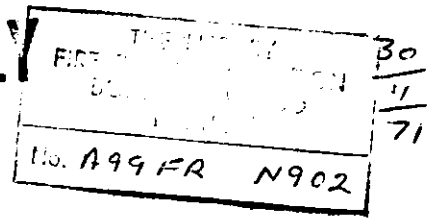


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Fire Research Note

No 902

FIRE DEATHS IN THE THIRD QUARTER OF 1971

by

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November 1971

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F.R. Note No.902
November 1971

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SUMMARY

A preliminary analysis shows that 83 persons died in fires in the period July to September 1971. Of these, 74 were in England and Wales and 9 in Scotland. An unstated number of fatalities occurred in one incident reported from Northern Ireland.

The most serious incident reported in the quarter was a crash on the M6, giving rise to six fire deaths.

KEY WORDS: Fatalities, fire statistics

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND FIRE OFFICES' COMMITTEE
JOINT FIRE RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

FIRE DEATHS IN THE THIRD QUARTER OF 1971

by

S. E. Chandler and Jean E. Woolley

INTRODUCTION

A preliminary analysis of casualties in fires shows that, in the third quarter of 1971, 83 persons died in fires attended by fire brigades in the United Kingdom. Of these, 74 were in England and Wales, and 9 in Scotland. There was one fire in Northern Ireland in which the report received indicated that there had been fatal casualties, but the number was not stated. No further reference is made to this fire in this report. Because of the unsettled situation in Northern Ireland, it is possible that not all incidents involving fatal casualties will have been reported.

The most serious incident in the quarter was on the M6 motorway when six people died in a fire resulting from a crash. Three children died in a house fire in Salford of which the cause was recorded as 'unknown'.

Tables 1-4 give details of hazard, time of call, source of ignition and dates of construction (where applicable) with respect to fatal fires. Table 5A gives the age and sex distribution of fatal casualties, and the causes of death are given in Table 5B. The numbers of fatal and non-fatal casualties in each brigade area are shown in Table 6.

This analysis is based on reports received up to 31 October 1971 and is subject to revision when outstanding reports are received.

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

Hazard in which fire started	No. of fatal fires	No. of multiple death fires	No. of deaths	No. of deaths in multiple death fires
TOTAL	61	8	74	21
IN BUILDINGS Total	50	6	57	13
Industry	2	-	2	-
Medical services	2	-	2	-
Clubs, hotels, restaurants and public houses	2	1	3	2
Houses - detached or semi-detached	5	2	7	4
- terraced	3	-	3	-
- not stated	19	2	22	5
Flats - in blocks	5	1	6	2
- converted	3	-	3	-
- other or not stated	4	-	4	-
Non-institutional dwellings as part of other occupancies	1	-	1	-
Private sheds, garages, etc	1	-	1	-
Other	3	-	3	-
NOT IN BUILDINGS Total	11	2	17	8
Road vehicles	7	2	13	8
Other means of transport	3	-	3	-
Caravans	-	-	-	-
Other	1	-	1	-

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

Time of call to fires	No. of fatal fires	No. of multiple death fires	No. of deaths	No. of deaths in multiple death fires
TOTAL	61	8	74	21
Midnight - 02.59	6	1	11	6
03.00 - 05.59	8	1	9	2
06.00 - 08.59	7	1	8	2
09.00 - 11.59	7	-	7	-
12.00 - 14.59	6	1	7	2
15.00 - 17.59	9	-	9	-
18.00 - 20.59	6	1	7	2
21.00 - 23.59	8	1	10	3
Late call	4	2	6	4

Table 1B. Hazard in which fire started (Scotland)

Hazard in which fire started	No. of fatal fires	No. of multiple death fires	No. of deaths	No. of deaths in multiple death fires
TOTAL	8	1	9	2
IN BUILDINGS Total	8	1	9	2
Houses - detached or semi detached	1	-	1	-
Flats - in blocks	3	1	4	2
- other or not stated	2	-	2	-
Other	2	-	2	-

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

Time of call to fires	No. of fatal fires	No. of multiple death fires	No. of deaths	No. of deaths in multiple death fires
TOTAL	8	1	9	2
Midnight - 02.59	3	1	4	2
12.00 - 14.59	1	-	1	-
15.00 - 17.59	2	-	2	-
18.00 - 20.59	1	-	1	-
21.00 - 23.59	1	-	1	-

Table 3A. Source of ignition of fires (England and Wales)

Source of ignition of fire	No. of fatal fires	No. of multiple death fires	No. of deaths	No. of deaths in multiple death fires
TOTAL	61	8	74	21
Children with fire	1	-	1	-
Crash or collision	3	2	9	8
Malicious ignition, suicide	7	1	8	2
Matches, tapers, etc.	3	-	3	-
Smoking materials	15	-	15	-
Electric - wire and cable	3	-	3	-
- blanket	1	-	1	-
Gas - cooking	3	-	3	-
Solid fuel - fire in grate	1	-	1	-
Oil - other than spacing heating	1	-	1	-
Other	2	-	2	-
Unknown*	21	5	27	11

*Includes fires reported as 'Unknown, pending inquest'

Table 4A. Date of construction of buildings (where applicable)
(England and Wales)

