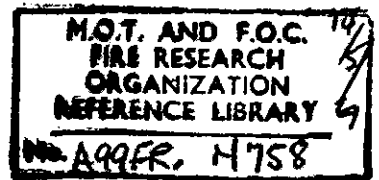


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**PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF FIRE REPORTS FROM  
FIRE BRIGADES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1968**

by

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March 1969

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MINISTRY OF TECHNOLOGY AND FIRE OFFICES' COMMITTEE  
JOINT FIRE RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF FIRE REPORTS FROM  
FIRE BRIGADES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1968

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INTRODUCTION

A preliminary analysis of reports shows that, during 1968, local authority fire brigades attended 186 571 fires in England and Wales, 22 979 in Scotland and 3 685 in Northern Ireland. The number of incidents attended by each brigade is given in Table 1.

Four firemen were killed at the scene of fires. In England and Wales 327 members of the fire service were injured at fires; the corresponding figures for Scotland and Northern Ireland were 26 and 14 respectively.

Fire brigades assisted in the rescue of 789 persons from hazardous situations at fires in England and Wales, 160 in Scotland and 12 in Northern Ireland. A further 1 469 persons were rescued by other persons in England and Wales; the corresponding figures for Scotland and Northern Ireland were 205 and 94 respectively. Six hundred and five people in England and Wales escaped by emergency means from fires; there were 41 such escapes in Scotland and 33 in Northern Ireland. Further details of casualties, rescues and escapes are given in Tables 2, 3, and 4.

There were 11 incidents in which mass evacuation of premises or a mass rescue was either necessary or advisable. These incidents involved two hospitals, two hotels, a school evening class, three buses, a railway train, a football ground and a departmental store. All the incidents except the departmental store, which was in Northern Ireland, were in England and Wales. There was an attendance of 34 000 at the football ground and the ground was evacuated; in the remaining incidents, the number of persons at risk was not generally known.

The analysis is based on reports received up to 7th March, 1969 and the figures are subject to revision when outstanding reports are received.

Table 1.

FIRES ATTENDED BY FIRE BRIGADES  
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1968

Fire Brigades	Total fires	Total fires other than those confined to grassland and heathland	Fires confined to grassland and heathland
<u>England and Wales - County Fire Brigade</u>			
Anglesey	175	96	79
Bedfordshire	832	710	122
Berks. and Reading	1 098	743 (1)	355
Brecon Co. and Radnor	168	147	21
Buckinghamshire	1 581	1 215	366 (2)
Caernarvonshire	533	317	216
Cambridgeshire and Ely, Isle of	706	663	43
Cardiganshire and Carmarthenshire	618	408	210
Cheshire	4 163	2 855	1 308
Cornwall	1 030	682	348
Cumberland	838	564	274
Denbigh and Montgomery	682	587	95
Derbyshire	1 915	1 323	592
Devonshire	1 379	1 028	351
Dorsetshire	1 113	654	459
Durham Co.	2 732	1 968	764
Essex	3 619	2 616	1 003
Flintshire	481	390	91
Glamorganshire	2 836	1 759	1 077
Gloucestershire	1 309	1 060	249
Hampshire	2 860	1 791	1 069
Herefordshire	323	288	35
Hertfordshire	2 798	2 205	593
Huntingdonshire and Peterborough	570	526	44 (3)
Kent and Canterbury	4 146	3 153	993
Lancashire	12 473	8 424	4 049
Leicestershire and Rutland	1 115	873	242
Lincs. (Holland)	219	203	16
Lincs. (Kesteven)	362	323	39
Lincs. (Lindsey)	1 034	828	206
London	29 316	26 123	3 193
Merionethshire	130	89	41
Monmouthshire	925	612	313
Norfolk	1 033	829	204
Northamptonshire	934	816	118
Northumberland	1 452	1 103	349
Nottinghamshire	2 043	1 275	768
Oxfordshire	530	455 (4)	75 (3)
Pembrokeshire	325	200 (4)	125

Table 1 (Contd).

