





Fire Research Note No 799

FIRE DEATHS IN THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 1969

by

S. E. CHANDLER

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FIRE RESEARCH STATION

Fire Research Station, Borehamwood, Herts. Tel. 01-953-6177

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SUMMARY

A preliminary survey shows that 202 persons died in fires in the fourth quarter of 1969. Of these, 171 were in England and Wales, 28 in Scotland and three in Northern Ireland. Revised estimates for the first three quarters are 311, 173, 103 respectively, giving a total of 789 for the year, slightly below last years total of 865.

Eleven people died in a hotel fire at Saffron Walden. Two firemen were killed at fires, one in England and one in Scotland.

KEY WORDS: Fatalities, fire statistics.

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MINISTRY OF TECHNOLOGY AND FIRE OFFICES' COMMITTEE

JOINT FIRE RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

FIRE DEATHS IN THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 1969

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Introduction

This report is the eighth of a series of quarterly reports giving preliminary information on deaths in fires attended by fire brigades. It is based on reports of fires during the third quarter of 1969 which were received by 9th February 1970, and is subject to revision.

Revised estimates for the first three quarters of 1969 show that the numbers of fire deaths in the United Kingdom were 311, 173, 103 respectively. With a provisional figure of 202 for the last quarter, this gives a provisional figure of 789 for the year, but when all reports are received, the final figure is likely to approach the record high of 865 in 1968. Of the 202 deaths reported in the final quarter of 1969, 171 were in England and Wales, 28 in Scotland and three in Northern Ireland.

The worst fire of the quarter was at an hotel in Saffron Walden which claimed 11 lives. This occurred during the night and is thought to have been caused by a television set. Two firemen lost their lives at fires during the quarter.

Tables 1-5 give further details of hazards, times of calls, sources of ignition, ages of buildings, age and sex and causes of death. Table 6 gives the numbers of fatal and non fatal casualties in each brigade area.

Table 1A Hazard in which fire started (England and Wales)

Hazard in which fire started			deaths	No.of deaths in multiple death fires
TOTAL	140	17	171	48
IN BUILDINGS - Total	129	16	157	44
Industry	4	1	5	2 [.]
Distributive trades	3	1	4	2
Financial, professional and miscellaneous services	1	1	2	2
Medical services	1	_	1:	_
Clubs, hotels, restaurants, public houses	3	2	15	14
Houses-detached or semi-deta	. 21	<u> </u>	21	_
-terraced	34	2	36	4
-not stated	23	3	26	6
Flats - in blocks	12	_	12	_
- converted	21	5	28	12
- other or not stated	3	1	4	2
Other	3	_	3	-
NOT IN BUILDINGS - Total	11	1	14	4
Road vehicles	1	_	1	_
Other means of transport	1	1	4	4
Caravans	4	_	4	_
Other	5	_	5	_

Table 1B Hazard in which fire started (Scotland

Hazard in which fire started	No.of fatal fires		deaths	No.of deaths in multiple death fires
TOTAL	24	3	28	7
IN BUILDINGS - Total	21	2	23	4
Houses-detached or semi-det	3	_	3	-
-terraced	2	-	2	-
-not stated	4	_	4	-
Flats - in blocks	2		2	- .
- converted	2	-	2	_
-other or not stated	5	2	7	4
Other	3	· -	3	-
NOT IN BUILDINGS - Total	3	1	5	3
Road vehicles	1		1	_
Caravans	1	1	3	3
Other	1	-	1	-

Table 1C Hazard in which fire started (Northern Ireland)

There were three fires each accounting for one death - two were in houses and one in road vehicle.

Table 2A. Time of call to fires (England and Wales)

Time of call to fire	No.of fatal fires	No.of multiple death fires	No.of deaths	No.of deaths in multiple death fires
TOTAL	140	17	171	48
Midnight - 02.59 03.00 - 05.59 06.00 - 08.59 09.00 - 11.59 12.00 - 14.59 15.00 - 17.59 18.00 - 20.59 21.00 - 23.59 Late call	21 6 19 28 17 10 11	2 - 1 4 2 3 4 1 -	33 6 20 32 19 15 17 11	14 2 8 4 8 10 2

Table 2B. Time of call to fires (Scotland)

Time of call to fire	No.of fatal fires	No.of multiple death fires	No.of deaths	No.of deaths in multiple death fires
_TOTAL	24	3	28	7
Midnight - 02.59 03.00 - 05.59 06.00 - 08.59 09.00 - 11.59 12.00 - 14.59 15.00 - 17.59 18.00 - 20.59 21.00 - 23.59	1 4 8 4 2 3 1	1 1 - 1	3 5 8 4 3 3 1	3 2 - 2 -

Table 2C. Time of call to fires (Northern Ireland)

The brigade were called to three fatal fires in Northern Ireland occurring one each in the periods Midnight - 02.59, 06.00 - 08.59 and 18.00 - 20.59.

