



**Question Papers and Report of the
Assessors and the Examiners for the
Qualifying Examination for
Promotion to the Rank of
Leading Firefighter
Part I: Written Examination 2003**

**QUESTION PAPERS AND REPORT OF THE ASSESSORS AND EXAMINERS FOR THE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION FOR PROMOTION TO THE RANK OF LEADING FIREFIGHTER
PART I WRITTEN EXAMINATION 2003**

GENERAL COMMENTS

The eighteenth examination conducted by the Fire Services Examinations Board produced a pass rate of 33.6% from 1681 candidates who sat the examination. These figures show an increase in the percentage pass rate to that achieved last year (30.3%) but a decrease in the numbers achieving success from a decreased number of candidates sitting the examination.

The number of good quality scripts remained very similar to that of last year and, regrettably, remained in the minority. The general quality of scripts submitted by candidates still suggests that a large number of those attempting the examination do not adequately prepare themselves. However, it was apparent that certain candidates had been involved in study groups from the way in which a collection of good quality scripts were found from particular centres and it was pleasing to note their just reward of high marks.

Evidence that a candidate has not effectively studied the bibliography appropriate to the examination, but sought to rely on what is clearly relatively limited experience, is very apparent to examiners. Whilst the belief that the candidate attaches to such experience may be of comfort to the candidate, it is usually extremely limited when applied to the level of knowledge and understanding sought in order to measure the individual's abilities for greater responsibilities.

Assuming that effective preparation to sit the examination papers has been applied, it only remains for the candidate to then apply basic care and examination technique when providing their responses in order to achieve the result that they desire and which their efforts deserve.

As regards examination techniques, use your available time wisely. Read each question carefully and identify what information is being sought and how it suggests that it be presented. (eg list, define, describe, explain, explain briefly, provide examples, outline, identify). Avoid the temptation to quickly scan the question and rush into writing an answer. There have been many cases where very detailed answers have been provided but unfortunately not to the question asked and no marks have been obtained.

Check your answers when you believe that you have completed the examination paper and again compare them to the questions. Examiners can only mark what you have submitted. They are not permitted to apply their imagination to what has been written in trying to define what a candidate meant to say. There have been numerous cases where inadequacies within a script could have been easily recognised and corrected if sufficient care had been taken when undertaking this further check.

Avoid the use of 'general' terms without further clarification, such as 'training', 'PPE', 'as appropriate', 'etc', together with others identified by the examiners in their reports on questions.

Attempt all the questions. Failure to answer any question should always be avoided as this will reduce your opportunity to obtain marks that will enable you to better achieve a pass.

The following pages contain the detailed comments of the Assessors and Examiners. A careful study of these comments should be beneficial to future candidates.

PAPER 1: OPERATIONS

GENERAL COMMENTS

The quality of the responses to each question varied significantly from very good to very poor.

Candidates have failed to take note of the guidance contained in Assessor's reports year after year. Failure to read the question properly continues to be an important issue. The board is careful to ensure that all the questions on the paper can be answered well within the time available. Hence candidates have plenty of time to read the question properly and then re-read it to maximise their chances of understanding what is required of them. Failure to do this is a major obstacle to successfully providing the information being sought.

All questions used in these examinations are wherever possible of the scenario type in order to provide a context for the information required to successfully answer the question. Too many candidates write down all they know about the scenario rather than the particular aspect which is the subject of the question.

A common manifestation of the failure to read the question properly is the provision of lengthy essay type responses to questions which ask for a list. Responses of this type are difficult to mark since it can be difficult to identify the salient points. Whilst examiners take great care to ensure that candidates get all the credit due, there is always the risk that marks may be missed if a response is not presented in the required and most appropriate format.

It is apparent that many candidates do not check their work before leaving the examination room. If candidates read the question properly, restricted their responses to the specific material asked for and followed the instructions, there is adequate time to re-read their submissions, to correct the many obvious slips, make any necessary additions or amendments and thus maximise the marks awarded.

The apparent belief in one's operational experience being sufficient once again proved to be inadequate as preparation for this examination. It was clear from candidates' responses as to which ones had relied on this strategy. The importance of a systematic study of the bibliography cannot be over-emphasised.

