.1. We have considered the types of qualification and training appropriate for fire service personnel, bearing in mind the functions arising at different levels as discussed in the

previous section. A guiding principle in our approach has been the need to ensure that all ranks have on appointment, or on becoming operational, a requisite experience and training (academic and practical, as may be appropriate) to fill the office competently in all respects.

8.5.2. The first requirement at all levels is physical fitness and personal suitability. Special qualities of decision making under difficult conditions, dealing with stress situations and providing leadership, as well as qualities of courage and dedication are needed, in different degrees, in fire service personnel at different levels.

We recommend that future arrangements for recruitment of fire service personnel should include appropriate assessment of personal as well as of physical fitness.

Senior Grade Qualifications

8.6.1. Appointees at the level of the senior grades should have appropriate knowledge and technical skill in the following areas, in particular,

(i) *Science of Fire Processes*
Heat and combustion and the properties and behaviour of fire.

(ii) *Practical Firemanship*
Fire appliances equipment
Fire ground operations
Water supply systems
Hydraulics
Communications.

(iii) *Fire Protection*
Building construction
Detection and extinction systems
Means of escape
Laws, regulations, codes.

(iv) *Administration*
Estimates, store-keeping
Personnel
Training
Leadership.

8.6.2. At present, as discussed in paragraph 5.3.2., appointees to position as Chief Fire Officer, and to certain other senior positions in the whole-time service, must possess an engineering or architectural degree. The senior officers concerned, on appointment, have a high academic training in engineering or architecture followed by practical experience of varying kinds over a number of years, mainly in civil or mechanical engineering works in the local authority service or in the armed forces. We consider that the present qualifications do not fully reflect the particular requirements for the office. The competence and the skills of the senior officers concerned in fire engineering and fire prevention come mainly from experience on the job and from personal study including, in some cases, attendance at courses and attainment of specialist qualifications. That Chief Fire Officers have in such circumstances succeeded in bringing their own performance and that of their service to levels that have been achieved is a considerable credit to them. But it is basically unsatis-

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factory that most Chief Fire Officers come to the local authority fire service with little or no previous indepth experience of it.

8.6.3. It is evident that the particular technical knowledge and expertise required in the senior positions as outlined above in paragraph 8.6.1. is not adequately provided for, and in some respects is not provided for at all, in the normal course in engineering or in architecture leading to a first degree. This applies generally to the area of firemanship and knowledge of of fire protection, and to the understanding of the physical and chemical elements of fire. In other respects the first degree course may involve a level of expertise which is unnecessary, or irrelevant, from the point of view of the fire service.

8.6.4. We consider that:

(i) the senior grades in the service should carry a qualification which reflects the high level of specialist expertise which is essential for the successful discharge of the functions described in par. 8.4.2. and

(ii) the existing qualification is not in all respects adequate or suitable for the grades in question.

We recommend that a technological qualification should be devised and introduced to meet the criteria at (i) above.

8.6.5. We further consider that there should be a standard technological qualification for the senior grades of Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

We recommend that the specialist training body recommended in Chapter IX should advise on the appropriate qualification and on how it might best be provided for within the third level educational system. The standard of the qualification, as we envisage it, would be such as to require a level of expertise in fire engineering (technology) not lower than the level normally associated with a primary degree qualification in a technical discipline.

8.6.6. **We recommend** that all appointees to the senior grades should have a fire service background. For the position of Chief Fire Officer we consider that this should comprise five years fire service experience including three years senior grade experience. For other grades at the senior level there should be two years experience at Station Officer or higher level.

Middle Grade Qualifications

8.7.1. For the middle grades of Station Officer and Sub-Officer specialist knowledge and experience is required in the following areas:

—fire fighting theory and practice, and legislation,

—instruction techniques and drills,

—hydraulics,

—fire fighting appliances and equipment (including special equipment),

—communications,

—elements of fire safety, fire protection, and prevention,

—station management, supervision of personnel, clerical (reporting, records, etc.).

8.7.2. **We recommend** that the Specialist Training Body recommended in Chapter IX should devise appropriate technical qualifications for these grades and should advise on arrangements for related training. Account should be taken of existing educational facilities and the facilities which we recommend in Chapter IX should be provided in a fire service Training Centre. To cater for differences between the grades of Station Officer and Sub-Officer it is necessary to envisage a number of different courses being devised at these levels. In general those for full-time positions will be more intensive than those for positions in the retained service.

8.7.3. All appointments to these grades should have appropriate fire service background. This would be five years experience in the case of a Station Officer, including at least two years as a Sub-Officer, and three years experience for Sub-Officer.

Fireman Education and Expertise

8.8.1. With the development of the secondary education system, it is realistic to think in terms of a basic educational level of intermediate or group certificate level, or equivalent, for fireman recruits to the full-time brigades. Recruits who wish to make a career of the service will need an educational base of that order if they are to be in a position to make the most of the opportunities.

8.8.2. We envisage that no recruit fireman would become operational until he had completed satisfactorily a course of preparation in appropriate subjects. These include fire fighting methods and procedures, elementary aspects of water supply, hydraulics, construction, and first aid and other elements of firemanship.

8.8.3. The safety of a fireman, and that of his colleagues, may be unduly at risk if he engaged in operational work at an age when he no longer has the special degree of physical fitness which is necessary for such work. It is desirable that an age limit should be established for operational firemen. We consider that there should be a limit of 60 years of age at the outside. Engagement of firemen of 45 years or more on tasks requiring the use of breathing apparatus or other equipment which may involve special strain should be subject to annual medical examination.

Recruitment

8.9.1. The existing recruitment system is explained in Chapter V. Firemen are recruited directly by the local fire authorities. Higher positions for which no professional qualification has been prescribed are filled by promotion, except for the position of Second Fire Officer in the retained service. That position is filled by appointment made by the local fire authorities by open competition. In practice, the position is generally filled from existing fire service personnel. The position of Chief Fire Officer, and the positions of Second Fire Officer and Fire Prevention Officer in whole-time brigades, for which professional qualifications have been declared, are filled on the recommendations of the Local Appointments Commission.

8.9.2. For practical purposes, therefore, a two-tier system of recruitment operates—at the fireman level and at the level of Chief Fire Officer (and analogous positions in the whole-time service).

8.9.3. In the future, if our recommendations are adopted, fire service experience will be among the qualifications for all positions above that of fireman. Appointees to those positions must, therefore, have a fire service background, and the most senior positions will be filled, as a rule by a process of advancement of personnel recruited at fireman level. The training implications of this are considered in Chapter IX.

8.9.4. We have considered whether it is desirable to retain provision for a second tier of entry to the service. Provided the arrangements which we have recommended for qualifications and training are put into effect, we believe that it will be possible to meet the foreseeable manpower needs of the service at the middle and senior grades from among serving personnel, and personnel recruited in the future at fireman level. In this situation there is no need, strictly, to provide for a second tier of entry. **We recommend** accordingly in favour of a single tier entry system at fireman level. It could become necessary in the future to widen the field of recruitment in certain circumstances. This would be the case if, for example, a system of qualifications and training such as we recommend were not applied, or if difficulties arose in filling some vacancies or in recruiting particular specialist skills. Such considerations apart it may well be in the long term interests of the service that there should be provision for a balanced infusion of outside talent. We have concluded on this point that while we do not envisage a second tier of entry as an initial feature of the new structure, the position should be reviewed when there is some experience of the operation and effects of the arrangements which we recommend in regard to qualifications, training and promotion.

Promotion and Training

8.10.1. We support the McKinsey recommendation that opportunity should be created for promotion to Chief Fire Officer within the service. Enhanced promotion possibilities are likely to bring improvement in morale and application in the lower ranks, as well as enhancing the prospects of attracting to the service a greater quantity of high quality recruits with an interest in the service as a career. It will also help to ensure that future heads of the service will come to office with a full range of prior experience and highly developed skills in both operational and prevention work.

8.10.2. A successful promotion system will depend heavily on suitable qualifications and related training arrangements being devised and applied for all ranks. It will be essential to have opportunity for all ranks to acquire the technical qualifications for the next highest grade. This aspect is dealt with in Chapter IX.

8.10.3. We consider that mobility within the fire service is in the interest of efficiency. **We recommend** that personnel who become eligible for promotion should be able to seek it in any brigade in which a vacancy arises. To this end vacancies should be filled by competition open to all eligible personnel.

8.10.4. The majority of retained firemen may not be interested in a full-time career in the service. We believe, however, that a number have both the interest and the capacity to reach senior rank given the opportunity, and that possibilities for advancement should be opened up for them. We refer to the contribution that special training might make to achieving this aim in Chapter IX. As a general rule the normal avenue of advancement in the service for the retained man must be by way of joining the whole-time service at fireman level. We **recommend** that this avenue should be opened up for all who have the prescribed educa-

tional and other qualifications. We consider that existing residential restrictions on applications for whole-time fireman posts, where they apply, should be removed.

Discipline, Conduct, etc.

8.11.1. In common with other emergency services, the success of fire fighting operations may depend, not only on the skill and dedication of the staff involved, but also on the strength of the chain of command and the willingness of front-line operatives to respond fully to orders by superior officers. This requires a unique relationship and understanding between officers and firemen in both on-station and operational work. In the interests of public safety, and of maintaining the high level of public esteem enjoyed by the fire service, we believe that all personnel should be in no doubt as to what may be required of them in any given situation. Accordingly, **we recommend** that a standard code of conduct and discipline should be devised for all ranks following appropriate consultation.

Reporting Position of the Chief Fire Officer

8.12.1. We have considered the recommendation in the report on *Strengthening the Local Government Service*, by McKinsey & Co. Inc. Management Consultants, that, in county organisations, the Chief Fire Officer should report to the County Manager and be fully responsible for the service under his control.

8.12.2. The existing arrangements by which the County Engineer has overall responsibility for supervision and co-ordination of local authority technical services has definite advantages. There is close inter-relationship, in financial and operational matters, between the fire service and other local authority technical services e.g. planning, sanitary services, housing, roads, general purposes. The existing arrangement facilitates co-ordination in the use of local authority manpower and of maintenance and other shared facilities. We have taken account of these considerations.

8.12.3. The Chief Fire Officer has a status similar to that of a Chief Assistant County Engineer and is in a somewhat similar reporting position to the County Engineer, the head of the local authority technical staff. As indicated in the consultants' report referred to, there is some doubt in practice about the working relationship. Whereas the Chief Assistant County Engineer is required by his conditions of appointment to work under the "direction and supervision" of the County Engineer, the Chief Fire Officer is required to work under his "general supervision".

8.12.4. The specialist skills required in a Chief Fire Officer are distinctive in important respects from those of other branches of engineering. We have stressed the importance of developing these specialist skills in our recommendation that a special technological qualification should be devised for the post of Chief Fire Officer and other top fire service positions.

8.12.5. We have recommended that the strength of the service be basically reviewed in each area and there should be an intensification of prevention work backed by more effective legislation and by new training and promotion arrangements. The final responsibility at technical level for preparing proposals and programmes in these areas; for dealing with management and with Councils in relation to them, and for carrying through local policy would, we believe, most appropriately rest with the Chief Fire Officer as the chief officer of

the fire service. We think also that he should be responsible at technical level for the day to day activities of the service in operational and fire prevention matters, and for directly related matters including provision and maintenance of sub-stations and equipment. He should have a corresponding financial responsibility.

We recommend that the Chief Fire Officer should report directly to the Manager in relation to the aforementioned matters.

