



Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate for Scotland

Performance Monitoring Inspection of Central Scotland Fire Brigade

Central Scotland Fire Board

Falkirk Council
Municipal Buildings
Falkirk FK1 5RS
Convener: Thomas Coll
Clerk: Elizabeth Morton
Treasurer: Alec Janetta

Central Scotland Fire Brigade

Fire Brigade Headquarters
Main Street
Maddiston
Falkirk FK2 0IG
Firemaster:
A J Early QFSM Bsc MIFireE
MIOSH

Geographical Area: 2,652 km²

Population: 281,600

Staff: Wholetime: 243
Retained: 173
Volunteers: 7
Control: 17
Non-uniformed: 30

Vehicles: Pumping appliances: 27
Midi Fire appliances: 2
Aerial appliances: 1
Special appliances: 7

Total calls received: 5,107

Total incidents attended: 4,951

Fire Safety Inspections:

Statutory Inspections: 2,408
Other Inspections: 1,063
Plans examined: 77

Budget (expenditure):£12,330,000

INTRODUCTION

Central Scotland Fire Brigade was inspected by HM Fire Service Inspectorate during 31 October and 1 November 2000. The Inspection was undertaken to monitor performance and seeks to inform the public and those responsible for the fire service on current activities.

In addition the inspection provides continuity between the principal inspections conducted every three years and an updating regarding relevant professional matters.

The inspection team consisted of HM Chief Inspector Dennis Davis assisted by Inspectors Allan Whitton, Charles Stewart and Angelo Errigo. Firemaster John Early was available with his senior managers throughout the inspection.

KEY FINDINGS

The key findings of the inspection were:

- The review of management structure requires further definition and submission as a formal change to the establishment.
- A formal application to cease the establishment of a volunteer station at Lochearnhead should be made.
- Urgent arrangements should be made to evaluate and establish a firm fire safety management process.

MANAGEMENT

It is pleasing to note that further development has occurred to introduce a structured and strategic approach to Brigade planning. The work originally seen as part of the Best Value Review in March this year has advanced. Whilst further detail is being incorporated within the planning process, which will need to be amended to reflect the new structure being proposed for management, there is general progress in the whole strategic process. The integration of the financial planning process and the generally adopted budgetary control mechanism for 2001/02 apparently reflect the requirements of the Brigade. There will be a requirement to formally submit for establishment variation the proposals arising from the 21st Century Review (21CR) designed to secure improved management and career development.

HUMAN RESOURCES

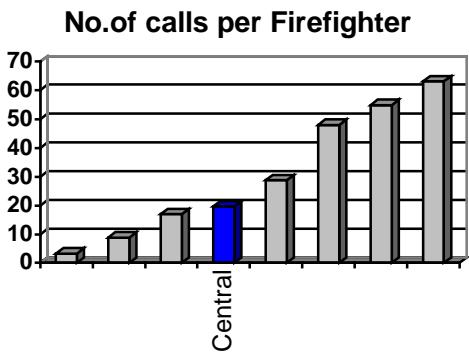
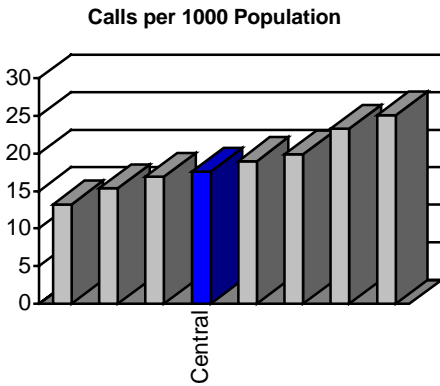
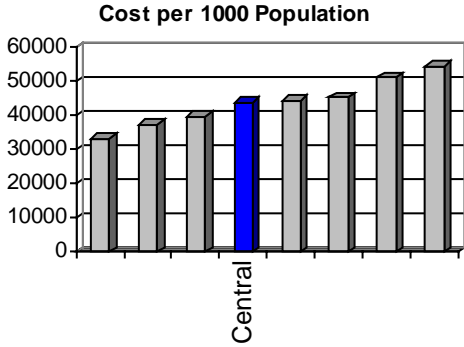
The 2 prime functions within Human Resources, namely Training and Personnel continue to perform well under the direction of the Divisional Officers who head those particular departments. A number of initiatives are in the process of being introduced in relation to a ‘Competency Framework’ and many of these have cut across areas of Training, Equality and Health and Safety, generating a number of issues that the Brigade has had to identify resources to address.

OPERATIONS

Satisfactory process continues with the production of operational plans, the revision of procedures and the provision of fire appliances and operational equipment. However, the proposed new structure for the Department will need to be carefully developed to ensure the Head of Operations has sufficient support staff to enable him to carry out his function efficiently and effectively. Practical improvements are also considered necessary to ensure firefighter safety at cross-border incidents in relation to interoperability of procedures in command and control and use of breathing apparatus.

FIRE SAFETY

It is considered that the Brigade, having successfully carried out a desk top risk assessment of their fire safety workload some 18 months ago, should now revisit that work and carry out a validation process. This process should ascertain the departmental requirements in terms of staffing hours of working, grades and ranks of inspecting officers, administrative staff and those involved with the delivery of Community Fire Safety (CFS). It is recognised that there is an existing comprehensive written policy on the aims and objectives for the promotion of both the statutory fire prevention and CFS functions that has been ratified by the fire authority.