Date of construction	No. of fatal fires	No. of multiple death fires	No. of deaths	No. of deaths in multiple death fires
TOTAL	61	8	74	21
Pre - 1900	12	2	15	5
1900 - 1909	8	1	9	2
1910 - 1919	4	-	4	-
1920 - 1929	3	-	3	-
1930 - 1939	11	-	11	-
1950 - 1959	5	-	5	-
1960 onwards	4	3	7	6
Not stated	4	-	4	-
Not applicable (outdoor hazard)	10	2	16	8

Table 3B. Source of ignition of fires (Scotland)

Source of ignition of fire	No. of fatal fires	No. of multiple death fires	No. of deaths	No. of deaths in multiple death fires
TOTAL	8	1	9	2
Children with fire	2	-	2	-
Smoking materials	2	-	2	-
Other	1	-	1	-
Unknown*	3	1	4	2

*Includes fires reported as 'Unknown, pending inquest'

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

Date of construction	No. of fatal fires	No. of multiple death fires	No. of deaths	No. of deaths in multiple death fires
TOTAL	8	1	9	2
1900 - 1909	2	-	2	-
1920 - 1929	2	1	3	2
1930 - 1939	1	-	1	-
1940 - 1949	2	-	2	-
Not stated	1	-	1	-
Not applicable (outdoor hazard)	-	-	-	-

Table 5A. Sex and age of fatal casualties

Age (years)	England and Wales		Scotland	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
TOTAL	43	31	6	3
Under 1	-	-	-	-
1 - 4	5	3	1	-
5 - 14	2	2	1	-
15 - 44	12	10	1	1
45 - 64	7	4	-	2
65 - 74	5	5	3	-
75 and over	11	7	-	-
Not stated	1	-	-	-

Table 5B. Cause of death

Cause of death	England and Wales	Scotland
TOTAL	74	9
Burns	28	2
Asphyxiation	21	2
Other and Unknown	25	5

Table 6. Numbers of casualties in each brigade area

	Fatal	Non-fatal
UNITED KINGDOM	83	703
England & Wales	74	621
Scotland	9	74
Northern Ireland	*	8

*See introduction

(A) English and Welsh County Borough Fire Brigades

Brigade	Fatal	Non-fatal	Brigade	Fatal	Non-fatal
Barrow in Furness	-	1	Liverpool	-	13
Bath	-	2	Manchester	1	12
Birkenhead	1	2	Newcastle/Gateshead	1	11
Birmingham	1	37	Newport (Mon.)	1	4
Blackburn	-	2	Norwich	-	1
Blackpool	-	4	Nottingham	-	10
Bolton	-	3	Oldham	-	3
Bootle	-	1	Plymouth	-	2
Bournemouth	-	1	Portsmouth	1	3
Bradford	3	3	Preston	-	7
Bristol	2	8	Rochdale	-	1
Burton upon Trent	-	2	Rotherham	-	3
Bury	-	1	St Helens	-	3
Carlisle	-	1	Salford	3	4
Coventry	-	5	Sheffield	2	7
Derby	-	1	Southend	-	2
Dewsbury	-	1	Stockport	-	1
Dudley	-	6	Stoke-on-Trent	-	6
Eastbourne	-	1	Sunderland	-	3
Gloucester	-	2	Tynemouth	-	4
Great Yarmouth	-	1	Wallasey	-	3
Grimsby	-	5	Warrington	-	1
Halifax	-	1	Hartlepool	-	2
Hastings	-	3	Wigan	-	2
Huddersfield	-	5	Wolverhampton	-	5
Kingston upon Hull	-	4	Warley	-	5
Leeds	2	10	West Bromwich	-	4
Leicester	-	3	Tees-side	1	5

(B) English and Welsh County Fire Brigades

Brigade	Fatal	Non-fatal	Brigade	Fatal	Non-fatal
Bedfordshire	1	-	Lincolnshire (Kesteven)	-	1
Berkshire and Reading	-	2	Lincolnshire (Lindsey)	1	1
Caernarvonshire	-	5	London (Greater)	17	128
Cardigan/Carmarthen	-	7	Norfolk	1	4
Cheshire	-	3	Northamptonshire	1	-
Cornwall	3	12	Northumberland	-	8
Cumberland	-	5	Nottinghamshire	-	8
Denbigh/Montgomery	2	6	Pembrokeshire	1	3
Derbyshire	1	7	Somerset	1	7
Dorset	-	1	Staffordshire	6	8
Durham (Co.)	-	4	Suffolk and Ipswich	-	8
Essex	2	26	Surrey	1	-
Flintshire	-	1	Sussex, East	2	7
Glamorgan	2	8	Warwickshire	1	12
Gloucestershire	-	1	Wight, Isle of	-	1
Hampshire	-	2	Worcester City/County	-	7
Huntingdon/Peterborough	-	1	Yorkshire (North Riding)	-	3
Kent	3	23	Yorkshire (West Riding)	4	16
Lancashire	5	42			

(C) Scottish Fire Brigades

Brigade	Fatal	Non-fatal
Glasgow	3	19
Lanarkshire	2	7
Central	-	6
Western	-	5
South Western	-	2
South Eastern	1	17
Fife	-	2
Perth and Kinross	1	1
Angus	1	3
North Eastern	-	9
Northern	1	3

(D) Northern Irish Fire Brigades

Brigade	Fatal	Non-fatal
Belfast	*	8

*See introduction