8.12.6. The fire service inter-acts, as mentioned, with various other local authority services, particularly in relation to planning and water supplies. We envisage that the Chief Fire Officer will be consulted in all appropriate cases and that his recommendations will be taken into account within the system by which the overall responsibility of the County Engineer is exercised in those areas.

8.12.7. We stress the importance of clear arrangements being made to ensure that the new reporting relationship of the Chief Fire Officer in fire fighting and fire prevention operates effectively. This applies particularly to such matters as overall financial management; availability for fire service work of local authority personnel who are retained firemen; the use of shared services and facilities, such as machinery and building maintenance; the pooling of resources in dealing with local flooding or other emergencies.

8.12.8. The view has been expressed in the Working Party that it would be better to defer a decision on the question of the reporting position of the Chief Fire Officer until decisions are taken on the recommendations of the consultants on the future management structure of local authorities, with particular reference to the role of the County Engineer. The majority of the Working Party do not share this view. The majority view is that the change in the Chief Fire Officer's reporting relationship will have significant, but not fundamental implications at management level; that the change is in the interests of the more effective operation of the fire service, and that it should be made as soon as possible—in advance, if necessary, of decisions on the future management structure.

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Chapter IX

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

General

9.1.1. We have stressed in Chapter VIII the need, if promotion avenues are to be opened up, for a comprehensive programme of education and training for the fire service. Even more important, such a programme is necessary to ensure that the expertise essential to the most efficient operation of the service and to the safety of personnel, is developed and maintained at all levels.

9.1.2. We have recommended that a new technological qualification for the senior grade positions should be devised and that it should be provided for within the third-level educational system.

Technical training for firemen and middle grades will be needed in the following respects:

(i) Induction training, with particular reference to practical firemanship, for new appointees;

(ii) continuation training, theoretical and practical, to maintain and improve performance standards;

(iii) courses to deal with specialist aspects and to raise the level of skills generally;

(iv) courses by which personnel will be assisted in obtaining qualifications for advancement.

9.1.3. To devise a training programme to meet these various needs over the range of requisite skills, as described in paragraphs 8.4.1.–8.4.7. for the different grades, will be a complex task. **We recommend** that it should be undertaken as a matter of urgency. Special arrangements will be needed to devise, guide and carry out the programme.

Fire Service Training Council

9.2.1. **We recommend** that a Fire Service Training Council should be set up to advise on the manpower, educational and training needs of the fire service with particular reference to the following:

1. advising on qualifications, and training programmes and arrangements, for fire service grades, based on analysis of job content, taking account of the considerations which we have put forward in Chapter VIII ;
2. advising on the best arrangement for a third-level technological qualification for senior grades, in consultation with the appropriate educational authorities;
3. acting as an advisory body in the organisation and operation of courses at the Training Centre—the provision of which we recommend in paragraph 9.3.10—and in the preparation of a programme of central and local training for all grades.

9.2.2. We referred in Chapter VI to the Local Government Manpower Committee which has been set up to advise the Minister for Local Government on the manpower needs of local authorities generally, and on the promotion of measures to meet those needs. We recognise that the examination of fire service training needs and the wider examination of local authority manpower questions should be co-related. **We recommend** that the Fire Service Training Council should operate in association with the Local Government Manpower Committee. We stress the urgency of the need for a fire service training programme and the distinctive features of that need. We consider that arrangements should be made to ensure that the work of the Training Council will be facilitated and expedited in every way possible.

9.2.3. **We recommend** that the Fire Service Training Council should have representation of the Department of Local Government; Local Authorities; Chief Fire Officers Association; Trade Unions representing fire service interests; the Department of Education and other appropriate interests. Association with the Council, on an occasional or consultancy basis, of an expert from a training establishment abroad would, we consider, be very helpful, especially in the early stages.

9.2.4. It will be the function of the Training Council to devise courses leading to qualifying examinations for full-time positions. Regard must be had in this respect to the ongoing operational needs of the service, which will rule out prolonged absences from work in many cases. It is, in any case, desirable that academic training should be mixed with practical application. Consideration should be given, therefore, to basing training, including preparatory courses for technical examinations, on modules of study, attendance at courses, and operational work.

9.2.5. In the retained service, availability for training and intensive study is severely limited by work commitments. We are convinced that training for retained firemen must be provided for locally in the stations and through attendance at evening and weekend courses at convenient centres. **We recommend** that such courses should be organised and suitable provision made for them, including lecture and study facilities, at regional centres.

9.2.6. We have referred in paragraph 8.10.4. to the probability that a limited number of retained personnel will be interested in making a full-time career of the fire service, and to the desirability of opening up possibilities for them. **We recommend** that careful consideration be given to the contribution which personal study, including the use of programme learning, and correspondence courses might have in preparing such personnel for advancement in the service.

9.2.7. We have heard of reluctance on the part of some employers to release retained firemen for operational or training work. Releases can cause inconvenience especially where key employees are concerned, or where the number of employees is small. We believe, however, that employers generally will appreciate that firemen are providing an essential civic service for the protection of lives and property, in the community at large, and will be responsive to an approach for co-operation. On a practical level, the advantage of the presence on the staff of an organisation or business of a trained fireman is a considerable offset against the inconvenience which his absence on operational work or on essential

training may cause on occasions. **We recommend** that the Training Council should, as part of the preparation and organisation of training courses, seek the co-operation of employers in releasing retained fire service personnel for operational and training work. The assistance of the employer representative bodies, including the FUE, the CII, RGDATA, IFA, and of Trade Unions should be sought in this regard.

Need for Central Training

9.3.1. Holders of senior grade positions should have opportunity, through periodic attendance at seminars and courses, to exchange views and experiences; to keep abreast of developments in their field and to obtain guidance on aspects of fire service administration of concern to them. We envisage that it will be possible and appropriate to arrange the necessary courses through one of the existing training institutes.

9.3.2. As recommended in paragraph 9.2.5. training of retained firemen should be provided for in local stations and in regional centres. It is desirable in principle that all retained fireman recruits should have the benefit of an initial central training course before becoming operational. It may be difficult to achieve this in practice in view of the problems already referred to as regards the release of retained firemen. We consider, however, that central training for retained fireman recruits should be introduced, if it proves feasible to do so, on a uniform basis, and that the possibilities in this regard should be further explored in the light, *inter alia*, of the response to the approach which we have recommended should be made to employer and union interests with a view to securing their co-operation in the release of retained firemen for training and operational work.

9.3.3. Apart from the foregoing aspects there remains a substantial training need for whole-time firemen, and for middle grade personnel in both the whole-time and retained services, which we think can only be provided for by an expanded central training programme. Particular importance attaches to the training of the middle grades. They are usually in charge of fire operations. On their skills and judgement depend the success of the rescue and fire fighting operations and the safety of the personnel under their control. Qualities of leadership, judgement and decision-making are called for, which underline the distinctive training needs of the grades concerned.

9.3.4. For the purpose of advising on how the central training need might be provided for, we have made a tentative assessment of the extent of the need. The complement of personnel at fireman and middle grade levels in the service at 31st March, 1973 was as follows:

whole-time station officers	52
whole-time sub-officers	38
whole-time firemen	505
retained sub. and station officers ..	396
retained firemen	1,525

The annual intake of whole-time firemen between 1964 and 1973 was 44 on average, but the figure varied from 8 to 82. The average annual intake of retained firemen over the same period was 87 approximately. The average rate of annual promotion to the grades of sub-officer and station officer between 1968 and 1973 was 6 and 6 respectively, in respect of whole-time brigades, and 12 and 18 for retained brigades.

9.3.5. On the foregoing basis we envisage a need for the following courses as a basis for a central training programme:

Whole-time Fire Brigades

Type of Course	Number of Weeks
Two courses of 12 weeks each for recruit training to cater for about 20 personnel per course	24
Four 1 week refresher courses for all full-time firemen—20 per course	4
One course, training sub-officers on appointment: to include leadership, station routine, report writing etc.	4
One course for existing sub-officers: to include fire ground procedure, report writing, fire prevention, special services, control room procedure	4
One course for Station Officers: to be of more advanced level than that of sub-officers with emphasis on fire prevention	4

Retained Personnel

Type of Course	
Four advanced courses of two weeks each for Sub-Officers and Station Officers in instructional techniques, fire ground controls, special risks etc.	8

9.3.6. Specialist courses will also be needed for fire service personnel e.g. in fire prevention and in training of instructors, as well as courses to prepare firemen and sub-officers for qualifying examinations for advancement.

Training in particular aspects of fire service work such as driving, repairs and maintenance, breathing apparatus, road accidents and other emergencies, and dangerous substances will also need to be provided for. Reference has been made in Chapter III to the fact that a number of organisations and businesses maintain a fire fighting capacity of their own and undertake fire prevention work. A number of these have training needs for their fire operatives. We believe that these needs should be provided for as far as possible in the central training programme. Finally facilities will be needed for the accommodation of central courses, including courses to be organised by the Fire Prevention Council, to promote fire safety in industry, trade and business, at management, professional and other levels, and in the public at large.

Training Centre

9.3.7. We have considered whether a national Fire Service Training School, to be run by the Department of Local Government or by an independent body, should be set up to meet the central training needs outlined above. A central training facility is a common feature in the fire service systems which we have looked at abroad, but the arrangements vary widely.

9.3.8. Retained firemen number 1,525 and make up 59% approximately of all service personnel. It is envisaged that their training needs will be provided for locally and at regional centres on lines already recommended. The central training need relates essentially to the requirements of some 1,000 personnel, of whom approximately 600 are full-time personnel

and 400 are middle-grade personnel in the retained service. There is an annual recruitment and turnover rate of some 86 in those categories. Of the 600 whole-time personnel at fireman and middle-grade levels 76% are attached to the Dublin and Dún Laoghaire fire services.

9.3.9. We have recommended in par. 9.2.1. that a programme of training for all grades should be prepared by the Fire Service Training Council. We believe that a substantial contribution to implementation of the programme can be made through the established schools of technical education and other existing training institutions. It will be for the Training Council to examine and advise on the possibilities and arrangements in this regard.

9.3.10. The main core of the need for central training relates, however, to training in various aspects of practical firemanship. We are satisfied that neither the facilities nor the environment essential to such training can be provided except in a special training centre. We have considered whether, as an alternative to provision of such a centre in this country, sizeable numbers of fire service personnel of all ranks might be sent abroad for training on an ongoing basis. This will probably be a necessary means of providing training in certain specialisms where the numbers involved are few, but we do not consider that it would be a practicable basis on which to plan for training in the service as a whole.

We recommend that a national Fire Service Training Centre should be established. The function of the Centre will be to provide training facilities and courses for fire service personnel in accordance with the training programme.

9.3.11. The following are among the facilities which would be needed in a national Training Centre:

> Lecture theatre with modern aids; syndicate rooms, library and study room; recreation room; cooking and dining facilities; locker rooms, wash rooms with showers and toilets; drying rooms; instructors rooms and office accommodation; separate building for breathing apparatus training, heat and smoke chambers; appliances with garage accommodation; drill yard and tower, equipped fire ground, simulated buildings, installations room (fire alarms, sprinklers, extinguishers).

9.3.12. It may be asked on purely economic grounds whether the capital investment required for the setting up of a separate Training Centre with all appropriate facilities including specialist equipment, and teaching and training aids as outlined above, can be justified at present having regard to the numbers of personnel to be provided for. Our view is that the need for central training is a clear and urgent need, which must be met, if there is to be efficiency of performance in the fire service of the future. The value of efficiency in the fire service is difficult to quantify but when account is taken of the mounting fire losses referred to earlier and the importance of fire prevention in controlling the losses, we have no doubt that the argument in any cost/benefit assessment of our recommendation would be tipped firmly in favour of a central training facility being provided urgently and by the best means feasible.