**PERFORMANCE MONITORING
INSPECTION OF CENTRAL
SCOTLAND FIRE BRIGADE**

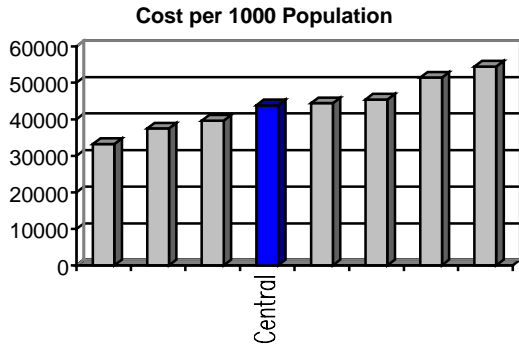
October 2000

A Report by
HM Fire Service Inspectorate for Scotland
Saughton House
Edinburgh

INTRODUCTION

1. Central Scotland Fire Brigade was inspected by HM Fire Service Inspectorate during 31 October and 1 November 2000. The inspection team consisted of HM Chief Inspector Dennis Davis assisted by Inspectors Allan Whitton, Charles Stewart and Angelo Errigo. Firemaster John Early was available with his senior managers throughout the Inspection.
2. HM Fire Service Inspectorate conducts routine inspections in all 8 fire brigades in Scotland and the Scottish Fire Service Training School. A Principal Inspection is conducted every 3 years whilst in each intervening year a Performance Monitoring Inspection is undertaken. This inspection is to monitor performance and seeks to inform the public and those responsible for the fire service on current activities. In addition the inspection provides continuity between the principal inspections conducted every three years and an updating regarding relevant professional matters. Areas subjected to consideration for review are shown in Appendix A, although only those deserving note are mentioned in this report.
3. The key findings from the inspection were:
 - The review of management structure requires further definition and submission as a formal change to the establishment.
 - A formal application to cease the establishment of a volunteer station at Lochearnhead should be made.
 - Urgent arrangements should be made to evaluate and establish a firm fire safety management process.
4. Against the background of these principal findings it is confirmed that operational service delivery both for firefighting and rescue and preventative services are operating efficiently. The improvements identified are required to ensure that the service can confront the many substantial issues which will have to be pursued in the very near future.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING INSPECTION OF CENTRAL SCOTLAND FIRE BRIGADE



PREVIOUS REPORT

6. The Brigade was last formally inspected during the week of 17 August 1998. The following summarises actions to date regarding the recommendations made.

Establishments

[Discuss with the local community the disbandment of Lochearnhead Volunteer Unit] Changes have occurred at Lochearnhead which render this original consideration inappropriate. A formal Section 19 application is required to vary establishment arrangements.

Finance

[Fire Board allocation of budget in line with GAE assessment does not reflect expected high ill-health retirements] This problem persists and discussions are ongoing to resolve pension funding. Care needs to be taken to avoid impact upon the operational service.

Operations

[Recruit retained personnel capable of providing cover for the 24 hours period and improve the attendance times] This year has shown improvement in recruitment and attendance times by retained personnel.

[Instruct junior officers on classes of defects, when to proceed at reduced speed and when to book vehicle off the run. Publish a list of defects which prohibit the use of the vehicles] Not implemented. A senior officer is notified if a pump goes off the run. However, it is important to ensure all drivers are made aware of the road safety requirements relating to the use of their vehicles.

[Implement a Health and Safety plan with fixed timescales] Implemented.

[Health and Safety performance to be measured throughout the organisation] Implemented.

[Health and Safety Officer to assess all the accidents, injury, sickness, ill-health and absenteeism statistics for the true costs throughout the organisation] Most issues are being recorded except where personal confidentiality is an issue. A cost benefit analysis is underway to assess the value of introducing an in-house physiotherapy service.

Fire Safety

[Develop and put into operation a 5-year business plan on fire safety related issues] This has been achieved.

[Continue examining and considering premises that qualify for exemption under the provisions of Section 5A of the 1971 Act] This activity is now concluded.

7. It will be noted that the Brigade has implemented some but not all of the previous recommendations. Minor changes are required to improve operational availability of appliances.

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Overview

8. It is pleasing to note that further development has occurred to introduce a structured and strategic approach to Brigade planning. The work originally seen as part of the Best Value Review in March this year has advanced. Whilst further detail is being incorporated within the planning process, which will need to be amended to reflect the new structure being proposed for management, there is general progress in the whole strategic process. The integration of the financial planning process and the generally adopted budgetary control mechanism for 2001/02 apparently reflect the requirements of the Brigade. There will be a requirement to formally submit for establishment variation the proposals arising from the 21st Century Review (21CR) designed to secure improved management and career development.

Project 21 CR

9. Presentation was made by the Management Team to the Inspectorate on this project which relates to a 21st Century Review [21CR]. Also present was the Vice-Convener, David Speirs. The review outlined in some detail that considerable work had been undertaken to assess and provide a new system of management to provide an operating regime which followed Best Value principles, helped carry forward the principal aims of the Brigade and offered career progression opportunities. It was felt such a change was necessary since the existing system was not conducive to career growth, had not been particularly inclusive of all personnel, had elements of dubiety and had consequently left some resources untapped. It was emphasised that financial savings were not a prime driver for the review being conducted.
10. It was evident in listening to the detail of the review that substantial thought had been given to the establishment of 4 senior positions below that of Firemaster and Deputy Firemaster. These new 'Director' positions, related to Community Protective Services; Personnel and Development; Corporate Affairs; and Corporate Services. They were designed to provide a structure which related to the functional commands now encompassed within the Brigade's own strategic plan.
11. A systematic and quantified approach had been taken with detailed information being offered as to how each functional command would operate within the responsibilities of the Director. Also within these considerations operational performance, with regard to the Brigade's known operational risks, including a major hazard site, had been included. The primary consequence of these deliberations was the removal of an Assistant Firemaster post and the replacement of existing Divisional Officer Grade II posts with 8 posts, 3 graded at Divisional Officer I and 5 at Divisional Officer III level, so removing all Divisional Officer Grade II posts from the establishment.
12. The presentation indicated a logical and extensive review. In discussion with the Inspectorate it was confirmed that following implementation of the uniformed restructure, adjustment will be made to the support services required for this new structure and as to whether some aspects of the management functions should be placed outside the Brigade. It was also indicated that collaboration with other brigades and the requirements for support within the new structure were issues which had been recognised and would be considered in the near future.