FIRES ATTENDED BY FIRE BRIGADES  
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1968

Fire Brigades	Total fires	Total fires other than those confined to grassland and heathland	Fires confined to grassland and heathland
<u>County Fire Brigades (contd)</u>			
Shropshire	882	745	137
Somerset	1 148	997	151
Staffordshire	2 363	1 614	749 (2)
Suffolk(East) Suffolk(West) and Ipswich	1 495	1 236	259
Surrey	2 300	1 265 (5)	1 035
Sussex East	1 051	754	297
Sussex West	1 123	967	156
Warwickshire	1 693	1 323	370 (2)
Westmorland	172	133 (2)	39
Wight, Isle of	215	185	30
Wiltshire	1 036	953	83
Worcester Co. and Worcs. C.B.	1 281	1 030	251
Yorks (East Riding)	570	521	49
Yorks (North Riding)	996	865	131
Yorks (West Riding)	5 627	3 927	1 700
<u>England and Wales - County Borough Fire Brigades</u>			
Barnsley	250	155	95
Barrow in Furness	171	108 (3)	63 (3)
Bath	220	205	15
Birkenhead	1 498	1 345	153
Birmingham	4 890	4 273	617
Blackburn	676	531 (6)	145
Blackpool	707	608	99
Bolton	1 078	813	265
Bootle	1 391	1 203	188
Bournemouth	476	292	184
Bradford	1 298	1 166	132
Brighton	593	486	107
Bristol	1 663	1 333	330
Burnley	847	688	159
Burton on Trent	184	147	37
Bury	619	414	205
Cardiff	1 317	1 149	168
Carlisle	341	280	61
Chester	383	341	42
Coventry	1 347	998	349
Darlington	333	333	NIL
Derby	719	629	90
Dewsbury	296	243	53
Doncaster	330	303	27
Dudley	687	376	311

Table 1 (Contd)

FIRES ATTENDED BY FIRE BRIGADES  
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1968

Fire Brigades	Total fires	Total fires other than those confined to grassland and heathland	Fires confined to grassland and heathland
<u>County Borough Fire Brigades (contd)</u>			
Eastbourne	157	142	15
Exeter	262	248	14
Gloucester	256	235	21
Great Yarmouth	238	229	9
Grimsby	566	509	57
Halifax	600	471	129
Hartlepool	762	716	46
Hastings	298	166	132
Huddersfield	430	345	84
Kingston upon Hull	2 017	1 851	166
Leeds	2 383	1 936	447
Leicester	1 198	1 019	179
Lincoln	345	269	76
Liverpool	8 498	7 716	782
Luton	558	444	114
Manchester	5 871	5 021	850
Merthyr Tydfil	217	149	68
Middlesbrough (up to 31.3.68 only)	140	118	22
Newcastle on Tyne and Gateshead	1 822	1 627	195
Newport (Mon.)	524	409	115
Northampton	371	345	26
Norwich	545	416	129
Nottingham	1 577	1 379	298
Oldham	760	689	71 (3)
Oxford	327	311	16
Plymouth	943	819	124
Portsmouth	936	828	108
Preston	771	657	114
Rochdale	683	570	113
Rotherham	452	336	116
St. Helens	711	509	202
Salford	1 425	1 335	90
Sheffield	1 813	1 470	343
Solihull	176	134	42
Southampton	884	648	236
Southend	384	342	42
Southport	278	239	39
South Shields	504	378	126
Stockport	833	659	174
Stoke on Trent	740	699	41
Sunderland	1 152	886	266
Swansea	714	477	237

Table 1 (Contd)

FIRES ATTENDED BY FIRE BRIGADES  
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1968

Fire Brigades	Total fires	Total fires other than those confined to grassland and heathland	Fires confined to grassland and heathland
<u>County Borough Fire Brigades (contd)</u>			
Tees-side (new authority from 1.4.68)	1 802	1 632	170
Tynemouth	322	255	67
Wakefield	190	147	43
Wallasey	715	591	124
Walsall	879	594	285
Warley	625	510	115
Warrington	543	376	167
West Bromwich	784	588	196
Wigan	530	414	116
Wolverhampton	908	722	186
York	390	342	48
Total number of fires attended in England and Wales	186 571	148 753	37 818

Fire Brigades	Total fires	Total fires other than those confined to grassland and heathland	Fires confined to grassland and heathland
<u>Scotland</u>			
Glasgow	6 950	6 495	455
Lanark	2 907	2 365	542
Central	1 926	1 404	522
Western	2 051	1 755	296
South Western	1 368	1 131	237
South Eastern	3 056	2 656	400
Fife	1 154	891	263
Perth and Kinross	416	355	61
Angus	1 424	1 202	222
North Eastern	1 297	1 133	164
Northern	430	365	65
Total number of fires attended in Scotland	22 979	19 752	3 227



Table 1 (contd)

FIRES ATTENDED BY FIRE BRIGADES  
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1968

Fire Brigades	Total fires	Total fires other than those confined to grassland and heathland	Fires confined to grassland and heathland
<u>Northern Ireland</u>			
North	754	593	161
South	792	644	148
West	695	575	120 (2)
Belfast	1 444	1 369	75
Total number of fires attended in Northern Ireland	3 685	3 181	504