Possibility of Joint Provision

9.3.13. With a view to spreading initial and operating costs we have considered whether

joint provision might be made for central fire service training and for kindred training needs. We have discussed two particular possibilities:

(*a*) joint provision for central fire service training and for needed training facilities for the Dublin fire service;

(*b*) joint provision through extension of the facilities at Ratra House, Dublin, so as to provide for fire service as well as civil defence training.

There would be advantages in the opportunity for beneficial links between the training activity and the practical operation of a fire service. On the other hand it is essential that the centre should be physically separate from any operational station and that it should be seen to be outside the control of a particular fire brigade authority.

On the whole we think the solution at (*b*), if it were feasible, would be more appropriate and satisfactory. Central training courses for retained station officers and sub-officers are already accommodated in the Civil Defence School in addition to civil defence and ambulance training. The development of a general facility there for central fire service training would be a logical extension of the existing activities. It is understood that the existing accommodation and facilities at the school are heavily taxed, in particular by ambulance training requirements, and the possibilities for extension limited, though not absolutely.

If the physical (and possible environmental) problems can be overcome, the adaptation and extension of the Civil Defence School to enable the recommended Fire Service Training Centre to be established there would, in our view, have much to commend it. We consider that the possibility should be specially examined.

Financing and Control

9.3.14. We envisage that the capital costs involved in the provision and basic equipment of a national training centre for the fire service should be fully met by the State in view of the national significance of an efficient service and the fundamental dependence of efficiency on training.

The school will be of direct benefit to local fire authorities in discharging the fire service responsibilities which rest directly on them. It is appropriate that fees should be payable for attendance of personnel at courses in the centre. We consider that there should be an element of State support in this as well, so that the fees payable by local authorities are kept to an acceptable level by reference to fees payable for technical and vocational courses of a comparable level in existing educational institutions.

9.3.15. The Training Centre should be under the control of the Minister for Local Government as the Minister with central responsibility for the service and should be under the immediate control of a suitably qualified Director. We have already advised that the Fire Service Training Council should have an advisory role in the operation of the centre. This would apply to the settling of the annual programme for the Centre and organisation of courses. We envisage that instructors for the centre would be provided by the Department of Local Government, local authorities and by outside bodies and organisa-

tions, including educational authorities who may be in a position to release personnel on an agreed basis for the purpose.

9.3.16. Depending on the location decided on, it may not be essential to include residential accommodation in the Training Centre initially. It is, however, desirable to allow for the future addition of such accommodation.

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Chapter X

MISCELLANEOUS AND TRANSITIONAL MATTERS

Fire Fighting and Water Supplies

10.1.1. We have given some consideration to the water supply position as it affects the fire fighting service. Most Chief Fire Officers have expressed the view that the water supply in some of the urban parts of their areas is inadequate for fire fighting. We are aware that in practice fire fighting operations in towns have been inhibited in some particular cases by water shortages. Those were a very small proportion of all operations and were mainly operations at large fires.

10.1.2. The piped water supply in many urban areas would not be sufficient in all cases to deal satisfactorily with a major outbreak, but we believe that urban supplies by and large are reasonably adequate to meet normal fire fighting demands. This condition reflects limitations in the storage and/or delivery capacities of the water systems concerned. We are aware that in many cases schemes to augment existing supplies or to service new areas are in course of planning or construction under an expanded sanitary services programme and this should lead to a progressive improvement in the supply position.

10.1.3. While it is rarely practicable on economic grounds to relate design capacity to the maximum theoretical demand for fire fighting, the rapid increase in the equivalent per capita consumption of water is reducing the gap between optimum design requirements for fire fighting and the requirements for other purposes. On a reasonable assessment, modern water systems in the larger towns are usually adequate for practical fire fighting needs because of their physical size and the volumes required to meet domestic and industrial needs. In the smaller towns design volumes related to normal needs may not be sufficient to provide adequate fire cover in all cases.

10.1.4. The limitations on the available piped supply in particular situations can often be made good, by drawing on non-piped sources, including open water, and supplies stored on site. The fire operations plan for each area should include provision, as appropriate, for drawing on alternative sources as well as for the most effective use of the available piped supply, for example through arrangements for diverting flows.

10.1.5. We are concerned that the improvement in urban water systems which are unsatisfactory for fire fighting and which cannot be supplemented adequately from other sources, should be expedited as much as possible. We are also concerned that in deciding on the balance between cost and supply standards in the design of urban water schemes full account should be taken not only of the relevant economic and technical constraints but also of the degree and nature of the fire risks and the availability or otherwise of alternative water sources, so that the fire fighting cover provided is, in all the circumstances, adequate and reasonable. Reference has already been made to the particular importance of standardisation of hydrants for fire fighting purposes.

10.1.6. For schemes in rural areas the Department of Local Government has laid down guidelines for local authorities. These provide that trunk mains in rural areas should not be designed primarily for fire fighting purposes but that, where considerations of cost allow, due weight should be given to fire fighting requirements. Any special allowance for particular fire risks in rural areas should be decided in the light of the economics of the scheme; feasible pressures; the available fire fighting equipment and the possibility of alternative solutions such as the use of other water sources.

10.1.7. We believe that the guide lines laid down by the Department are basically sound. The extended use of water tenders has eased the fire fighting problem in many rural areas. For dealing with larger fires it is important to identify available surface water sources and to make any arrangements that may be needed to enable these to be used in an emergency. The possibility of including provision for some storage capacity for fire fighting purposes in water supply schemes in rural areas is also worth considering.

10.1.8. **We recommend**

(1) that in the fire operations plan which we have recommended for each area, particular attention should be paid to water resources, including public piped supplies, and to measures to ensure their most effective use in various circumstances; to alternative sources (such as rivers and streams, lakes, and the sea) and their accessibility, and to the scope for alleviating immediate problems by means such as the provision of independent on-site storage capacity where particular fire risks occur;

(2) that the views of the Chief Fire Officer should be taken into account in regard to the design of all new or improved water systems, and in the settling of local priorities for improvement in existing water systems, including such emergency measures for supplementing supplies as may be necessary and feasible.

Communications

10.2.1. As with any emergency service, efficiency in the fire service depends largely on good communications. This applies both to the links between the public and the service, to inter-service links, and to the internal communications within the service.

10.2.2. In many rural areas, telephones are still non-automatic. In all 14% of subscribers are connected to 578 manual exchanges. In those cases it is not possible to dial the fire service directly, but through the operator only. Delays can arise before a call is identified as an emergency one where there is no emergency call system in operation. Another difficulty is that there may be a delay before a call is connected to the "right" fire station. This is most likely in the larger telephone exchange areas, which straddle county boundaries. Even a short delay, caused by a communications problem of this kind, in the time taken for a fire appliance to reach a fire may mean a radical difference in the fire situation to be dealt with.

10.2.3. The Department of Posts and Telegraphs have proposals for extending the automatic telephone system so that by 1978 all areas will be covered by automanual exchanges in 16 centres. Already 86% of all telephone lines are linked to 14 automanual exchanges. The exchange areas do not coincide with county boundaries.

10.2.4. For maximum efficiency fire service calls should be routed automatically and with all possible expedition to the appropriate county fire service headquarters and thence to the

fire station covering the area in which the fire occurs. To be effective a system such as this needs to be based on reserved telephone circuits linking the outlying stations to the fire service headquarters and the headquarters to a control centre to which all fire calls would be routed from exchanges. We are advised that there is no technical problem in introducing such a system.

10.2.5. There would be obvious advantages in linking a system of fire service control centres to the 16 exchange centres envisaged by the Department of Posts and Telegraphs. The telephone exchange areas would cut across fire authority areas and fire cover arrangements. A particular exchange centre might cover several, or parts of several, counties. We do not think that in itself this is a basic objection to linking the exchange centres and fire service control centres, as a general rule, provided the fire service control centres were manned by personnel with a specialised knowledge of the arrangements for fire service cover within the whole of the exchange area.

Fire service control centres are already in use in Dublin, Drogheda, and Dundalk areas. Calls for the fire service in those areas are extended over special circuits to the main fire stations, which act as relay and co-ordination centres.

We recommend that a system of fire service control centres, on the lines discussed in the preceding paragraphs, should be established and that the system should be integrated, as far as possible, with the system of automatic exchanges being developed by the Department of Posts and Telegraphs.

10.2.6. In parts of the country in which telephones are not available for public use, people have no effective means of getting in touch with emergency services in a hurry. Accepting that there are special difficulties in providing telephone services in sparsely populated areas we consider that it should be a minimum aim in the development of the service to provide a public call-box within reasonable reach of all who might have need of it. What constitutes a reasonable distance for this purpose will vary according to the circumstances but we would suggest as a general guideline that people should not have to travel more than three miles in order to be in a position to get in touch with the emergency services. We suggest that ways and means of offsetting losses incurred on the operation of call boxes provided essentially as an emergency service in remote areas, including the possibility of assistance being provided by local authorities, should be specially examined.

10.2.7. **We recommend** that the emergency call system (i.e. the 999 system) should be extended, as speedily as possible, to all areas of the country.

10.2.8. In a report, *Rescue Services at the Scene of Traffic Accidents*, published in January, 1969 by An Foras Forbartha, it was recommended that a system of ambulance control centres, to which all calls on the ambulance service would be routed, should be set up to improve the operation of rescue services. We consider that the possibility of establishing a system of control centres in respect of both fire service and ambulance service calls should be further examined by the Departments concerned (i.e. the Departments of Local Government, Health and Posts and Telegraphs).

Mobilization arrangements

10.3.1. Effective mobilization arrangements are important if brigades are to respond to

calls with minimal delay. Problems are most marked in the retained service, where stations are not manned.

10.3.2. In the retained service, fire service calls are usually received in the home of the Station Officer (or Sub-Officer) from which it is possible to activate electrically a fire alarm which is a normal feature of fire stations. This is still the usual means by which retained firemen are called out.

A variation on this arrangement is a system by which alarm bells in the homes of firemen are activated electrically by the Station Officer or Sub-Officer who received the call for assistance. The bells system is usually used at night.

10.3.3. A more modern system involves the use of pocket alerters by firemen. The alerters can be activated within a given radius of a central radio control point. The advantages of this system include minimum public disturbance and a greater freedom of movement for firemen on call.

The pocket alerter system is in operation in a few areas but its use in this country is still largely experimental.

10.3.4. We think it desirable that there should be uniformity in the arrangements for mobilization. **We recommend** that consideration of the role which the wider use of the modern mobilization systems might play in improving and promoting greater efficiency in both whole-time and retained brigades should be undertaken by the Department of Local Government.

Operational Links

10.4.1. We have recommended (par. 10.2.5.) that, as part of a system of fire control centres, special telephone links should be provided between the stations in an area. It is also important, and **we recommend**, that fire fighting appliances should be fitted with a radio telephone link with the control station so that the developing needs of a situation can be assessed by the control station and any necessary adjustments made with minimum loss of time. It should also be possible for the control station to draw on the dangerous substance index which we have recommended that fire authorities should maintain. (paragraph 7.14.3.)

10.4.2. There should also be effective communications between brigade units on the fire ground. This can present problems at large fire outbreaks where it may not be possible to move from one fire front to another. In such circumstances the total fire fighting capacity at the scene may not be deployed to the best advantage. There could also be risks to fire brigade personnel arising from lack of information as to the overall development of the fire outbreak. **We recommend** that appliances be fitted with suitable means of ensuring adequate communication on the fire ground.