13. The new structure does provide career progression and in that context opens the organisation for career advancement in a way which is not currently available. This is to be welcomed. There were however a number of points raised which do need further assessment. The structure as defined is quite heavy in relationship to the ranks of the uniformed Directors. There may be some justification to this requirement given the operational demands evident within the Brigade area. Quantification of these demands and the introduction of a robust operational rota for senior staff, is viewed as a matter for further detailed consideration.
14. In a similar way there is a need to quantify workload of the various functional commands. The Deputy Firemaster did indicate that time assessments had been conducted, and job descriptions prepared to support quantification of these posts, although these assessments were not available during the presentation. As part of the distribution of workload there will be a requirement, given the equivalency of ranks as outlined amongst the Directors, for some equitability of distribution of responsibilities and accountability amongst the functional commands. One such issue is the management of emergency planning for major hazard sites, where the Brigade indicated removal of a key post. Reassessment of this need is suggested. There are also questions to be resolved relating to cross-over issues between functions, matters such as the management of information, communications and information technology. Many of these matters relate to the support organisation which has yet to be evaluated. A further matter is the need to ensure that the structure, once introduced, can cope with the likely demands which will arise in the near future. Finally there are the responsibility and supervision as exercised by the Firemaster and his Deputy. The proposals outlined do not envisage a strategic level of monitoring and this will need to be addressed.
15. It is important, given the nature of the structural review, that it does incorporate sufficient command training for the senior staff who will have responsibility for major incident management of the type likely to arise in this brigade. The measurement of the tasks to be undertaken in day-to-day management issues needs to be realistic, given the range of responsibilities. There is also a requirement to ensure that performance management and monitoring is robust.
16. In summary, in welcoming the proposals providing as they do broad improvement for career progression, stakeholder focus, operational cover and clarification of responsibilities, the Inspectorate would wish to see demonstrated, as part of a formal application for change in establishment, evidence which supports the following:
 - (a) a robust operational duty roster and command training system;
 - (b) quantification of the workload between individual functional commands;
 - (c) equitability of the grading and distribution of that workload between various officers within the proposed structure;
 - (d) identification of the options for management of cross-cutting issues, particularly related to management support;
 - (e) indications that new demands have been considered as part of the validation workloads; and
 - (f) definition of the personal accountabilities for the 2 Principal Officers.

Service Planning

17. The process of service planning contains an expressed principal aim within the Brigade Business Plan. Underpinning the principal aim a number of objectives have been expressed. It is evident that elements and skills within the planning process are still developing, but that the central arrangements are in place. One further proposal is to invite 2 members of the Fire Board to join the Brigade Planning Steering Group [BPSG], of Firemaster and Deputy, which has ownership and responsibility for Brigade planning function.
18. The existing process involves the heads of functions formally submitting to the BPSG proposals for incorporation within the overall Brigade plan. These submissions are made from a functional level informally to BPSG before being introduced to the wider Management Team. Indications are that this process enables individual development and exploratory discussion in a way which could not be incorporated if the whole Management Team were involved in the process.
19. It is the Inspectorate's view that in future this formulation of proposals should include the whole Management Team in open discussion, so that when the strategic portfolio is developed from individual projects and reviews, due consideration will have been given to resourcing those requirements by incorporating them within a comprehensive planning process.
20. It is also important that the monitoring arrangements now individually ascribed to each function as part of the plan do become part of a much broader Management Team review process, so that there is collective corporate debate and responsibility for the holistic development of the Brigade.
21. Currently information is selected and circulated on a controlled basis. Again, as the system develops, encouragement of a wider sharing of information is suggested. Helpful in this regard is the use of the already established Brigade Intranet which will provide a mechanism for circulation amongst functional heads of available information. This will become more important, given the devolved nature of the business planning process.

Finance Management

22. The existing allocation of resources is controlled by the Fire Board through its proper officers. Discussions occur as part of the budget process. It was further advised that the fire service GAE distribution to the constituent authorities of Central Scotland Fire Brigade has sometimes formed the focus of foundation for the budget. There is a danger that adopting GAE in this way, as a target for expenditure, fails to reflect accurately the needs of the Brigade. Conducting a base budget review as part of the budget consultation is a better way of targeting of expenditure. It is interesting to note in discussions with the Trade Unions that they share the concern of management that budget proposals were not necessarily based upon expenditure, either historically or by identified need. In addition, the current budget appears to have included unrealistic assessments of pension expenditure and income generation. It is considered that this needs addressing if budget management is to be effective and avoid significant in-year variations.

23. Overall budget management does seem to be effective with reports relating to expenditure being timely and accurate. There are well established financial management procedures for control of expenditure and there have been modest improvements in performance in areas such as energy conservation. It was however equally noted that prioritisation of expenditure, accepted as locally determined, has included less than essential capital items, like a vehicle washing facility at Falkirk Fire Station.

Resource Management

24. The adoption of a Brigade plan has provided a structure which now enables resource allocations to be accurately determined. Introduced within the planning process are issues relating to Best Value and best practice. Consultation occurs at all levels as part of the planning process, and this will grow in strength as the existing arrangements are progressively improved. It was also noted that the Brigade is to begin discussions regarding the service level agreements with Falkirk Council who provide legal and financial services. The use of SLAs will help reinforce the Brigade's approach to Best Value and is to be welcomed.

Use of Capital Assets

25. The capital expenditure programme for 2000/01 has had to be modified to cater for the current uncertainty on realisation of capital receipts. It is noted, however, that there are proposals for the replacement of Callander Fire Station with an identified 2000/01 capital bid of £140,000. Due to difficulties with the capital programme this project has now been carried forward to 2001/2 at £370,000.
26. The Fire Board had elected not to utilise £75,000 of the current Capital From Current Revenue (CFCR), which had originally been allocated for property maintenance purposes, but had included £86,000 in the 2001/2 Property Maintenance Revenue Budget. This is welcomed since it is important to maintain the current satisfactory standard of property maintenance.

Consultations

27. The Brigade has a well established pattern of internal consultations which involve the majority of staff in the policy formation process. It was indicated by senior representatives of the Fire Brigades' Union and the local UNISON Branch, that management have recently moved towards a more open, cultural style of inclusiveness with all staff. This the trade unions welcomed. The Union representatives also indicated that they generally considered management to be business-like, effective and moving towards greater staff involvement in all their discussions. Some indication was also given, that internal communications between management levels could be improved to give internal consultations a higher level of confidence in areas like the communicating of agreed decisions.
28. In general the staff representatives indicated they were involved therefore in the consultation about the strategic aims of the service and understood the various challenges that are having to be faced by the service. They also indicated that management was generally supportive of staff, whilst recognising there were practical limitations to that support.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Overview

29. The 2 prime functions within Human Resources, namely Training and Personnel continue to perform well under the direction of the Divisional Officers who head those particular departments. A number of initiatives are in the process of being introduced in relation to a 'Competency Framework' and many of these have cut across all three areas of Training, Equality and Health and Safety, generating a number of issues that the Brigade has had to identify resources to address.
30. Since the promotion of the Firemaster, Health and Safety reporting lines have been left as a temporary arrangement awaiting confirmation of a possible management restructure. Once a new structure is adopted many of the issues identified during the inspection will naturally be absorbed within the organisation.