Table 3A Source of ignition of fire (England and Wales)

Source of ignition of fire	No.of fatal fires		deaths	No.of deaths in multiple death fires
TOTAL	140	17	171	48
Children with fire	. 6	1	7	2
Matches, tapers, etc	1	1	2.	2
Smoking materials	25	3	30	8
Electric-space heating	12	1	13	2
-wire and cable	2	<u>-</u>	- 2	-, -, -, , ,
-blanket	3	_	3	-
-other	4	1	14	,11
Gas-cooking appliances	2	-	2	_
-space heating	3	_	3	_
-other	3	_	3	
Solid fuel-fire in grate	11	_	11	- • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •
-other	1	- ·	1	_
Oil-space heating	4	2	7	5.
-other	1	_	1	_
Other	14	1	15	2
Unknown*	48	7	57	16

^{*}Including, "unknown, pending inquest"

Table 3B Source of ignition of fire (Scotland)

Source of ignition of fire	No.of fatæl fires			No.of deaths in multiple death fires
TOTAL	24	3	28	7
Children with fire	1	1	2	2
Matches, tapers, etc	. 2	_	2	_
Smoking materials	2	-	2	-
Electric-space heating	1	-	11	<u>-</u> ·
-wire and cable	1	_	1	_
Gas-cooking appliances	1	_	1	-
Solid fuel-fire in grate	2	1	4	3
Other .	5	-	5	-
Unkmown*	9	1	10	2

^{*}Including, "unknown, pending inquest"

Table 3C Source of ignition of fire (Northern Ireland)

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The three fatal fires in Northern Ireland were attributed to "crash" (1) and "unknown, pending inquest" (2).

Table 44 Date of construction of hazard (where applicable)

(England and Wales)

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Date of construction	No.of fatal fires	multiple	deaths	No.of deaths in multiple death fires
TOTAL	140	17	171	48
Pre 1900 1900 - 1909 1910 - 1919 1920 - 1929 1930 - 1939 1940 - 1949 1950 - 1959 1960 - 1969 Not stated, not applicable	37 27 9 10 19 5 8 13	8 2 1 2 - 3 1	57 29 9 11 21 5 8 18	28 4 - 2 4 - 8 2

Table 4B Date of construction of hazard (where applicable) . (Scotland)

Date of construction		No.of Multiple death fires	deaths	No.of deaths in multiple death fires
TOTAL	. 24	3	28	7
Pre 1900 1900 - 1909 1920 - 1929 19300- 1939 1940 - 1949 1950 - 1959 1960 - 1969 Not stated, not applicable	7 2 2 5 1 2 2 3	1 1 1	8 3 2 5 1 2 2 5	2 2 - - - - 3

Table 4C Date of construction of hazard (where applicable)
(Northern Ireland)

The two houses involved in fatal fires were construction in 1890 and 1930. The age of the road vehicle was not stated.

Table 5 Age and Sex of Fatal Casualties

Age (years)	England and Wales		Sco	Scotland		Northern Ireland	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
TOTAL	81	90	14	14	1	2	
Under 1	3	4		_	-	· ·	
1 - 4	12	12	3	1	_	1	
5 – 14	4	3	1	1	-	- .	
15 - 44	20	10	4	4	1	· - ·	
45 - 64	17.	12	4	3		1	
65 - 74	11	22	-	3	_	-	
0 ver 75	13	27	2	2	- 1	-	
Not stated	1	-	-	-	-	_	

Table 5A Cause of death

Cause of death	England and Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
TOTAL	17/1	28	3
Burns	49	6	_
Asphyxiation	8.11	14	-
Other; unknown or not stated*	41	8	. 3

^{*}Includes those shown as "unrecorded, pending inquest"