Transitional Considerations

10.5.1. We have recommended some major new steps in relation to the organisation and staffing of the fire service. These include the introduction of new technical qualifications for various grades to be based on evaluation of job content; the introduction of related educational and training programmes; the introduction of Assistant Chief Fire Officers; the review of the structure of the whole-time service in each of the areas concerned and of the

strength of the service in all areas. We have recommended that a central training centre should be set up. It will take time before a service embodying the statutory and organisational changes which we have recommended can become operational. Every effort should be made to expedite matters.

10.5.2. We consider that permanent appointments to offices which are filled on the recommendation of the Local Appointments Commission (i.e. offices for which professional qualifications have been declared by the Minister for Local Government) should in future be made only on the basis of the new qualifications to be devised. **We recommend** that special arrangements should be made to enable the duties of such offices in the senior grades in question as become vacant to be discharged in the meantime. Our recommendation is that appointments to these grades in the transitional period should be made on an acting basis and be filled by competition from a field of recruitment which should include serving officers with suitable experience who are adequately qualified in other respects. We advise that the qualifications for the temporary offices should be similar to the existing qualifications for the corresponding permanent offices with the following qualifications being accepted as a concomitant alternative:

(i) at least ten years whole-time fire service experience, of which five years at least should be at a level not lower than that of the grade of Second Fire Officer in a retained brigade;

(ii) satisfactory experience or training in general fire brigade administration, control and direction of fire fighting operations, fire prevention and the training of fire personnel;

(iii) a satisfactory knowledge of the law relating to fire fighting and fire prevention;

(iv) a satisfactory knowledge of water supply systems, principles of hydraulics and pumps and building construction with particular reference to fire resistance.

10.5.3. The transitional arrangements which we recommend will have advantages not alone in widening the field of selection, but also in providing new promotion outlets for serving fire officers. There is reason to believe that the practice of appointing local authority engineers from outside the fire service as acting Chief Fire Officers has had adverse effect on service morale, particularly amongst middle grade personnel in the retained service. The recommended transitional arrangements should result in a significant improvement in that respect also.

10.5.4. We would stress that we see this arrangement applying for a minimal transitional period only, i.e. until the senior posts in question can be filled permanently on the basis of the new technological qualifications to be devised and introduced in accordance with recommendations which we have already made. We consider that the transitional period should be for a maximum of seven years. We would further stress that our recommendation in favour of a transitional arrangement in this matter is not intended to anticipate, or to influence, the work of the Training Council in developing the new system of qualifications.

Finally, we think it best that the change in the reporting relationship of the Chief Fire Officer, which we recommend in Chapter VIII, should be deferred, in the case of offices to which appointments are made in the transitional period in accordance with our present recommendations, until the offices are permanently filled.

10.5.5. **We recommend** that the existing central training courses arranged by the Department of Local Government should be maintained and, if possible, intensified, in the interim period with the following objectives in mind:

(*a*) to maintain and develop the training of personnel, in existing middle grades, viz the ranks of District Officer, Second and Third Fire Officers (excluding Dublin), Station Officers and Sub-Officers, through short intensive courses;

(*b*) to increase the number and improve the quality of both whole-time and retained instructors;

(*c*) to build up experience in the organisation and running of courses with a view to facilitating the successful introduction of the recommended Training Centre.

The successful implementation of our recommendations in relation to future training both centrally and locally will depend heavily on instructors of the necessary quality and expertise being available in the requisite numbers to operate the system. We hope it will be possible to secure the co-operation of one of the fire service training establishments abroad in developing a corps of skilled training instructors.

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MINORITY REPORT submitted by Mr. J. D. Hally

While I am in complete agreement with the vast majority of the Recommendations in the Main Report, I cannot agree with the majority view on the following points, for the reasons given:

I. *Reporting relationship of the Chief Fire Officers, the County Engineers and the County Managers:*

(*a*) Under the existing system the County Engineer is the head of the Technical Services and the sole adviser to the County Manager on technical matters. This arrangement is clear cut and allows of no ambiguity, while the proposal in the majority report could lead to confusion in the Chief Fire Officer's responsibilities and reporting relationship. I believe the present system should continue.

(*b*) The difference whereby Chief Assistant County Engineers in general are "under the direction and supervision" of the County Engineer, while the Chief Fire Officer is "under the general supervision" of the County Engineer is not significant—both are under the control of the County Engineer.

(*c*) The technical skills required in a Chief Fire Officer are no more distinctive than the skills of Chief Assistant County Engineers employed in particular services.

The Consultants' recommendations on the Fire Service are part of a series of interdependent recommendations on the Local Government system as a whole and should not be taken in isolation.

II. *Entry to the Fire Service*

The majority Report proposes in effect a single-tier entry to the Fire Service at Fireman level. I believe this would be an unfair limitation and not in the best interests of the service, and that entry should be open at any level to suitably qualified applicants; specifically there should, in my opinion, be provision for entry at say Sub-Officer level and at Assistant Chief Fire Officer level and that the Training arrangements should be adjusted accordingly with provision where necessary for an accelerated training programme.

MINORITY REPORT submitted by Capt. B. McMahon

I find that I am unable to agree with seven of the recommendations set out in the summary of main recommendations and I propose the following recommendations in their stead.

24. While the duties discharged by the Second Fire Officers are essential to an effective Fire Service, their technical content does not require the employment of primary degree personnel.

I recommend that the grade of Second Fire Officer should be retained in the Retained Fire Service but the title of the post should be changed and the qualification for the post should be that of certified technician. (8.3.2.).

25. In my opinion the proposal to set up a special degree in fire engineering is educationally unsound, impractical and expensive. It would lead to the Fire Service becoming an introverted "closed shop".

I recommend that the Fire Training Council should advise on the suitability of existing primary degree courses for Chief Fire Officers and Asst. Chief Fire Officers' posts; and on certified technician courses for Second Officers' posts, and should advise on the extra training in fire matters which should be given to holders of these qualifications. (8.6.4. and 8.6.5.).

27. Practically all of the present Second Fire Officers have been recruited from the Retained Fire Service and I see no reason why this practice should be discontinued.

I recommend that retained Firemen, who are qualified, should be able to compete for Second Fire Officer posts when vacancies arise. (8.10.4.).

28. I see no reason why the present system of entry to the Fire Service should be changed other than that provision should be made for all grades on appointment to possess qualifications suitable for their office together with operational experience and training in fire matters.

I recommend that the present two tier entry to the Fire Service should be maintained. (8.9.4.).

32. Fire prevention work has a high engineering content since it embraces an engineering appraisal of structures and hydraulics, drafting of technical specifications, estimating the cost of proposed alterations, and engaging in technical discussions with senior engineers and architects etc. On this account it is essential that the Institution of Engineers of Ireland be represented on a Training Council.

I recommend that the Fire Service Training Council include representation from the Institution of Engineers of Ireland. (9.2.3.).

38. This proposal would lower the existing academic qualifications for the post of Chief Fire Officer from primary degree level to a level of "good standard of education". This proposed lowering of the technical qualification would be unsafe and would not provide the Local Authorities or the general public with that level of technical expertise which fire safety requires.

The proposal that the post of Chief Fire Officer be filled on an acting basis for many years deprives existing Chief Fire Officers of rights they enjoy at present and could lead to serious administrative difficulties at the end of the interim period.

I recommend that the qualifications for the post of Chief Fire Officer should not be lowered. (10.5.2.).

39. The training courses organised by the Department at central level and the Fire Prevention training course held in Galway have had serious defects and have led to a dangerous complacency in Local Authorities regarding firemen's safety because of confusion as to the level of expertise attained by those attending the courses.

I recommend that the courses, the level of expertise of the instructors and the level of expertise obtained by those who took part in the various courses should be appraised by the proposed Training Council as a matter of urgency.

Of the proposals set out in the main report I find paragraphs 6.4.1., 7.7.2. and 10.1.2. particularly unacceptable and I set out hereunder my views re same.

6.4.1. I disagree with a statement which seems to me to imply that every foreseeable fire fighting need should not be catered for locally in organising a fire service. This approach could allow fires to develop to the scale of the Galway fire in 1970, the Dublin Docks fire in 1974 and the recent Limerick fire in 1974. It is my view that in crowded high risk dock areas, in areas of special risk such as large chemical and industrial concerns, oil refineries, the Bantry Bay complex, and in built-up areas where fire separation between properties is suspect, the county fire fighting system together with the application of fire prevention measures should guarantee that the development of a fire beyond defined predetermined limits cannot occur.

Further it is my view that the siting of industries having inherent major explosion risks near or in built-up areas should be avoided if possible.

I recommend that the present Inter-Departmental Committee examining the implications of the recent Dublin Dock fire should make recommendations on the siting and protection of major industries having regard to standard of fire cover provided by the Local Fire Brigade Authorities. They should also advise on the maximum sizes of fire tight compartments (in the case of buildings) and areas (in the case of open storage) which should be allowed in the Republic.

7.7.2. I believe that the occupants of timber framed terraced houses have not been provided with a reasonable degree of structural fire safety and that in the event of a fire developing, occupants lives and the lives of firemen attempting rescue could be put unreasonably at risk.

I recommend that an inquiry be held and remedial steps be taken as soon as possible.

10.1.2. It is my opinion, and my view is supported by the submissions to the Working Party by the Local Authorities, that water supplies in the public mains in urban areas are grossly inadequate for fire fighting purposes.

I recommend that the Department should re-examine the guidelines laid down by them and revise them where necessary so that adequate water supplies will be available from the public mains in those areas where it is essential for effective fire fighting operations.

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Comment on Capt. B. McMahon's Minority Report

The following comment is confined to what seems necessary in order to avoid the danger of misunderstanding being created as to certain views and recommendations in the main report.

The numbering of paragraphs relates to the numbering in the minority report.

24. It is not recommended in the main report, as implied here, that a primary degree qualification should be prescribed for an office of Second Fire Officer. What is recommended is that a new office of Assistant Chief Fire Officer should be introduced and that the qualifications for the new office should be advised on by the Fire Service Training Council. (Paragraphs 8.3.2., 8.6.4., and 8.6.5.).

25. It is not recommended that a special degree in fire engineering should be introduced. What is recommended is that an appropriate qualification for the senior positions, and how it might be provided within the third level educational system should be advised on by the Fire Service Training Council. (Paragraph 8.6.5.).

27. Of the twenty Second Fire Officers in office at 31st March, 1973, eight (40%) were in full-time, permanent employment in the fire service before appointment. (Table 10—Paragraph 3.4.2.).

38. The qualifications recommended in paragraph 10.5.2. for senior positions in the transitional period are not reasonably or accurately described here.

39. The statement that the existing training courses organised by the Department of Local Government have led to a dangerous complacency in Local Authorities regarding firemen's safety is unsupported. It is a view not shared by any of the other local authority interests represented on the Working Party and not derivable from any evidence made available to it.

6.4.1. Specific recommendations have been made to meet the problem of fires of special size or complexity, taking account of what are referred to as the inherent limitations of a county based fire service. (Paragraphs 6.4.1., 6.4.2. and 6.4.3.).

10.1.2. On the basis of all the evidence available to the Working Party the position as regards the adequacy of the water supply for fire fighting is properly and fairly described in paragraphs 10.1.1. and 10.1.2. of the main report.

MINORITY REPORT submitted by Mr. M. P. Murphy

I regret the necessity of submitting a minority report. I regard the competent staffing of the fire service as a matter of prime national importance. The existing qualification for the post of Chief Fire Officer is a degree in Engineering or its equivalent. I am satisfied that:

—having regard to the complexity of modern building techniques,

—the necessity for the Chief Fire Officer to be able to talk authoritatively to Architects, Engineers and his own Local Authority,

—and other reasons,

he should be a qualified engineer.