Training

31. Pleasing progress has been recorded in a number of areas including those relating to health and safety and diversity of the workforce. Those activities suggested for further improvement include greater administrative and training support.
32. The Training Department operates under the control of a Divisional Officer Grade II, and is divided into three areas with an Assistant Divisional Officer responsible for each area, namely commercial training, service delivery and policy development. The department delivers a wide range of courses including a five day retained firefighter recruit course, a 5 day retained firefighter BA course, command and control training, first aid training and various driver training courses. In relation to the latter it is pleasing to see that all aspects of Brigade driving are taken into account by the provision of such courses as Light Goods Vehicle, Emergency Fire Appliance Driver, EFAD refresher, responding officer and training for LGV class 3 drivers.
33. During the past year the Brigade has successfully continued to develop its strategy for introducing a competency based framework for training. As well as these in-house initiatives the Training Officer has also been actively involved in addressing these and related issues through regional committees and working groups. The net outcome is that the Brigade is making good progress towards the implementation of an effective system for competency based training.
34. Also in the past year the Brigade has successfully gained the Investors In People award in recognition of the importance that the Brigade places in its employees. In the main the award has had little effect on the Brigade but it has been instrumental in raising the profile of development in relation to non-uniformed personnel. As a result Scottish Vocational Qualifications have been introduced for many of the support staff at various levels in the organisation.
35. A limited budget of £2000 is available for personal development and is allocated on a first come first served basis. Financial support is given up to 100% but will depend on the relevance of the training to the work activity. At present two non-uniformed members have 100% funding for Higher National Certificate courses in Business Administration, two sub-officers have 100% funding for IT courses and a Station

Officer is receiving 50% support for a BA in Business Studies, dependant upon achievement of the qualification.

36. The Training Department has been instrumental in the recent introduction of a formal debriefing policy. The procedures which include incident and activity debriefs allows for Immediate Post Incident debriefing, a Structured debrief and Periodic debrief. The system, which will allow the Brigade to learn from 'success and failure', puts in place a procedure whereby all lessons learned can be fed into the Strategic planning level of the Brigade.
37. In relation to First Aid Training, the Brigade has decided to adopt the 'Strathclyde' model and subsequently issued every wholetime station with the relevant training pack. In addition to this training the Brigade continues to run a four hour Emergency First Aider course for all staff both uniformed and non-uniformed, who do not hold a First Aid Certificate, and a First Aid and Trauma Management Course and Refresher for wholetime and retained staff who hold a full First Aid Certificate.
38. The Brigade continues to operate a two-hour retained training night, supported by weekend training sessions. Such a policy may need to be reviewed with the development of the competency framework. The Brigade also trains its own retained recruits with a one week basic module. This training is supported by a retained recruit training programme that spans up to a nine month period. During this time the recruit will be given closer supervision both operationally and while training to ensure a safe system of work.

Personnel Issues

39. The Brigade has recently changed its procedures in relation to recruitment and selection. Random selection is no longer used in the process. All applicants are now given the opportunity of entering into the selection process. An initial sift is carried out by the Occupational Health Nurse, based on the information given in a confidential medical pro-forma. All those applicants who pass this sift will be invited to attend for the written tests.
40. The Equality and Fairness Officer closely monitors the whole process and has access to statistics allowing him to audit the whole procedure. However as no monitoring of the medical decisions taken by the Occupational Health Nurse during the initial sift takes place, it is suggested that random sampling by a second medically qualified person be introduced into the process.
41. Every member of the Brigade undergoes a three-yearly medical, with the opportunity of voluntarily receiving annual fitness monitoring. This is supported by fitness instructors on every wholetime watch. Although there is little uptake for fitness monitoring from the retained members, each station and watch - both wholetime and retained - does receive an annual visit from the Occupational Health Nurse to discuss health issues.

Equal Opportunities

42. The Brigade has been actively involved in a number of equality initiatives over the past year. These have included:

- The first careers awareness day specifically for women, black and ethnic minorities. This was held during October at Falkirk Fire Station and although the numbers attending were not high (24 women, one of whom was from an ethnic minority and two ethnic minority males) lessons have been learnt and it is hoped to repeat the event next year.
 - All Brigade personnel (including support staff, workshops, wholetime and retained) with the exception of Headquarters' officers have received training on Harassment and Bullying policies and procedures. The training has been delivered in-house by uniformed officers and is supported by the personal issue to every member of an explanation booklet and a network of harassment counsellors within the Brigade. These counsellors are volunteers drawn from all across the Brigade who have all received training from harassment counsellors from Falkirk Council. The Brigade's Occupational Health Nurse also plays an active roll as a lead counsellor for any member wishing to discuss issues on harassment or bullying.
 - A link has been forged with Falkirk Women's Technology Group, a women's re-employment aid group. The initiative is for a four-month period during which time the group will work with the Brigade to produce a questionnaire for completion by women looking for employment. The aim is to get a view of employment in the fire service along with local recruitment initiatives from a wide range of women in the community.
 - It is proposed that equality training will take place across the Brigade in the coming year. Once again this will be delivered in-house by uniformed officers who have been specifically trained for that purpose.
43. The Brigade has worked hard to develop external partnerships and relationships and enjoys its equality and fairness officer having a seat as a director on the Central Scotland Racial Equality Council.

Health and Safety

44. The Brigade has an Assistant Divisional Officer who carries out the duties of the Health and Safety Advisor and reports directly to the Firemaster on Health, Safety and Welfare issues. However this is a short-term arrangement following the Firemaster's promotion from his previous position as the officer with responsibility for Health and Safety in the Brigade.
45. Since his promotion the Firemaster no longer chairs the Health, Safety and Welfare Committee. This responsibility now sits with the Divisional Officer who heads the Operations function. Once again this is a short-term arrangement that is due to be reviewed in the coming months. The Committee has representatives from all the trades unions in the Brigade including the Royal College of Nursing. One of the strengths of the committee is that all accidents and near miss reports are presented at the meetings for discussion.
46. The Brigade now has a three-year service plan for Health, Safety and Welfare issues, which is prepared by the Health and Safety Advisor and reviewed in December of each year. The Brigade has fallen short of achieving its projected plan through lack of resources, however this problem has been addressed within the past two months by the allocation of Health and Safety responsibilities to a Station Officer (Watch Commander) on each of the four wholetime stations. All health, safety and welfare issues relating to that particular station will be dealt with by the nominated Station Officer. Additional project work may be allocated to these officers by the Health and Safety Advisor dependent on individual workloads, but their initial priority will be to carry out risk assessments for all off-station training sites.
47. In the coming year the Brigade should issue a revised Health and Safety policy document reflecting the current or revised management structure. Consideration at that time should also be given to a joint signing of the document by the Firemaster and Convenor.