SECTION A FIRE APPLIANCES, EQUIPMENT AND SYSTEMS

Attempt BOTH questions

1 You are the officer-in-charge of an attendance at an incident involving a marine craft on fire and you decide to send an informative message to fire control.

(a) Define an informative message from this incident. (2 marks)

and

(b) What information would you include in your informative message from this incident? (8 marks)

Bibliography: Fire Service Manual Volume 4 – Fire Service Training, Appendix 2, page 12.

Whilst a substantial number of candidates managed to achieve a satisfactory proportion of the marks available, it was disappointing to note that many candidates were unable to provide sufficient information to earn the marks available for part (a).

Some candidates offered lengthy examples of informative messages which were not required and in any case did not demonstrate sufficient understanding of the subject to achieve good marks. This was particularly so if the example was not related to marine craft, which was the subject of the question. Similarly, detail related to assistance messages, whether by way of examples or in the form asked for in the question attracted no credit.

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- 2** You are the officer-in-charge of an incident and decide to apply firefighting foam. What factors greatly influence the effective and efficient use of firefighting foam? **(10 marks)**

Bibliography: Fire Service Manual Volume 2 – Firefighting Foam, Chapter 1, page 2.

A number of candidates offered responses clearly based on operational experience alone. As a result too many candidates concentrated on areas involving the practical application of foam and associated firefighting skills ignoring the other factors which officers-in-charge need to consider if they wish to mount an effective foam attack such as the type of fire, the type of foam making equipment or the length of the pre-burn. Many of those who identified the type of equipment as a factor failed to mention that the way it is operated is also an important factor. Others concentrated almost exclusively on the quality of the foam and its characteristics.

Nevertheless there was a reasonable number of good scripts submitted by candidates who had clearly studied the bibliography.

SECTION B OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES AND INCIDENT COMMAND

Attempt BOTH questions

- 3** You are the Senior Fire Officer present at an incident involving a building on fire. During operations a police officer instructs you to divert water to an adjoining building. Your risk assessment is that this action would be inappropriate and will put your crews and the public at unnecessary risk.

Describe your powers for the control of operations at this type of incident as provided by the Fire Services Act 1947.

(10 marks)

Bibliography: Study Note 1102 – Powers to Extinguish Fire, pages 2 and 3.

Overall this question was not answered at all well. It was clear that too many candidates had little or no knowledge of the information provided in the bibliography. Most knew that the senior fire officer was in charge at a fire but too many candidates were unable to offer a great deal more. Others wasted time talking about powers of entry, powers to control traffic or those in relation to water undertakers when the question was clearly directed towards the specific powers of the officer-in-charge at a fire.

- 4 Consideration should be given to the possible circumstances which might give rise to the initiation of the emergency evacuation procedures for firefighters at an incident.
- (a) When should the evacuation signal be used? (2 marks)
- and
- (b) List two examples of circumstances which might give rise to the use of the evacuation signal. (8 marks)

Bibliography: Study Note 1101 – Emergency Evacuation Procedures, pages 2 and 3.

Overall the response to this question was disappointing, especially when it is realised that all firefighters have a role in actuating and applying emergency evacuation. Many candidates were unable to attract the marks available for identifying when the emergency evacuation signal should be used. In particular, 'In an emergency' attracted no marks as this was merely repeating the information given in the question.

Responses to part (b) tended to be incomplete, for example, rate of spread of fire is not the complete story. The use of the emergency evacuation signal would only be required if fire spread or the rate of spread of its products threatened the ability of firefighters to withdraw.

Too many candidates wrote lengthy responses in which they expounded on issues such as the signs and symptoms of collapse, yet failed to indicate the point at which it would be appropriate to initiate an emergency evacuation. One would normally expect that the gradual deterioration of the building would be observed and an orderly evacuation organised in good time thus making an emergency withdrawal unnecessary. Thus, in spite of the length of some responses to this section, it was often impossible for the Examiner to award all the available marks for each example.