I do not agree that there should be a transition period as proposed in the report during which time there would be no formal qualifications for the appointment of Chief Fire Officer. There is no justification for abandoning the present standard. This I would regard as a retrograde step constituting a risk to the public to which I could not subscribe and should not be permitted. Should the introduction of additional qualifications be thought desirable, the Institution of Engineers of Ireland and myself are willing to discuss the nature and content of these qualifications.

I also believe that as is the case in most European countries visited by a group of the Working Party, and elsewhere, at least a two-tier entry system should be preserved. Those in the service who possess the necessary educational level can always apply to the Institution of Engineers of Ireland or any of the Institutions comprising the Council of Engineering Institutions in Britain for student membership, leading ultimately to corporate membership which is the equivalent of a University degree. Facilities should be provided to enable this procedure to be followed.

Having regard to recommendation made at paragraph 6.6.3. and assistance agreements, I do not subscribe to the recommendation in paragraph 6.3.10. regarding the transfer of fire fighting responsibilities from Dún Laoghaire to Dublin city and county joint service.

MINORITY REPORT submitted by Mr. C. A. O'Connor

I find myself unable to agree with two of the premises that condition my colleagues' approach to the problem of designing a new structure for the Fire Service. It is with regret that I do so, particularly when I find that I am in general accord with almost all of what they say in their Report. My task here, in accordance with standard practice, is to concentrate on the issues that divide us and the reasons why they do so.

It is a guiding principle in my colleagues' approach that all ranks should have, on appointment or on becoming operational, a requisite experience and training. In addition, senior grades, on appointment, must possess a technological qualification to be devised, which should reflect the high level of specialist expertise which is essential for the successful discharge of the duties. I am in complete agreement with these two principles.

In the field of recruitment, my colleagues take as their starting point the proposition that there should be a single tier of entry—fireman level—and that the most senior positions should be filled, as a rule, by a process of advancement from the basic grade. They go on to say that it could become necessary in the future to widen the field of recruitment in certain circumstances.

This would be the case if, for example, a system of qualifications and training as recommended were not applied, or if difficulties arose in filling some vacancies or in recruiting some particular specialist skills. This is one of the areas of disagreement between us. My dissent is essentially based on a rejection of the one-tier entry concept. I welcome the proposal which makes it possible for a fireman to proceed by advancement to the highest position in the service, but I find it unacceptable that advancement should be exclusive to those who enter the service at the basic grade.

What is needed, it seems to me, is a widening of the field of recruitment. A system of entry at different levels is needed if the prospects are to be enhanced of attracting to the service, a greater number of young men with an interest in the service as a career. It is probable that some young men of ability and suitable aptitude who have completed third level technical or technological courses will be interested in making a career in the service at a stage when recruitment at fireman level will not be attractive to them. I believe that the service can benefit from a balanced infusion of outside talent, and avenues should be opened up and appropriate levels of access provided in the new structure, e.g. at Sub-Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer levels with appropriate adjustment in the requirements for further advancement, and an accelerated training programme.

I find myself unable to accept the recommendation in the main Report that a change should be made in the reporting position of the Chief Fire Officer. My colleagues recognise that the existing arrangement by which the County Engineer has overall responsibility for supervision and co-ordination of local authority technical services has definite advantages. They go on

to say that there is close inter-relationship in financial and operational matters between the Fire Service and other local authority technical services, e.g. planning, sanitary services, housing, roads, general purposes, and that the existing arrangement facilitates co-ordination in the use of local authority manpower and of maintenance and other shared facilities. They further accept that the Chief Fire Officer has a status similar to that of a Chief Assistant County Engineer and is in a somewhat similar reporting position to the County Engineer, the head of the local authority technical staff.

My colleagues' view that there should be change in the reporting positions seems to be based on two factors:

(1) a distinction in the conditions of appointment of a Chief Assistant County Engineer and a Chief Fire Officer in as much as that in the case of a Chief Assistant County Engineer the words "under the direction and supervision of the County Engineer" are used, and that in the case of the Chief Fire Officer the words used are "under general supervision of County Engineer".

(2) the technical skills required in a Chief Fire Officer are distinctive in important respects from those of other branches of engineering.

I do not regard these as cogent reasons for a change because, firstly, the wording in both appointments emphasises the supervisory role of the County Engineer *vis-a-vis* the appointee, and, secondly, the technical skills required in a Chief Fire Officer are no more distinctive than the skills of Chief Assistant County Engineer employed in particular services.

What my colleagues propose would, in fact, create a dichotomy in the workload of the Chief Fire Officer, e.g. in certain instances he would be working direct to the Manager and in other areas he would have an undefined consultative role. This divided role is clearly unsatisfactory, not alone to the local authority but to the Chief Fire Officers themselves.

Under the existing system the County Engineer is the chief technical adviser with overall responsibility in the technical field. This is a well-established system. I consider this arrangement should continue.

MINORITY REPORT submitted by Mr. V. F. Walsh

I do not agree with paragraphs 10.5.1. to 10.5.4. which deal with transitional arrangements concerning the appointment of Acting Chief Officers. Such arrangements would have a divisive effect at Chief Officer level and therefore could not be justified.

I see no valid reason for the inclusion of a transitional period as far as Chief Officer and Acting Chief Officer appointments are concerned and I regard the existing arrangements for filling these posts as adequate in the circumstances.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

Extract from recommendations made by McKinsey & Co. Inc. in relation to the Organisation of the Fire Service in their report on "Strengthening the Local Government Service"

First, we recommend that in the County Organisation, the Chief Fire Officer should report to the County Manager and be fully responsible for the service under his control.

Second, opportunities should be created for promotion to Chief Fire Officer from within the service. Present staff shortages can be attributed in part to poor career prospects, and a programme should therefore be established to enable firemen with suitable ability to develop the necessary administrative and technical skills.

Third, the Department should set up an advisory council on fire. Its aim would be to recommend common standards for fire prevention, propose a standard training programme and act as a publicity agency for the service.

Fourth, we recommend that the Department of Local Government immediately carry out its plan to strengthen its fire staff to undertake the following programme:

1. Develop and co-ordinate the training programme, including training in prevention.
2. Review present fire resources in all counties, establish standards and assist each authority to develop a phased programme of re-equipment.
3. Develop and establish common standards for fire prevention.
4. Implement a programme of prevention, including recruitment of the necessary staff.
5. Examine and update the legislation on fire prevention.

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APPENDIX B

Interim Report of Working Party on the Fire Service

To the Minister for Local Government:

1. You appointed us in November last with the following terms of reference:

"To examine the recommendations made by McKinsey and Co. Inc. in relation to the organisation of the fire service in their report on 'Strengthening the Local Government Service'; to advise you in the matter under the following heads, taking account of the Government decision as contained in the White Paper on Local Government Reorganisation that the county should remain the basic Local Government unit:

(*a*) Fire resources including premises and equipment;

(*b*) Fire prevention measures;

(*c*) Legislation;

(*d*) Financial implications;

(*e*) Staffing and training arrangements."

2. The following persons are members of the Working Party:

Chairman
Mr. H. P. Clerkin.

Members	*Organisation*
Mr. C. A. O'Connor	County and City Managers Association.
Mr. J. D. Hally	County and City Surveyors Association.
Mr. H. O'Sullivan	Local Government and Public Services Union.
Mr. S. Cleary	Local Government and Public Services Union.
Mr. M. N. Kennedy	Department of Labour.
Miss M. Kelly	Department of Labour.
Capt. B. McMahon	Chief Fire Officers Association.
Mr. M. Murphy	Institution of Engineers of Ireland.
Mr. J. McGrath	Department of Local Government.
Mr. V. F. Walsh	Department of Local Government.
Mr. C. McDonnell	Department of Local Government.

3. In your address to us on the occasion of our first meeting on the 21st November, 1972, you asked us to consider the possibility of submitting an interim report to you on fire prevention measures.

4. We have given consideration to your request and are agreed that our recommendations in this matter, at this stage of our deliberations, must be based within the framework of existing legislation if such recommendations are to result in meaningful improvements in the short term.

5. We are agreed that the greatest needs in the short term are:

(*a*) to improve the capacities of local authorities to engage in enforcement activities in relation to fire prevention measures in existing legislation and (*b*) to bring home to people the need to be more conscious of fire hazards and to take steps to prevent or reduce outbreaks of fire to a minimum. Initially we feel action in this area should be directed mainly at management of premises in the public resort category, i.e. hotels, restaurants, shops, institutions etc.

6. We, therefore, recommend as follows:

(1) We support the request made by you to local authorities that they should strengthen their organisations in order to be able to carry out fire prevention duties in a reasonable manner, by appointing where appropriate additional staff at Second Officer level and/or at Chartered Engineer level. Selected personnel should attend the proposed course in Fire Prevention being organised by the Department of Local Government so as to increase the capacity of these officers to undertake fire prevention duties.

We believe that implementation of these proposals will enable local authorities to engage more extensively, and more effectively, in fire prevention work within a relatively short time. In this connection we think it important that local authorities should be prepared—as we believe they are—not only to undertake those inspections and controls for which they have specific statutory cover (the adequacy of which we have yet to consider) but to do everything they can, by providing information, and advice, and exhortation, to increase awareness of fire risks and the value of fire preventive measures.

(2) It is recommended that an interim publicity campaign should also be mounted. We believe that this would be most effectively done at local level and that it should take a practical form. We think it would be very useful if local seminars on fire prevention were to be provided by Fire Service Officers, particularly for management in the public resort sector already referred to, but also for other groups. We recommend that the Department of Local Government should take the initiative in encouraging the holding of such seminars, and should render whatever assistance is possible.

(3) We make these interim recommendations in response to your specific request and in the belief that they hold out the possibility of reducing fire risks in the period which must elapse before our final report can be prepared, considered, and any consequential measures put into operation. We wish to stress, however, that it is not possible to deal comprehensively, or conclusively, with fire prevention problems in isolation from other aspects of the fire service coming within our terms of reference. We would not wish these recommendations to be interpreted to mean that we have reached any conclusion in particular on the appropriate status or grading of preventive staff in the fire service of the future.

We understand that an organisational analysis of the Department of Local Government is being undertaken and that this analysis will entail an examination of the structure of the Department having regard to the recommendations contained in the Report of the Public Service Organisation Review Group, including consideration of the existing division of functions between the Department and the local authorities.

We also understand you are giving attention to the recommendations contained in the Report "Strengthening the Local Government Service". We believe that the recommendations in the report that a national fire advisory body should be established, and that the Chief Fire Officer should report to the County Manager and be fully responsible for the service under his control, are matters of considerable importance and requiring immediate attention. Because of the urgency and importance of these matters, it is our intention to make a further report or reports on them as soon as possible.

Signatures to the Report:

H. P. Clerkin	*V. F. Walsh*
J. D. Hally	*C. A. O'Connor*
M. N. Kennedy	*J. McGrath*
M. Murphy	*H. O'Sullivan*
Seán Cleary	*C. McDonnell*
B. McMahon	*Mairéad Kelly*

7th March, 1973.