48. The Brigade should also consider the presentation of the Health, Safety and Welfare Committee minutes at the Brigade Management Team meetings. This would ensure that all senior members of the Brigade would have an awareness and ownership of health and safety issues and initiatives within the Brigade. It would also be advisable to have a health and safety item placed as a matter of course on the agenda of all meetings.
49. During the inspection it was assessed that the Health and Safety Advisor had a full understanding of his reference, not only in relation to the practical elements of his responsibilities but also from a theoretical viewpoint, the latter assisted by his studies at NEBOSH Diploma level. However the manual system of information retrieval on health safety and welfare issues available to him is slow and resource intensive. The current initiatives to secure a safety event database should be progressed with urgency.
50. With respect to qualifications the Brigade should be congratulated on its achievement of qualifying all officers from Assistant Divisional Officer and above with a NEBOSH certificate and numerous other officers with the Managing Safety certificate.

OPERATIONS

Overview

51. Satisfactory progress continues with the production of operational plans, the revision of procedures and the provision of fire appliances and operational equipment. However, the proposed new structure for the Department will need to be carefully developed to ensure the Head of Operations has sufficient support staff to enable him to carry out his function efficiently and effectively. Practical improvements are also considered necessary to ensure firefighter safety at cross-border incidents in relation to interoperability of procedures in command and control and use of breathing apparatus.

Operational Performance

52. Two exercises were organised by the Brigade during the inspection to provide an opportunity to assess operational performance. One exercise was conducted at Springkerse Industrial Estate, Stirling, and involved a deep sewer rescue. The objective of this scenario was to test working between wholetime and part-time personnel, command and control procedures, breathing apparatus procedures and manual handling techniques. The second exercise was held at Falkirk Fire Station and was designed to simulate an incident at a refrigeration warehouse, the objectives of this scenario being to reinforce hazardous material procedures, to exercise retrieval and command and control.
53. The exercises were successfully accomplished with all objectives being achieved in a satisfactory manner. At the Springkerse exercise, particular proficiency was shown in the use of lifting equipment to achieve an efficient rescue with manual handling techniques being competently displayed. At both exercises competent use was made of communications, including the use of the laptop computers in the vehicles.

Operational Management

54. The Operations Department is responsible for planning and co-ordinating the Brigade's emergency response for dealing with operational incidents and for ensuring appropriate equipment is available to deal with those tasks.
55. Adequate arrangements exist for the production and revision of plans for dealing with Major Incidents. This work, which hitherto was carried out by the Brigade Emergency Planning Staff Officer, is being transferred to the Group Commanders within the Operations Department, who will liaise with the local authorities and other agencies. The need to reconsider this reallocation of responsibilities is referred to earlier in this report.
56. The Major Incident Plans are supplemented by Operational Plans (Safety Case - Risk Assessments) which contain operational aide memoirs that are available to operational personnel responding to incidents. These plans include arrangements for damage limitation and minimising the effects of pollution at incidents. However, the Brigade may wish to consider a more formal arrangement with local authorities for the removal of contaminants where necessary.

57. The plans are reviewed on a 6-monthly basis and relevant details from the plans are held on the laptop personal computers provided on fire appliances.
58. The operational planning process was verified by assessing the arrangements in place for GR Advanced Materials Ltd, Stirling. The audit confirmed satisfactory operational preparedness with information from the safety case, operational risk information - section (1(1)(d)) - that included site and floor plans of the premises plus the hazardous materials information, all being readily obtainable from the database provided on the laptop computers.
59. The Brigade is in the process of revising their procedures for Incident Command in accordance with the guidance contained in the Fire Service Manual. Training on the new system is about to commence with implementation early in the new year. A revised fireground radio structure and procedures that will complement the Command and Control system is currently being trialled. Revised Breathing Apparatus Command and Control Procedures as detailed in Technical Bulletin 1/97 have also been introduced. Although verbal discussions have been held with neighbouring brigades regarding a number of these issues, the Brigade could not confirm that efficient interoperability or equipment compatibility could be achieved at cross-border incidents. In ensuring effective mutual aid and the safety of personnel it is essential information on operational procedures and practices is exchanged with neighbouring brigades. It would also be beneficial to have joint training sessions to ensure satisfactory procedures and safe working practices are maintained at cross-border incidents.
60. At the time of inspection the Brigade was in the process of revising their current operational risk information (Section 1(1)(d)). The information held by the Brigade is being updated incorporating a risk assessment based approach and all plans are being verified for accuracy. This information, along with site specific risk assessments, should be shared with the relevant adjacent brigades.
61. With the introduction of new roads around Falkirk the opportunity has been taken to review the pre-determined attendances in the Falkirk and Larbert turn-out areas.
62. There is no formal arrangement in place between different sections of the Brigade, in particular fire safety and operations, for sharing information on premises and risks. In the interests of Best Value the Brigade may wish to review the process for risk assessment, by linking the different risk assessment approaches, by standardising formats and by exchanging data utilising common terminology.
63. It is pleasing to report that the Volunteer Fire Stations have now been provided with breathing apparatus and the necessary training has been provided in its use. Also the collaboration with Grampian Fire Brigade regarding the possible purchase of personal protective equipment which we welcome in the interests of Value for Money for the Authority.

Communications and Control

64. As part of the Service Planning process the Brigade will need to provide a policy and strategy for efficient and effective emergency call handling, communications and mobilising. In defining a policy and strategy the opportunity should be taken to review the adequacy of existing procedures and equipment utilising the latest national

guidance provided. The Brigade may also wish to consider carrying out an exercise utilising the advice offered in the Home Office Study Report - The Future of Fire Service Control Rooms and Communications in England and Wales to see whether there are any significant issues to be addressed and where any Best Practice guidance could be implemented.