SECTION C FIREFIGHTING AND RESCUE INCIDENTS

Attempt BOTH questions

- 5 List the generic hazards to firefighters when involved in fighting rural fires. (10 marks)

Bibliography: A Guide to Operational Risk Assessment, Section 3.4, page 31.

Too many candidates submitted lengthy prose scripts rather than a list as requested, thus making it difficult to mark. These responses often contained a great deal of detail without actually mentioning the actual hazards which were asked for in the question, thus expecting the examiner to identify an inference of the generic hazard. A simple list of generic hazards was all that was needed to attract the available marks. Indeed, the reasonable number of candidates who achieved respectable marks did just that, especially those that had studied the bibliography.

Some candidates responded to this question from the appliance driver's perspective, thus failing to consider all the generic hazards associated with fighting rural fires. Whilst an issue, the possibility of difficulties associated with water supplies is not, in itself, a hazard.

As is so often the case, too many candidates apparently relied on their experience or, in some cases, their perceptions of rural firefighting. A number had concerns over the possibility of attacks by wild animals or marauders, exploding trees or agrochemical stores, the effects of agrochemicals on the fire behaviour of crops and an unlimited supply of oxygen in the air to feed any fire that broke out.

It was apparent that reference to the study note would be beneficial to many in order to improve their basic knowledge of this subject.

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- 6** You are the officer-in-charge of a road traffic accident involving a road tanker. Before being transported to hospital, the driver of the vehicle tells you that a 'Tremcard' is available in the vehicle cab.
- (a) What is a 'Tremcard'? (2 marks)
- and**
- (b) What information does the 'Tremcard' provide? (8 marks)

Bibliography: Study Note 1111 – The Identification of Dangerous Substances, page 11.

Overall this question was extremely well answered with an encouraging number attracting full marks. Nevertheless, marks failed to be obtained by candidates who appeared to think that stating that a Tremcard is a transport emergency card was sufficient to gain the marks available. Clearly more detail was required.

In answers provided to the part (b) of the question, it was evident that some candidates did not understand the difference between a composite panel and a Tremcard and many marks were thus lost by listing features contained on the former. Some responses contained uninformative statements such as 'relevant information' or 'general advice'. These attracted no credit.

SECTION D SCIENCE AND FIREFIGHTING

Attempt BOTH questions

- 7** The officer-in-charge of an attendance at an incident which has occurred inside a pressurised tunnel on a construction site decides not to allow fire service personnel to enter the pressurised workings. Explain this decision. (10 marks)

Bibliography: Study Note 1110 - Respiration, pages 4 and 5.

This was a particularly badly answered question with a very large number of candidates who appeared to be unaware that the fire service does not enter pressurised workings. Their responses fell into two main groups. The first group said they would not allow fire service personnel to enter the pressurised tunnel because they had done a risk assessment. Many of these discussed safe systems of work or whether the benefits outweighed the risks at great length.

The second group showed their complete lack of understanding of the workings of a positive pressure breathing apparatus set, believing that the pressure in the tunnel would exceed that inside the face mask, thus, risking the ingress of smoke or toxic gases.

From the minority of candidates who realised that they were expected to demonstrate knowledge of the fire service's role at fires which occur in pressurised workings, the responses varied significantly in quality. Some attempted to make educated guesses, offering for example, 'a point of law' or 'the regulations' in the hope that this would attract some credit when what was required was a reference to regulations made under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

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- 8** You are the Incident Commander of an incident which involves a building on fire and you are concerned about the possible occurrence of a flashover or backdraught.

List the factors you would take into account as part of your dynamic risk assessment, prior to committing crews.

(10 marks)

Bibliography: A Guide to Operational Risk Assessment, Section 5.8, page 59.

It was clear that many candidates had not studied the bibliography and apparently based their responses on practical experience concentrating on issues such as smoke conditions or heat production. Similarly, a list of the signs and symptoms of a flashover or backdraught was insufficient to attract all the marks. Many failed to mention the nature of construction, type of premises or contents, or demonstrated a far from adequate knowledge of the ventilation issues involved.