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APPENDIX C

Organisations and Individuals who made written or oral submission

Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (Tass) (Limerick branch).
Catholic Clerical Managers Association.
Chief Fire Officers Association.
Council of Managers of Catholic Secondary Schools.
Department of Defence.
Fire Offices Committee, London.
Fire Offices Committee, London.
Fire Offices Committee (Irish Standing Committee). } Jointly.
Fire Protection Association of Ireland.
Industrial Development Authority.
Institute for Industrial Research and Standards.
Irish Fire Fighting Traders Association.
Irish Transport and General Workers' Union
Workers Union of Ireland } Joint submission.
Second Fire Officers Association (Local Government and Public Services Union).
The Confederation of Irish Industry.
The Institution of Engineers of Ireland.
The Institution of Fire Engineers (Republic of Ireland branch).
The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland.
Messrs. Bowaters Irish Board Mills Ltd., Athy.
Messrs. Stevensons (Balbriggan) Ltd., Balbriggan County Dublin.
Messrs. Williams and Woods, Dublin.
Mr. C. G. McGahon, Faughart Tce, Dundalk.
Mr. D. O'Brien, Victoria Cross, Cork.
Capt. P. B. Surgue, Chief Fire Officer, Galway County Council.

Organisations who supplied information

Aer Rianta.
Cork Harbour Commissioners.
Department of Lands (Forest and Wild Life Service).
Drogheda Harbour Commissioners.

Dublin Port and Docks Board.
Galway Harbour Commissioners.
New Ross Harbour Commissioners.
Sligo Harbour Commissioners.
Gulf Oil Terminals (Ireland) Ltd.
Irish Refining Company Ltd.

Local Authorities Visited

Cork Corporation.
Dublin Corporation.
Limerick Corporation.
Waterford Corporation.
Cork County Council.
Cavan County Council.
Galway County Council.
Longford County Council.
Louth County Council.
Meath County Council.
Monaghan County Council.
Roscommon County Council.
Waterford County Council.
Westmeath County Council.

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APPENDIX D

Classification of Fires by Cause of Fire (1963–64—1972–73)

Year	1963–64	1964–65	1965–66	1966–67	1967–68	1968–69	1969–70	1970–71	1971–72	1972–73
Spontaneous Combustion ..	—	—	—	45	42	46	33	70	67	42
Electrical Wiring ..	—	—	—	313	261	305	349	432	544	479
Electrical Faults in Motors	—	—	—	158	252	326	272	342	496	402
Burning Rubbish ..	—	—	—	—	—	1,109	825	507	923	661
Careless Disposal of Cigarettes, Matches, etc. ..	—	—	—	1,026	325	543	281	318	579	328
Careless Disposal of hot ashes	—	—	—	—	—	170	186	250	348	267
Soot in Chimneys ..	3,768	2,517	3,474	3,835	4,160	3,985	4,414	4,677	5,171	6,107
Defective Flues, Hearths	—	—	—	225	287	217	274	268	333	267
Children Playing with Matches, etc.	—	—	—	555	351	238	280	443	639	654
Unprotected Open Fireplaces ..	—	—	—	53	55	40	46	58	96	65
Bottled Gas ..	—	—	—	—	—	42	69	57	116	119
Heaters, Cookers (Oil, Electric, Gas.)	—	—	—	378	252	383	321	436	439	381
Malicious ..	—	—	—	33	99	42	139	244	244	254
Miscellaneous ..	4,145	4,817	5,869	410	1,223	463	409	527	575	1,089
Cause Unknown ..	—	—	—	2,112	2,643	3,713	5,321	5,057	5,314	6,825
Total	7,913	7,334	9,343	9,143	9,950	11,622	13,219	13,686	15,884	17,940

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APPENDIX E

Classification of Fires by place of Fire (1963–64—1972–73)

Year	1963–64	1964–65	1965–66	1966–67	1967–68	1968–69	1969–70	1970–71	1971–72	1972–73
Private Houses:										
—Chimney ..	—	—	—	3,970	4,223	4,077	4,495	4,741	5,463	6,303
—Others	—	—	—	1,430	1,207	3,294	3,024	1,800	2,212	2,073
Industrial	—	—	—	574	354	349	520	651	519	599
Commercial ..	—	—	—	287	294	562	443	677	666	541
Hotels	—	—	—	55	55	56	92	93	92	118
Places of Public Entertainment ..	—	—	—	39	25	59	42	64	82	64
Motor Vehicles ..	—	—	—	421	440	562	659	932	1,129	1,241
Caravans	—	—	—	11	13	33	39	71	102	63
Institutions ..	—	—	—	109	71	105	165	191	149	270
Farm, Hay, Straw	—	—	—	460	440	598	739	690	949	946
Garages	—	—	—	57	42	73	81	127	152	137
Bog, Forest, Grass	—	—	—	1,333	989	1,346	1,811	1,824	1,938	2,758
Miscellaneous ..	—	—	—	397	1,797	508	1,109	1,825	2,431	2,827
Total	7,913	7,334	9,343	9,143	9,950	11,622	13,219	13,686	15,884	17,940

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APPENDIX F

Organisation and Structure of the Fire Service in Tipperary S.R. County at 31st March, 1973

Staffing Structure

Chief Fire Officer
Second Officer (1)
Driver/Mechanic (1)
} Whole-time Personnel

Station Officer (5)
Sub-Officer (5)
Firemen (38)
Driver/Mechanic (5)
} Retained Personnel

Stations:

Five stations are maintained. These are located in Clonmel (population 11,688). Tipperary (population 4,631); Carrick-on-Suir (population 5,006); Cashel (population 2,692); and Cahir (population 1,747).

In addition, two "voluntary" fire brigades are maintained at Ballingarry, and Fethard.

The manning and equipment (appliances) of the stations is as follows:

Manning:

Clonmel { Second Officer and Driver/Mechanic (whole-time).
Station Officer (1); Sub-Officer (1); Driver/Mechanic (1) and Firemen (9).

The other 4 stations are manned fully by retained men and the complement is:
Station Officer (1); Sub-Officer (1); Driver/Mechanic (1) in each of the 4 stations and Firemen (9 in Clonmel; 8 in Tipperary and 7 each in Cashel, Cahir and Carrick-on-Suir).

Appliances

Clonmel	*Tipperary*	*Carrick-on-Suir*
Water tender (1)	Water Tender (1)	Mobile appliance (1)
Mobile appliance (1)	Mobile appliance (1)	Van/trailer pump (1)
Van/pump (1)	Van/trailer pump (1)	

Cashel	*Cahir*
Mobile appliance (1)	Mobile appliance (1)
Trailer pump (1)	Trailer pump (1)

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General description of duties of personnel:

Second Officer: assists Chief Fire Officer in the discharge of his duties, and acts as deputy when required; conducts the training of all units; keeps record of water supplies/inspects hydrants; inspects, as required, places of public resort; operational fire fighting duties.

Station Officer: responsible, under the direction of Chief Fire Officer, for the training, direction, welfare and control of his brigade.

Sub-Officer: deputises, as required, for Station Officer; responsible for condition of appliances, equipment and station.

Driver/Mechanic: deputises, as required, for Sub-Officer; responsible for normal maintenance of engines, pumps and road vehicles.

Firemen: operational fire fighting, under direction of Officers.

Call-out/Turn-out time:

Call-out is by way of siren and telephone extension to the houses of the station officer, sub-officer and driver/mechanic.

The average turn-out time is 5 minutes during the day and 12 minutes at night.

Cover Time:

Time taken to reach a fire depends on location of fireground in relation to nearest station. In general, the sphere of operation of each brigade is within an 8 mile radius of the station. In general, the anticipated cover time for a fire located at the perimeter of the sphere of radius is 20 minutes (approximate) by day.

Recruitment:

Recruitment is done through public advertisement, followed by interview. Wastage is approximately 4 men per year.

Training:

The training of brigade units is conducted by the Second Officer, with Station Officers in charge of training sessions in their stations. Training drills are carried out fortnightly.

Fire Prevention:

Fire Prevention work including initial inspections and follow-up inspections are carried out by the Chief Fire Officer.

In 1972/73 the number of fire prevention inspections/examinations carried out was as follows:

Planning and Development Act	*Fire Brigades Act*	*Other Statutes*
60 (examination of plans)	178	120
Nil (inspections)		

In addition, following inspections, 3 fire precaution notices were served under Section 7 of the Fire Brigades Act, 1940.

Voluntary fire brigades:
Two voluntary brigades are located in the county. These brigades owe their existence to local initiative; their members are unpaid. The fire brigade authority assists the brigades by (*a*) training the members, and (*b*) providing them with a light fire appliance.

The units are essentially seen as a first-aid organisation, and while they may be in a position to deal with local chimney fires, their role in a more serious fire is aimed at carrying out preliminary work e.g. making down hose lines to assist the retained brigade on arrival.

The training sessions for the members are generally once a month, but the sessions are flexible to suit the members.

The appliance provided for each brigade is a trailer pump, which is towed to fires by car.

The voluntary brigades are located at: Fethard and Ballingarry.

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APPENDIX G

Tabular Statement of Statutory Provisions relating to Fire Prevention

Act	Premises Covered	Scope of Provisions	Regulating Authority	Penalties
Cork Improvement Act, 1868	Theatres and other places of public resort kept or used for public dancing, music or other entertainment of a like kind.	Conditions of licence subject to regulations contained in bye-laws made under Section 174 of the Act.	Cork Corporation	Fine not exceeding £20 on person using premises without licence; fine not exceeding £5 for every breach of bye-laws.
Petroleum Acts, 1871 and 1879.	Premises in which petroleum is stored.	Conditions of licence may regulate mode of storage, and nature and situation of the premises in which petroleum is to be stored.	Borough and urban councils, town commissioners and harbour authorities in their respective administrative areas. In other areas, licences are issued by the appropriate District Court, with enforcement a matter for the Gardaí.	Petroleum kept without licence is subject to forfeiture. Occupier of place where it is kept is liable to fine of up to £20 a day.
Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878	All new buildings.	Power to make bye-laws regarding *inter alia* the structure, and description and quality of the substances used in the construction of new buildings for securing stability and the prevention of fires.	Local (sanitary) authorities who have made bye-laws.	Penalty as determined by the sanitary authority but not to exceed £5 for each offence or £2 per day for a continuing offence.
Public Health Act Amendment Act, 1890	(*a*) Premises of public resort i.e. (i) church, chapel or other place of public worship, (ii) theatre, public hall, public concert room, public ballroom, public lecture room, or public exhibition room, (iii) building used as public place of assembly or any other public purpose.	(i) Satisfactory means of ingress and egress to be provided. (ii) Means of ingress and egress to be kept free and unobstructed.	Urban authorities who have adopted Part III of the Act.	Fine of up to £20 for every offence.

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Act	Premises Covered	Scope of Provisions	Regulating Authority	Penalties
Public Health Act Amendment Act, 1890 —(*Contd.*)	(*b*) premises used for public singing, music or other public entertainment of a like kind.	Conditions of licence may include such terms, conditions and restrictions as the licensing authorities determine.	District Court, in areas where local authorities have adopted Part IV of the Act. Enforcement is the responsibility of the Gardaí	Fine of up to £5 per day for each day premises are kept or used without a licence. Fine of up to £20 and £5 per day for breach of licence; licence subject to revocation.
Dublin Corporation Act, 1890.	Theatres and other places of public resort in the city of Dublin containing a superficial area for the accommodation of the public of not less than 500 square feet to be kept open for public dancing, music or other public entertainment of the like kind.	Certification of premises in accordance with requirements of bye-laws made under Section 55 of the Act for the protection from fire of theatres and other places of public resort.	Dublin Corporation subject to right of appeal to District Court.	Penalty of £5 for each offence or £1 per day for each continuing offence.
Cinematograph Act, 1901.	Premises in which films made from inflammable materials are shown.	Conditions of licence may include such terms, conditions and restrictions, subject to regulations, as the licensing authorities may determine.	County councils, county borough and borough councils, urban district councils and town commissioners.	Fine of up to £20 where premises are used without a licence or a breach of licence. Further fine of £5 per day for a continuing offence with licence subject to revocation.
Game Preservation Act, 1930.	Any land not cultivated or in course of cultivation between 1st April and 14th July in any year.	Control of burning gorse, furze, whin, heath, fern etc. from between 1st April and 14th July in any year subject to written permission of the Superintendent of the Garda Síochána for the district.	Garda Síochána.	Fine not exceeding £10 on summary conviction.
Public Dance Halls Act, 1935.	Premises used for public dancing.	(i) Conditions of licence may include such conditions and restrictions as licensing authorities determine. In considering applications for licences, licensing authorities are required to give regard *inter alia* to the suitability of the place to which the application relates.	District Court, with right of appeal to Circuit Court. Enforcement is the responsibility of the Gardaí.	Fine not exceeding £10 per day where premises are used without a licence; fine not exceeding £5 per day where breach of licence occurs with licence subject to revocation.