65. The Control Centre continues to make progress with the development of the Geographical Information (GIS) system which is now widely utilised for statistical analysis and data collection along with overlays providing details on location of stations and hydrants, motorway functions, access to railways and route-maps, etc. In considering Best Value initiatives the Brigade may wish to collaborate with other brigades in Scotland who operate GIS, to share experiences and to jointly develop further functions.

FIRE SAFETY

Overview

66. It is considered that the Brigade, having successfully carried out a desk top risk assessment of their fire safety workload some 18 months ago, should now revisit that work and carry out a validation process. This process should ascertain the departmental requirements in terms of staffing, hours of working, grades and ranks of inspecting officers, administrative staff and those involved with the delivery of Community Fire Safety (CFS). It is recognised that there is an existing comprehensive written policy on the aims and objectives for the promotion of both the statutory fire prevention and CFS functions that has been ratified by the fire authority.
67. To facilitate the management of the fire safety function in terms of statutory, CFS and fire investigation information, it will be necessary to develop or purchase a suitable computerised software programme. This will enable the efficient collation of statistical data to be carried out. This system should be designed in a way that both decentralised inspecting officers and station personnel working in statutory inspections, CFS and the investigation of fire can readily access the system through perhaps an intranet.

Management of Fire Safety

68. There is a history and background of a fire prevention culture within the Brigade, covering both legislative and CFS functions with the existing system evolving from a traditional fire certification inspecting regime. What appears from the annual return to the Inspectorate to be a settled and the longest serving inspecting officer base in Scotland is not actually the case. The inclusion in the return of two long serving supervisory officers adversely weights the actual staffing situation of inspecting officers which has been in a state of flux over the last year or so.

Brigade Plan

69. The two core objectives relating to fire safety within the 5 year Brigade plan can be summarised as follows:
- To ensure that appropriate systems are in place to address the responsibility under statute to enforce the provisions of fire safety legislation for the protection of employees and consumers alike, and
 - To increase the awareness of the need for fire safety generally within Central Scotland through education, by concentrating on those groups most at risk.
70. The Brigade acknowledge in the primary statutory fire safety core objective that a risk assessment approach to fire safety is required rather than enforcement. This fundamental change, in the way that the Brigade meets its statutory duties has been in place for approximately 18 months. It should now be reviewed in light of recent legislative changes to the Workplace Regulations 1997 and as part of the constant review mentioned in this core objective. It is understood that as part of the ongoing risk evaluation process that the fire safety manager already envisages an interim report.

71. It is imperative that there be an accurate determination of all staff in terms of hours of availability, numbers, grades and ranks based on inspection times and frequency, allied to training for inspecting skills, transport and IT requirements as soon as possible. This should encompass both the existing and the longer-term legislative and community fire safety workload.
72. To assist with the validation process, helpful information is contained in the Home Office Guide to Fire Safety Planning and Management 1995 (ISBN No 1-85893-339-0).
73. Although management systems are in place, a final determination of the proposed re-structure of the Brigade management has still to be agreed by the Brigade steering group. It is considered that the fire safety validation process will assist by providing properly assessed resource requirements and true budgetary requirements along with additional costs or savings for this essential service.
74. Once the validation process has been concluded the Brigade will be in a position of effective management control of its fire safety resources. In addition the monitoring procedures should allow for a free flow of information on the complete fire safety service delivery to be available to both the public and also reported to the Fire Authority. It is noted that Fire Safety reports made to the Fire-Board are normally restricted to whenever there has been a change or amendment of Brigade policy or there is a proposal for instance to alter powers delegated to the Firemaster. Consideration should be given to the provision of a regular fire safety service update to be made available to the Fire Board.

Departmental Plan

75. A specific project departmental plan for 2000-2001 is in existence and describes 2 projects, one on Community Fire Safety another on Information Technology, and details a Service Delivery Profile. Key Elements are described as Time, Resources, Research, Administration and Finance. The Inspectorate will wish to monitor the outcome of these projects that began in April 2000 and expected to run for 12 months.

Information Gathering

76. A general information system of extant memorandum on technical, administrative and administrative issues allied to procedural notes and guidance is used to underwrite the written policy and strategy detailing the application of the Brigade's statutory fire safety duties based on the assessment of life risk from fire.
77. All fire safety data, including that mentioned in the previous paragraph, is presently collated at Brigade HQ. by hand and would benefit from being manipulated by a properly designed fire safety computer programme tailored to the needs of the Brigade. For example data required for workload and risk analysis is actually available in relation to the legislative work but cannot be easily handled due to an intensive time commitment from supervisory staff to highlight any problematical areas.
78. Any future requirements for IT within fire safety must embrace a two-way system of information flow between the service delivery point of legislative work or CFS work and the supervisory element to provide and secure accurate information about the

activity involved. It is abundantly clear that fire safety has not yet been included in the development of the Brigade intra-net system for the collation and distribution of statistics and information to all personnel, whether whole-time or retained, and this apparent omission should be addressed as soon as possible.

Statutory Workload

79. During the inspection it was apparent that cognisance had been taken of the potential and known workload, including the requirement for risk assessment, in relation to the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulation 1997. The Brigade is confident that they have sufficient knowledge to enable them to identify premises that are now subject to the amended workplace legislation. There has been an alteration to the delivery of this workload in that fire safety officers have carried out more inspections this year and the input by operational staff has reduced. However, the overall output of 1,677 inspections has remained almost exactly the same as the previous return for 1998-99 thus suggesting high senior staff involvement in achieving flexibility and programming.

Non-Statutory Workload (Secondary Legislation)

80. Non-statutory or secondary legislation accounts for 45.5% of the Brigade's fire safety output overall which is not dissimilar to other Scottish brigades. The revised annual return to the Inspectorate shows that the Service carried out 978 such inspections compared to 2,149 statutory inspections.