Table 6 Number of casualties in each brigade area

	No. of casualties Fatal Non-fatal			
UNITED KINGDOM	202	1451		
England and Wales Scotland Northern Ireland	171 28 3	1284 146 21		

(A) English and Welsh County Borough Fire Brigades

•	No. of	casualties		No. of	casualties
Brigade	Fatal	Non-fatal	Brigade	Fatal	Non-fatal
Bath Birkenhead Birmingham Blackburn Blackpool Bolton Bootle	1 - 3 - 3 1 1	1 13 95 1 5 14	Eastbourne Exeter Gloucester Great Yarmouth Grimsby Halifax Hastings	1 - 1 - 1	2 6 1 2 4 1 6
Bournemouth Bradford Brighton Bristol Burnley Bury Carlisle Chester Coventry Darlington Derby Dudley	1 - 2 - 2 1	5947 5131612 1612	Huddersfield Kingston-upon-Hull Leeds Leicester Lincoln Liverpool Luton Manchester Merthyr Tydfil Newcastle and Gateshead Newport(Mon.)	3 2 2 - 7 - 2 2	5 3 17 11 44 4 31 1

English and Welsh County Borough Fire Brigades (Gont'd)

Brigade	No. of casualties		: Brigade	No. of casualties	
_	Fatal	Non-fatal		Fatal	Non-fatal
Northampton Norwich Nottingham Oldham Plymouth Preston Rochdale Rotherham St.Helens Salford Sheffield Southampton Southend Southport South Shields	-111-1-1-134	43538123231551 11	Stockport Stoke-on-Trent Sunderland Swansea Wakefield Wallasey Walsall Hartlepool Wigan Wolverhampton York Warley West Bromwich Tees-side	1 2 - 1 1 - 2	1 18 3 1 7 5 1 8 13 1 5 8 3

(B) English and Welsh County Fire Brigades

Brigade -	No. of casualties			No. of casualties	
	Fatal	Non-fatal	Brigade	Fatal	Non-fatal
Anglesey	_	2	Cornwall	1	4
Bedfordshire	_	2	Cumberland		5
Berkshire and		}	Denbigh/		•
Reading	-	10	Montgomery	1	2
Breconshire/		l.	Derbyshire	1	7
Radnor	1	·	Devonshire	3	16 ·
Buckinghamshire	2	13	Dorset	_	8
Caernarvonshire	1	7	Durham(County)	1	6 [.]
Cambridgeshire	[• • • •	Essex	12	19
and Ely	-	1	Flintshire	-	1
Cardigan/	$i_{i_{r}}$,21			
Carmarthen	_	2			
Cheshire	4	21			

English and Welsh County Fire Brigades (Cont'd)

Brigade	No. of casualties		Princip	No. of casualties	
	Fatal	Non-fatal	Brigade	Fatal	Non-fatal
Glamorgan	1	18	Nottinghamshire	-	9
Gloucestershire	1	2	0xfordshire	- '	4
Hampshire	4	16	Shropshire	_	1
Herefordshire	_	4	Somerset	3	6
Hertfordshire	1	21	Staffordshire	1	13
Huntingdon/		•	Suffolk and		!
Peterborough	1	13	Ipswich	1	19
Kent(including			Surrey	-	4
Canterbury)	7	39	Sussex, East	2	9
Lancashire	5	107	Sussex, West	4	10°
Leicestershire/			Warwickshire	1	13
Rutland	_	2	Wiltshire	-	1
Lines(Holland)	-	1	Worcester City		
Lincs(Lindsey)	-	2	and County	-	1
London)Greater)	43	243	Yorkshire(East		
Monmouthshire	_	1	Riding)	-	5
Norfolk	2.	8	Yorkshire(West		
Northamptonshire	-	3	Riding)	2	39
Northumberland	3	10			

(C) Scottish Fire Brigades

	No. of casualties		
Brigade	Fatal	Non-fatal	
Glæsgow	8	32	
Lanark	4	38	
Central	2	1	
Western	3	6	
South Western	1.	18	
South Eastern	2	31	
Fife	4	2	
A ngus	3	5	
North Eastern	-	9	
Northern	11	4	

(D) Northern Irish Fire Brigades

	No. of casualties			
Brigade	Fatal Non-fa			
North South West Belfast	- 2 - 1	6 4 3 8		