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Act	Premises Covered	Scope of Provisions	Regulating Authority	Penalties
Public Dance Halls Act 1935 —(*Contd.*)		(ii) Where a public dancing licence for a period in excess of one month is sought, the applicant is required to give one month's notice in writing of such application to the local authority, in whose administrative area the premises are situated. (iii) Persons who appear to the licensing authorities to be interested in applications may appear and be heard in opposition to such applications.		
Fire Brigades Act, 1940.	"Potentially dangerous buildings", as defined in Section 1 of the Act viz "building structure or erection (whether permanent or temporary) of any kind or of any materials which would, in the event of a fire occurring therein, constitute a peculiarly serious danger to life by reason of: (i) the fact that large numbers of persons habitually resort thereto or are accommodated therein, or (ii) the absence of any or any adequate appliances or fittings for extinguishing fires occurring therein or for enabling the occupants thereof to escape therefrom on the occurrence of a fire, or (iii) the inflammable nature of the materials of which it is made, or (iv) the fact that articles of an inflammable nature are habitually kept therein, or (v) the absence of adequate means of exit therefrom, or (vi) any similar cause.	Power to serve on the proprietor of any building which appears to be a potentially dangerous building a notice requiring him either (*a*) to refrain absolutely from using such building, or a specified part of such building, for the purpose or any of the purposes specified in such notice, or (*b*) to refrain from using such building, or a specified part of such building, for the purpose or any of the purposes specified in such notice unless or until specified precautions are taken to the satisfaction of such sanitary authority whether by the provision in such building of specified appliances or fittings or by the execution of specified structural alterations or additions to such building, or by the doing in relation to such building of any other thing whatsoever.	County councils, county borough and borough councils, and urban district councils, with right of appeal to the District Court.	Fine not exceeding £50, on summary conviction, for use of building in contravention of Fire Precautions notice; in the case of a continuing offence a further fine not exceeding £5 for every day during which the offence is continued may be imposed.

Act	Premises Covered	Scope of Provisions	Regulating Authority	Penalties
Forestry Act, 1940.	Vegetation growing within one mile of a wood.	(i) burning of vegetation is subject to the giving of written notification in accordance with Section 61 of the Act. Owners of wood may serve counter notice objecting to burning.	Minister for Lands in the case of State forests; owner of wood and/or Gardaí in the case of private woods.	Fine not exceeding £5 on summary conviction, for contravention of section; damage caused by burning in contravention of section is deemed to have been caused by a negligent act and equivalent damages recoverable.
		(ii) power to serve on the occupier of uncultivated land adjoining a wood a notice requiring him to remove or destroy vegetation which constitutes a potential fire danger to such wood; or to authorise removal of such vegetation in case of unoccupied land or where occupier fails to comply with requirements of notice.	Minister for Lands.	Fine not exceeding £20, on summary conviction, on any person who obstructs person authorised to remove or destroy vegetation
Factories Act, 1955.	Section 45: Factories (as defined in Section 3 of the Act) where: (i) more than 20 persons are employed or (ii) more than 5 persons are employed in the same building or any floor above the ground floor or (iii) more than 5 persons are employed in the same building above the first floor or more than 20 feet above the ground level (where the factory was built before 1955) or (iv) where explosive or highly inflammable materials are stored or used, or (v) factory forms part of premises of which another part is used as a dwelling.	(i) Certification of means of escape in case of fire. (ii) Means of escape to be properly maintained and kept free from obstruction.	County councils, county borough councils, borough and urban district councils, are responsible for issue or refusal of certificates of means of escape. Enforcement is a matter for the Minister for Labour (through the Industrial Inspectorate).	Occupier of factory is liable to fine of up to £50 where Certificate is not in force; and fine not exceeding £10 per day for continuing offence.
	All factories (as defined in Section 3)	Power of Minister for Labour to make regulations for provision of means of escape in case of fire. (Regulations have not been made).	County councils, county borough councils, borough and urban district councils.	

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Act	Premises Covered	Scope of Provisions	Regulating Authority	Penalties
Factories Act, 1955—(*Contd*)	All factories (as defined in Section 3) or any class or description of factory.	Power of local authorities to make bye-laws as to means of escape to be provided. (Bye-laws have not been made).	County councils, county borough councils, borough and urban district councils.	
	All factories (as defined in Section 3)	While any person is in a factory no exit door may be locked or fastened in such a manner that it cannot be easily opened from the inside. All doors (except sliding doors) affording a means of exit must open outwards. Exits for use in case of fire must be conspicuously marked. There must be a clear passageway through workrooms. Hoistways and lift ways must be enclosed with fire resistant materials.	Minister for Labour (through Industrial Inspectorate).	Where no express penalty is provided for an offence, the following penalties apply: Fine on summary conviction, not exceeding £20; fine not exceeding £5 per day for a continuing offence; in addition or in lieu of a fine the Court may order that specified steps be taken to remedy matters in respect of which the offence occurred. For non-compliance with order, a fine of up to £5 per day may be imposed while non-compliance continues.
	All factories (as defined in Section 3) where more than 20 persons are employed in the same building, or explosive or highly inflammable materials are stored or used.	Requirement to make effective provision for the giving of a clearly audible warning in the case of fire.	Minister for Labour.	
	All factories (as defined in Section 3) where more than 20 persons are employed in the same building above the first floor, or more than twenty feet above ground level, or explosive or highly inflammable materials are stored or used.	Requirement to take effective steps to ensure that all employees are familiar with the means of escape and the routine to be followed in case of fire.	Minister for Labour.	
	All factories (as defined in Section 3) where more than 20 persons are employed in the same building above the first floor, or more than twenty feet above ground level, or explosive or highly inflammable materials are stored or used.	Power of Minister for Labour to make regulations as to steps to be taken for the purpose of ensuring that all employees are familiar with the means of escape and the routine to be followed in case of fire. (Regulations have not been made).	Minister for Labour.	

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Act	Premises Covered	Scope of Provisions	Regulating Authority	Penalties
Gaming and Lotteries Act, 1956.	Amusement halls and fun-fairs in areas where the local authority has adopted Part III of the Act.	(i) Conditions of licence. In considering applications for certificates of licence, the licensing authorities are required to have regard to, *inter alia*, the suitability of the premises or place proposed to be used. (ii) Applicants for licences are required to give notice of application, in writing, to the local authority in whose administrative area the premises are situated. (iii) The local authority, superintendent of the Garda Síochána and any other person who appears to the Court to be interested may appear at the hearing and give evidence in relation to the application.	District Court, with right of appeal to the Circuit Court. Enforcement is a matter for the Gardaí.	Fine, on summary conviction, not exceeding £100 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months or both. Licence subject to revocation.
Office Premises Act, 1958.	Premises in which more than five persons are employed on clerical work excluding the following: (a) premises or parts of premises occupied by the Defence Forces, (*b*) premises or parts of premises where clerical work is performed at irregular intervals and for short periods, (*c*) a shop to which the Shops(Conditions of Employment) Act, 1938 (No. 4 of 1938) applies (*d*) such premises or classes of premises as are declared to be exempt in regulations made by the Minister.	(i) While any person is in an office no exit door may be locked or fastened in such a manner that it cannot be easily opened from the inside. There must be a clear passageway through workrooms. Exits for use in case of fire must be conspicuously marked and workers must be made familiar with fire escape arrangements. (ii) power to make regulations requiring that provision be made for: (*a*) the giving of such warning in case of fire as may be prescribed and (*b*) fire preventive facilities. (Regulations have not been made).	The Minister for Labour in the case of offices in the occupation of the state, and in the case of offices in places to which the Factories Act, 1955 applies; in the case of other offices, the local authority in whose administrative area the offices are situated.	(i) Fine, on summary conviction, not exceeding £20, in respect of an offence under the Act; fine not exceeding £5 per day in the case of a continuing offence. (ii) in addition to a fine, the Court may order occupier or owner of an office to take specified steps to remedy matters in respect of which the contravention occurred. For non-compliance with order, a fine of up to £5 per day may be imposed while non-compliance continues.

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Act	Premises Covered	Scope of Provisions	Regulating Authority	Penalties
Road Traffic Act, 1961.	Storehouses in which vehicle petroleum is kept.	Regulations made by the Minister for Local Government under the Act, (Road Traffic (Petroleum) Regulations, 1964) provide that subject to the conditions set out therein a person may keep a limited quantity of petroleum for the purposes of a mechanically propelled vehicle owned by him, without a licence under the Petroleum Acts, 1871–1881.	Gardaí	Fine, on summary conviction, in the case of first offence, not exceeding £20; in the case of a second or subsequent offence, a fine not exceeding £50, in the case of a third or subsequent offence in any period of twelve consecutive months a fine not exceeding £50 or imprisonment for any term not exceeding three months or both.
Licensing Acts, 1830–1962.	Premises on-licensed for the retail sale of intoxicating liquor.	(i) New Licences: the Health Authority in whose area the premises are situated, or any inhabitant of the parish in which the premises are situated may object to the issue of licences on the grounds, *inter alia*, of the unfitness of the premises to which the application relates. (ii) Renewal of licences: any person may make an objection (in writing) to the renewal of a licence on the grounds of the unfitness of the premises to be licensed. The Courts may refuse to grant certificates of licence, if satisfied as to unfitness of premises.	Circuit Court, or District Court, as appropriate. Enforcement is the responsibility of the Gardaí.	Occupiers of unlicensed drinking premises are liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding £50. In the case of a continuing offence, a further fine of up to £5 per day may be imposed. A fine of up to £50 may also be imposed on any person found in or drinking in unlicensed premises.