Community Fire Safety

81. As previously intimated the Inspectorate is aware that a CFS plan has been drawn up, ratified by the Fire Authority and is in the final stages of implementation. It is important that this strategic plan, designed to reduce the impact of fire on the local community leading to a reduction in fires, fatalities and injuries particularly in domestic dwellings, be meaningfully 'owned' through the commitment of the combined efforts of the Brigade and Fire Board alike.
82. As a result of discussion during the inspection it is evident that the service delivery of CFS is being facilitated through a Station Officer and a Leading Firefighter within the fire safety department. There is also continued use of a schoolteacher in this service delivery.
83. It is recognised that the Brigade is carrying out a good deal of work and that there is a fundamental change in focus towards a more proactive approach to the prevention of fire in the process. Those directly involved in this work have to be complimented on the out-turn of work which includes the following main issues:

Firewatch

84. This is a partnership between the Brigade, the community and the local authority. It concentrates specific Brigade resources into identified high fire rate areas for a limited duration utilising the Brigade's fire statistics to identify "hot spot" areas. A Firewatch campaign team then surveys all commercial, industrial and community aspects within the area and produces a Selected Area Profile (SAP). The SAP identifies the infrastructure of community groups and helps direct the resources to the groups most

at risk. Part of this survey involves the completion of a fire safety questionnaire, undertaken by the community themselves.

85. Results from the survey identify local trends and help to formulate a Fire Safety Strategy which is unique and addresses the fire risks for the specific geographical location selected.

Residential (Domestic) Sprinkler Campaign

86. As a part of the evolving community safety programme aimed at reducing the number of deaths and injuries resulting from fires in domestic premises, the Brigade this year embarked on a campaign to advance the case for houses within the Brigade's area to be fitted with residential sprinklers.
87. Stirling council, a key player in the campaign, provided a property in Bridge of Allan that was subsequently fitted with sprinklers. The Brigade's immediate priorities lie in a continuation of the project allied to an advancement of the campaign into the adjacent Council areas of Clackmannan and Falkirk.

Fire Safety Youth Training Programme 1st and 3rd Year Pupils

88. All secondary schools in the area participate in the programme which involves a 45 minute fire safety talk from one of the department's officers. Topics include what to do if clothes catch fire, what to do in the event of fire, how to make a fire plan and the consequences of malicious calls to the Brigade. Fire safety worksheets are left with the school as a follow up to the input.
89. All secondary schools in the area have been given a 3rd year training package comprising of videos and class assignments. The package can be split to suit integration into the school curriculum and this year 2,886 pupils have worked on this package.

Firework Campaign

90. The Brigade firework safety campaign adopted the Department of Trade and Industry guidance package and was a joint venture with Central Scotland Police and the Forth Valley Health Board. Firework safety messages were broadcast through the local radio 'Central FM' and the campaign was highlighted through advertisements on buses and running schools competitions.

Safer Homes

91. The Brigade as part of a partnership on home security and health issues was involved in a "safer homes" programme in the Dawson area. The occupiers of houses in the area received carbon monoxide detectors and newly designed home fire risk assessment cards. The project is expanding into other areas of Central Scotland.

Young Fire Setters

92. It was particularly pleasing to note that the Brigade is not only involved in such a programme but are in the enviable position of having a 100% success rate with those young people that have been referred to them for guidance.

Fire Investigation

93. Supervision of fire investigation (FI) is a responsibility of operations, not fire safety, but depends on the Assistant Divisional Officer (fire safety) to attend the Fire Investigation Forum meetings to represent the Brigade. There is an extant Brigade fire investigation manual, issued some 10 years ago to all Officers conditioned to the flexible duty system and available at stations as a reference document.
94. Although the minimum training requirement for fire investigation in the Brigade is seen to be the Fire Service College FI Course, no other continuation or support training is in place. It is acknowledged that management has conducted an internal review on fire investigation and that a revised FI procedure has been suggested. The procedure does not include involvement in the formulation of partnerships and liaison arrangements with other agencies, such as the police, forensic and judicial services. In addition there is no laid down or structured format for producing fire investigation reports at the moment.
95. Equipment, in the form of essential fire investigation tools, is presently under consideration. The Brigade is encouraged to provide such equipment, not necessarily on an individual kit basis, to ensure that professional service can be achieved using the accepted minimum equipment recommended by the Scottish CACFOA fire investigation forum.
96. It is seen as important that one officer within the Brigade should have the overall responsibility of overseeing activity in this field given the requirement and effect that FI has and how it impinges into other arenas such as CFS, Building Regulations and the collation of effective fire data etc.

Reduction in Fire Raising and Unwanted Calls

97. The Brigade do not appear to have close liaison with the police and other agencies regarding the development of appropriate fire raising reduction strategies, although one operational Divisional Officer is involved with counselling of young fire setters. The Brigade has however identified 5 schools that have been built under the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) system and, through discussion, has sought to make them more secure prior to occupation to prevent fire raising attacks.
98. Although there are some existing initiatives within the Brigade to combat unwanted fire calls, such as those emanating from automatic fire warning systems, none have either been evaluated or effectively serviced to drive down the number of calls to known premises and consequently unwanted calls have remained static for some number of years. The Brigade rely on a numerical return from the Control Room to ascertain the 'offending' premises. There is a need to take into account the actual size of any fire detection system since that may have a dramatic effect on the number of such calls that can be reasonably expected. This is specifically mentioned in the relevant British Standard.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING INSPECTION OF CENTRAL SCOTLAND FIRE BRIGADE