- (1) Date of last report 31. 7.68  
 (2) " " " " 30. 9.68  
 (3) " " " " 30. 6.68  
 (4) " " " " 30.11.68  
 (5) " " " " 31. 8.68  
 (6) " " " " 31.10.68

Table 2

## NATURE OF INJURIES OF CASUALTIES IN FIRES

Casualties	England and Wales			Scotland			Northern Ireland		
	Fire brigade	Other casualties	Total	Fire brigade	Other casualties	Total	Fire brigade	Other casualties	Total
<b>FATAL CASUALTIES<sup>1</sup></b>									
Burns and scalds	2	262	264	-	36	36	-	6	6
Overcome by gas or smoke	-	353	353	-	54	54	-	4	4
Other and undefined injuries	1	67	68	1	34	35	-	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>682</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>NON FATAL CASUALTIES</b>									
Burns and scalds	46	2 259	2 305	2	180	182	-	53	53
Bruises, cuts, abrasions	143	230	373	12	23	35	9	5	14
Dislocations, sprains, fractures	27	46	73	1	3	4	3	-	3
Overcome by gas or smoke	49	431	480	6	56	62	1	10	11
More than one of the above injuries	14	150	164	1	20	21	-	-	-
Shock <sup>2</sup>	2	414	416	1	82	83	-	6	6
Other and undefined injuries	46	138	184	3	17	20	1	8	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>3 668</b>	<b>3 995</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>T O T A L</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>4 350</b>	<b>4 680</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>107</b>

1. Casualties who are certified as having died from "Burns and asphyxiation" are included under "Overcome by gas or smoke"

2. Casualties who suffer shock in addition to another injury are classified according to the other injury.

Table 3

## SEX AND AGE OF FATAL CASUALTIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM\*

Age (years)	Total	Male	Female
Under 1	32	18	14
1 - 5	110	67	43
6 - 15	34	22	12
16 - 40	141	91	50
41 - 65	196	99	97
66 - 80	185	74	111
Over 80	93	37	56
Not stated, unknown	18	10	8
<b>T O T A L</b>	<b>809*</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>391</b>

\*Thirteen deaths not yet classified on either sex or age on this table.

Table 4

PERSONS RESCUED OR ESCAPED BY EMERGENCY MEANS FROM FIRES  
ATTENDED BY FIRE BRIGADES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1968

Appliances or Methods Used	Number of Persons			
	United Kingdom	England and Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
Rescue with Fire Brigade assistance from				
Buildings				
Escape (hand operated)	75	66	9	-
Ladder: extension	131	98	30	3
first floor	46	37	5	4
hook	3	3	-	-
turntable (mechanical)	81	58	23	-
other or undefined	48	46	2	-
Line	2	2	-	-
Oxyacetylene cutting gear	3	3	-	-
Other apparatus	28	28	-	-
Without apparatus	531	439	87	5
Road vehicles	7	7	-	-
Ships	1	1	-	-
Railway train	4	-	4	-
Other specified hazards	1	1	-	-
Total	961	789	160	12
Rescue without Fire Brigade assistance from				
Aircraft	98	97	-	1
Buildings				
Automatic escape lines	2	2	-	-
Carried or assisted out	1 127	925	137	65
Jumping sheet	20	10	10	-
Ladder	201	185	4	12
Lowered from windows, roof etc.	255	194	47	14
Other or undefined methods	26	24	2	-
Road vehicles	31	25	4	2
Caravans	3	2	1	-
Ships	2	2	-	-
Railway train (diesel multiple unit)	*	*	-	-
Other specified hazards	3	3	-	-
Total	1 768	1 469	205	94

\*  
In one incident in a rush-hour train, passengers got out or were rescued. It is not known how many needed assistance in getting out.  
(see also Introduction)

Table 4 (Contd)

PERSONS RESCUED OR ESCAPED BY EMERGENCY MEANS FROM FIRES  
ATTENDED BY FIRE BRIGADES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1968

Appliances or Methods Used	Number of Persons			
	United Kingdom	England and Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
Escape by emergency means from				
Aircraft				
Baled out	3	3	-	-
Through exits or from debris	11	11	-	-
Buildings				
Automatic escape lines	1	1	-	-
Climbing over roof, window ledges etc.	77	72	2	3
Fixed fire escape	6	6	-	-
Jumping from upstairs window, roof etc.	278	249	24	5
Ladder	32	27	3	2
Sliding down drainpipe, sheets etc.	27	25	2	-
Through ground floor windows	36	34	2	-
Other or undefined methods	150	124	7	19
Road vehicles	36	31	1	4
Caravans	5	5	-	-
Ships	6	6	-	-
Other specified hazards	11	11	-	-
Total	679	605	41	33
Total persons rescued or escaped	3 408	2 863	406	139