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Act	Premises Covered	Scope of Provisions	Regulating Authority	Penalties
Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1963.	All new buildings (except certain buildings e.g. agricultural buildings, which are exempt from planning control); major extensions to existing buildings and material changes of use of such buildings (e.g. conversion to flats).	(i) General control of layout and structure of buildings (including materials to be used); power to attach appropriate conditions relating to structural fire precautions on the grant of planning permission.	County councils, county borough councils, borough and urban district councils, with right of appeal to the Minister for Local Government. Enforcement is a matter for the local authorities, with reserve powers to the Minister for Local Government to direct enforcement action if he considers it expedient.	(i) Fine of up to £20 per day for carrying out unauthorised development, and continuing fine of up to £10 per day for continuing offence. Penalty for non-compliance with enforcement notice – fine of up to £100, and continuing fine of up to £20 per day for continuing offence. Enforcement powers include the power to require the removal or alteration of a structure and discontinuance of its use.
		(ii) Power of Minister for Local Government to make Building Regulations which may prescribe standards for, *inter alia*, fire precautions (including resistance of structure to the outbreak and spread of fire, the protection of occupants and means of escape in the event of fire).	County councils, county borough councils, borough and urban district councils (when regulations are made), with right of appeal to Minister for Local Government.	(ii) Fine, on summary conviction, of up to £100 for contravention of each provision of the building regulations; with a further fine of up to £20 per day for a continuing offence.
Dangerous Substances Act, 1972.	(*a*) Premises in which petroleum is stored and explosives are either manufactured or stored.	(i) Power (of Minister for Labour) to make regulations as to conditions under which licences may be granted. (ii) Conditions of licence. Subject to regulations made by the Minister for Labour, the licensing authority may attach to a licence such conditions as it thinks proper.	The Minister for Labour in the case of factories and magazines in which explosives are either manufactured or stored; and in the case of premises owned by local or harbour authorities in which either petroleum or explosives are stored. In all other cases the licensing authorities are the appropriate county councils, county borough	

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Act	Premises Covered	Scope of Provisions	Regulating Authority	Penalties
Dangerous Substances Act, 1972—(*Contd.*)		(iii) containers and packages of petroleum and explosives to be clearly and conspicuously marked "Petroleum Spirit"—"Highly Inflammable" or "Explosive" with the name of the explosive, as appropriate. (iv) Power (of Minister for Labour) to make regulations for the marking of containers of petroleum; the marking of explosives and the packing of explosives for conveyance. (v) Power (of Minister for Labour) to make regulations providing for the protection of persons against risk or injury caused by petroleum	councils, borough and urban district councils and harbour authorities.	Fine, on summary conviction, for an offence under the Act, of up to £100, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, or both. In addition to or in lieu of a fine, the Court may order that specified steps be taken to remedy matters in respect of which the offence occurred. For non-compliance with order, a fine of up to £20 per day may be imposed while non-compliance continues. In addition Court may order the forfeiture of any substance or thing in respect of which the offence was committed.
	(*b*) Substances which are declared by order (of the Minister for Labour) to be dangerous substances.	(i) Power (of Minister for Labour) to apply any provision of the Act to any substance to which an order relates. (ii) Power (of Minister for Labour) to make regulations for the protection of persons against risk of injury caused by any dangerous substance. (iii) Power (of Minister for Labour) to make regulations for the purpose of preventing risk of injury to persons or property in the conveying, loading and unloading of any substance to which the Act applies. (iv) Power (of Minister for Labour) to require a railway or canal undertaker to make bye-laws governing the conveyance, loading and unloading of any substance to which the Act applies.	Minister for Labour.	

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APPENDIX H

Number of Planning Applications referred to Chief Fire Officers 1969–70—1972–73

Fire Brigade Authority	1969–70	1970–71	1971–72	1972–73	Total 1969–70 to 1972–73
Carlow County Council	35	19	21	37	112
Cavan County Council	75	110	151	88	424
Clare County Council	113	141	170	240	664
Cork Corporation	201	163	247	139	750
Cork (N) County Council	39	14	21	55	129
Cork (S) County Council	116	46	58	130	350
Cork (W) County Council	76	12	15	33	136
Donegal County Council	84	75	80	250	489
Dublin Corporation	1,402	1,937	1,603	1,636	6,578
Dún Laoghaire Corporation	386	375	128	121	1,010
Galway County Council	184	253	216	198	851
Kerry County Council	181	173	154	137	645
Kildare County Council	109	133	92	137	471
Kilkenny County Council	150	98	170	110	528
Laois County Council	41	50	100	132	323
Leitrim County Council	52	68	64	70	254
Limerick Corporation	132	136	72	112	452
Limerick County Council	90	337	117	139	683
Longford County Council	18	3	10	21	52
Louth County Council	27	25	31	45	128
Drogheda Corporation	29	35	30	35	129
Dundalk Urban District Council	31	40	35	60	166
Mayo County Council	83	91	119	131	424
Meath County Council	797	910	1,250	1,600	4,557
Monaghan County Council	150	94	130	160	534
Offaly County Council	26	25	30	42	123
Roscommon County Council	770	798	10	53	1,631
Sligo County Council	102	114	129	153	498
Tipperary (NR) County Council	53	82	70	90	295
Tipperary (SR) County Council	21	20	48	60	149
Waterford Corporation	56	73	106	109	344
Waterford County Council	382	288	175	195	1,040
Westmeath County Council	32	41	30	45	148
Athlone Urban District Council	15	10	6	25	56
Wexford County Council	72	78	82	100	332
Wicklow County Council	88	202	315	390	995
Total	6,218	7,069	6,085	7,078	26,450

Source: Returns furnished by Local Authorities. In the case of Meath all planning files were channelled through their fire section and similarly with Roscommon up to 10th January, 1972.

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APPENDIX I

Salient features of Fire Service Organisation in Scotland, Norway, Denmark and Holland

	Scotland	Norway	Denmark	Holland
1 Recruitment	Single tier: at recruit fireman level	Two-tier: fireman level and trainee Fire Inspector level	Two-tier: fireman level and Officer level.	Two-tier: fireman level and Trainee Officer level.
2 Educational Requirements (recruitment grades)	National standards not prescribed—each fire authority sets its own requirements—generally at Primary certificate level.	*Fireman level:* Primary level education. *Trainee Fire Inspector:* engineering qualification from Technical High School or University.	*Fireman level:* Primary level education *Officer level:* engineering qualification from Technical High School or University.	*Fireman level:* Primary level education or Middle Technical School certificate. Personnel with the latter qualification go on accelerated training courses. *Trainee Officer:* engineering qualification from Technical High School or University.
3. Training (Whole-time personnel)	*Recruit training:* at Fire School, Gullane, Nr. Edinburgh.	*Recruit fireman training:* locally on station.	*Recruit fireman training:* locally on station and on 4 week course run by Fire School at regional locations, at end of first year's service.	*Recruit fireman training:* locally on station to courses devised by Fire Inspectorate.
	Advancement training: at Fire Service Technical College, Moreton and Fire Service Staff College, Dorking, England.	*Advancement and Trainee Fire Inspector:* at Central Fire School.	*Sub-Officer and Officer levels:* at Central Fire School.	*Trainee Officer:* 1½ years course provided by Fire Inspectorate, comprising modules of theory and practical application.
		C.F.O.'s course: three week course at Fire School	*C.F.O.'s course:* four week course at Fire School.	*C.F.O.'s course:* none provided.
Training (Retained personnel)	Retained personnel trained locally on station. A limited number of short courses are put on at at the Fire School for retained men annually, but attendance is voluntary.	Retained personnel are trained locally on station. Standardised training courses not available, but this is aimed at.	(*a*) Retained firemen are trained locally on station on courses devised by Fire Inspectorate. New proposals being formulated aim at providing week-end courses at regional centres to supplement on station training. (*b*) Retained sub-officers do six week course at Fire School.	Retained personnel are trained locally on station. Training programmes, devised by Fire Inspectorate, are similar to those of full-time personnel.

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	Scotland	Norway	Denmark	Holland
4. Promotion	Firemen with appropriate training, experience, and ability can proceed through the ranks to the post of C.F.O. The promotion procedure for ranks up to and including Station Officer includes written State examinations.	Firemen can normally proceed to the rank of Station Officer only, because of the requirement that an engineering qualification from Technical High School or University is required for the next grade of Fire Inspector. *Note:* this system is under review. It is anticipated that in the future it will be possible for firemen to proceed to C.F.O. rank through courses provided at the Central Fire School.	Firemen can normally proceed to the rank of Station Officer only because of the requirement that an engineering qualification from Technical High School or University is required for the senior officer grades. In the Copenhagen brigade, firemen can normally proceed to Assistant Divisional Officer grade and then are eligible to compete with engineering graduates for posts of Divisional Officer.	Firemen can normally proceed to the rank of Station Officer only, because of the requirement that an engineering qualification from Technical High School or University is required for the next grade of Assistant Senior Brandmaster—filled by the Trainee Officers.
5. C.F.O. posts	All C.F.O. posts are whole-time posts.	Only a minority of C.F.O. posts are whole-time posts, filled by professionals. In the smaller authorities, the post of C.F.O. is a part-time post held by a local authority engineer. These "voluntary" C.F.O.'s do a three week course at the Fire School.	Only a minority of C.F.O. posts are whole-time posts, filled by professionals. In the smaller authorities the post of C.F.O. is a part-time post held by a local authority engineer. These "voluntary" C.F.O.'s do a six week course (Sub-Officers course) and a four week course (Fire Prevention and Administration) at the Fire School.	Only a minority of C.F.O. posts are whole-time posts filled by professionals. In the smaller authorities the post of C.F.O. is a part-time post held by a local authority engineer. No courses are provided for these "voluntary" C.F.O.'s.
6. Rank Structure	Firemaster (C.F.O.) Assistant Firemaster Divisional Officer (Grades (i), (ii) and (iii) depending largely on size of division) Assistant Divisional Officer Station Officer Sub-Officer Leading Fireman Fireman	C.F.O. Deputy C.F.O. Fire Inspector/ Trainee Officer Station Officer Sub-Officer Leading Fireman Fireman *Note:* Not all ranks above Station Officer level are represented in each brigade.	*(Copenhagen brigade)* C.F.O. Deputy C.F.O. Senior Divisional Officer Divisional Officer Assistant Divisional Officer } Officer grades Senior Sub-Officer (i) Senior Sub-Officer Sub-Officer } Sub-Officer grades Leading Fireman Senior Fireman (12–15 years' service) Fireman *Note:* Rank structure in other brigades is broadly similar, but not all ranks above Senior Sub-Officer are represented in each brigade.	Commander (C.F.O.) (Grades 1–4 depending on size of brigade) Senior Brandmaster (Grade (i)) Senior Brandmaster Assistant Senior Brandmaster (Grade (i)) Assistant Senior Brandmaster/ Trainee Officer Station Officer Sub-Officer Leading Fireman Fireman (1st Class) Fireman (2nd Class) *Note:* Not all ranks above Station Officer level are represented in each brigade.

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	Scotland	Norway	Denmark	Holland
7. State Support	(*a*) Financial assistance given through general grant scheme. The rate of assistance varies but averages 50% approximately of cost of providing fire service.	(*a*) No financial assistance provided.	(*a*) No financial assistance provided.	(*a*) No financial assistance provided.
	(*b*) Assistance with training through establishment of Fire Schools.	(*b*) Assistance with training through establishment of Fire School.	(*b*) Assistance with training through establishment of Fire School.	(*b*) Assistance with training through provision of Trainee Officers' Course; provision of standardised training course schedules; and examination courses for junior ranks.
	(*c*) Assistance with advice through H.M. Inspectorate.	(*c*) Assistance with advice through Fire Inspectorate. Advisory Inspection of brigades once every 5 years.	(*c*) Assistance with advice through Fire Inspectorate.	(*c*) Assistance with advice through Fire Inspectorate.
				(*d*) Assistance, on fire-ground, for small authorities through Inspectorate on occasion.
8. State Controls	(*a*) Through regulations and standards laid down by Secretary of State.	No direct controls on operations. Local Authorities have high degree of autonomy. Role of State is mainly advisory.	(*a*) Buildings in which hazardous substances are processed are subject to controls by Fire Inspectorate.	No direct controls on operations. Local authorities have high degree of autonomy. Role of State is mainly advisory.
	(*b*) Through annual inspection by H.M. Inspectorate.		(*b*) No direct controls on operations. Local authorities have high degree of autonomy. Role of State is mainly advisory.	
	(*c*) Through operation of variation in general grant support where brigade does not meet standards.			

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