AREAS OF REVIEW DURING PERFORMANCE MONITORING INSPECTIONS

	AREA	INSPECTOR
1	Previous Inspection Implementation	Chief Inspector
2	Trends Analysis	
3	Strategic Focus	
a	<i>Vision</i>	
b	<i>Aims</i>	
4	Business Process	
a	<i>Service to Authority Linkage</i>	
b	<i>Strategy Development Process</i>	
c	<i>Policy Framework Arrangements</i>	
d	<i>Business Plan</i>	
5	Information Management	
6	Business Management Devolved Management Responsibilities	
7	Resource Utilisation	
a	<i>Strategic Allocation Process Authority and Service</i>	
b	<i>Systematic Management of Resources</i>	
c	<i>Consultation Arrangements on Resource Allocations</i>	
d	<i>Asset Utilisation Buildings and Equipment</i>	
8	Finance	
a	<i>Budget Formation Arrangements</i>	
c	<i>Budget Management Process and Procedure</i>	
d	<i>Financial Improvements Identified</i>	
9	Integration of Service Planning	
10	Performance Monitoring Arrangements	
11	Best Value	
a	<i>Best Value Reviews - Concluded, Started and in Progress</i>	
b	<i>Public Performance Reporting Activities</i>	
12	Best Practice Access and Activity	
13	Consultation Mechanisms Internal	
a	<i>Management Arrangements</i>	
b	<i>Staff Response</i>	
c	<i>Information Dissemination</i>	
14	Staff Support and Development	
a	<i>Evaluation of Performance</i>	
b	<i>Development and Selection</i>	
15	Operational Effectiveness Verification	
16	Current Activities	
a	<i>Pressures</i>	
b	<i>Opportunities</i>	
17	Performance Indicators	
18	Mobilising and Communications - Management	HMI
a	<i>Policies and Strategies</i>	
b	<i>Provision of Services</i>	
c	<i>Staffing</i>	
19	Mobilising and Communications - Operations	
a	<i>Functions and Performance</i>	
b	<i>Liaison with Others</i>	
c	<i>Incident Command</i>	
20	Mobilising and Communications - Non-statutory Activities	
a	<i>Activities Undertaken by Control Staff</i>	
21	Operations	

PERFORMANCE MONITORING INSPECTION OF CENTRAL SCOTLAND FIRE BRIGADE

a	<i>Operational Preparedness</i>	
b	<i>Operational Information</i>	
c	<i>Operational Performance</i>	
22	Used Capital Assets	
23	Transport	
24	Personnel	Assistant Insp
a	<i>Departmental Plan (or relevant section of Service Plan)</i>	
b	<i>Structure</i>	
c	<i>Policies</i>	
d	<i>Links with Other Departments</i>	
e	<i>Recruitment and Selection Policies and Procedures Including Advertising</i>	
f	<i>Assessment and Promotion Procedures</i>	
g	<i>Occupational Health, Including Health and Fitness Monitoring and Absence Management</i>	
25	Training	
a	<i>Departmental Plan (or Relevant Section of Service Plan)</i>	
b	<i>Structure</i>	
c	<i>Training Strategy or Policy</i>	
d	<i>Internal Training Courses, Including First Aid, Commercial and Data Based Packages</i>	
e	<i>Personal Development Issues, Including Appraisal/Assessment and Funding for External Development Courses</i>	
f	<i>Real Fire and Breathing Apparatus Training</i>	
g	<i>Command and Control Training</i>	
26	Health and Safety	
a	<i>Departmental Plan (or Relevant Section of Service Plan)</i>	
b	<i>Structure</i>	
c	<i>Policy</i>	
d	<i>Health and Safety Meeting Arrangements</i>	
e	<i>Accident and Near Miss Reporting and Investigation</i>	
f	<i>Health and Safety Training NEBOSH (Certificate and Diploma) and IOSHH (Managing and Working Safely)</i>	
g	<i>Data Collection and Recording</i>	
27	Diversity and Fairness	
a	<i>Departmental Plan (or Relevant Section of Service Plan)</i>	
b	<i>Structure</i>	
c	<i>Policy</i>	
d	<i>Data Collection and Recording</i>	
e	<i>Diversity and Fairness Training, Including Positive Action, Awareness and Harassment and Bullying</i>	
f	<i>Committees, Including Forums, Constitution and Representation</i>	
g	<i>Links and/or Partnerships with Other Agencies</i>	
28	Management of Fire Safety	Sen Asst Insp
a	<i>Policy and Strategy for Delivery of Statutory Duties</i>	
b	<i>Practice, Procedure and Targets</i>	
c	<i>Fire Safety Data Collection</i>	
d	<i>Consultation with Local Community</i>	
e	<i>Areas of Responsibility</i>	
f	<i>Management systems and Documentation</i>	
g	<i>Competency</i>	
h	<i>Control and Utilisation of Resources</i>	
i	<i>Individual work output</i>	
j	<i>Service Monitoring and Reporting</i>	
k	<i>Operational input</i>	

PERFORMANCE MONITORING INSPECTION OF CENTRAL SCOTLAND FIRE BRIGADE

l	<i>High Risk Target Areas</i>	
m	<i>Prioritised Premises</i>	
n	<i>Annual Planning Process</i>	
o	<i>Reduction of Major Fires</i>	
29	Commitment to Community Fire Safety	
a	<i>CFS Strategic Plan</i>	
b	<i>Annual CFS Business Plan</i>	
c	<i>Priorities and Targets in Dwellings</i>	
d	<i>Dedicated CFS Team</i>	
e	<i>Liaison with other Agencies</i>	
f	<i>Strategic Lead</i>	
g	<i>Collection and Analysis of Data</i>	
h	<i>Campaigns</i>	
i	<i>Communication Methods</i>	
j	<i>NCFSC Toolbox</i>	
k	<i>Areas of Increased CFS Activity</i>	
l	<i>Quick Strike Programme</i>	
m	<i>Ops Interaction with the Community</i>	
n	<i>Seasonal Activity</i>	
o	<i>Internal Event Plan</i>	
30	Fire Safety Practice	
a	<i>Enforcement and Consultation Policies</i>	
b	<i>Inspections</i>	
c	<i>Written Procedure on National Guidance and Standards</i>	
d	<i>Ops Inspection Duties</i>	
e	<i>Procedure for Passing Information</i>	
31	Fire Investigation	
a	<i>Competency</i>	
b	<i>FI Guidance</i>	
c	<i>Additional Training</i>	
d	<i>Procedure for Information Sharing</i>	

PERFORMANCE MONITORING INSPECTION OF CENTRAL SCOTLAND FIRE BRIGADE

32	Reduction in Fire Raising and Unwanted Calls	
a	<i>Trends and Targets</i>	
b	<i>Policy on Reduction of Fire Raising</i>	
c	<i>Information Sharing</i>	
d	<i>Joint Working Procedures</i>	
e	<i>Local Targets</i>	
f	<i>Assisting Police Investigation</i>	
g	<i>Best Practice Guidance</i>	
h	<i>Preventative Advice</i>	
i	<i>Fire Setters Intervention Scheme</i>	
j	<i>Policy on Unwanted Calls</i>	
k	<i>Local Targets</i>	
l	<i>Awareness Campaigns</i>	
m	<i>AFD Reduction Targets</i>	
n	<i>Occupiers Encouragement to Reduce Unwanted Calls</i>	