The question was clearly focused on a particular area of science and firefighting and unfortunately, those candidates who chose to write lengthy scripts on safe systems of work were not awarded any credit for their efforts. Many candidates failed to read the question properly and offered lengthy prose scripts rather than the list requested.

PAPER 2: FIRE SAFETY, EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT

GENERAL COMMENTS

Comments Relating to Questions

With the modernisation agenda for the Service having a strong emphasis on risk reduction by prevention, it is important that junior officers have a knowledge and understanding of community safety through Education and Enforcement.

The results of this year's paper were better than last year, however it is still disappointing that some basic community fire safety questions were very poorly answered, demonstrating that some candidates have not studied effectively and are not embracing a culture of prevention, soon to become a statutory duty of the Service.

In general, the fact that there are still too many candidates ill-prepared to demonstrate a reasonable level of knowledge and understanding of this subject, with weak application and technique, and over reliance on 'operational experience' remains.

SECTION A FIRE SAFETY LEGISLATION

Attempt this question

- 1 During a visit to a premises you, as the officer-in-charge, find an area of the building which due to its layout and the hazards involved, you believe to be a serious risk to the occupants should fire occur.

The Fire Precautions Act 1971 makes provision for the Fire Authority to prohibit or restrict the use of certain classes of premises where such conditions apply.

List the **CLASSES** of use of premises to which a prohibition notice can be applied. **(10 marks)**

Bibliography: Study Note 1202 - The Fire Precautions Act 1971 – Awareness, page 5.

Overall this question provided some very good scripts with successful candidates relating the question to the study note, allowing clear and concise answers and demonstrating a good knowledge of the subject. However, it is disappointing that a number of candidates failed to understand the requirements of the question, and submitted a speculative list of different types of premises (offices, shops, and railway premises being the most common).

SECTION B COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY

Attempt ALL questions

- 2 Faulty electrical wiring is a major cause of fire.
- (a) List the warning signs of dangerous wiring. **(4 marks)**
- and**
- (b) List other dangerous situations that may lead to overheating or short circuits. **(6 marks)**

Bibliography: Study Note 1203 – Fire Safety in the Home, pages 6 and 7.

A relatively well answered question with a high number of good pass marks.

Those candidates who failed to obtain a satisfactory level of marks invariably showed poor examination technique by providing a description rather than a list as stated in the question. Some candidates gave shortened format answers by just writing 'scorch marks' or 'overheating' which without more detail means very little as an answer and so attracted no marks.

- 3 A member of the public has called at the fire station to ask advice about what precautions they can take to reduce the risk of fire from smoking materials.

They have an elderly relative, who is a heavy smoker and has just moved to their family home, which includes two young children.

State the advice you would give.

(10 marks)

Bibliography: Study Note 1203 – Fire Safety in the Home, page 3.

This question was reasonably well answered. However, many candidates failed in their attempt, by concentrating on the provision of smoke alarms and evacuation plans rather than the important precautions to reduce the risk in the first place.

- 4 During a community fire safety smoke alarm campaign at a local DIY store, a customer asks your advice on the **type** of smoke alarm they should buy.

They have read that fires in the home may give off different types of smoke, depending on the material on fire. The article also stated that there are two different detection methods used by smoke detectors and if the correct type of smoke detector is fitted it will detect a fire more effectively and reduce the frequency of false alarms.

- (a) What are the two types of **smoke** alarm that can be purchased?

(2 marks)

and

- (b) Explain briefly the differences between the types of SMOKE that each alarm is designed to detect. Include in your answer an example of the material that will produce each type of smoke.

(8 marks)

Bibliography: Study Note 1203 – Fire Safety in the Home, pages 9 and 10.

Part (a) was answered easily by most candidates. Part (b) was not so well answered by a number of candidates due to their confusion over the purpose of the design of each type of detector.

A detailed description of each detector and the working principles was not called for in this question.

- 5 Due to an increased number of unnecessary Automatic Fire Alarm calls in your station area, your Station Commander has asked you to form a small discussion group.

The aim of the group is to suggest positive actions that could be carried out to help reduce the number of unnecessary calls received.

What positive actions do you believe could be undertaken to reduce the number of these calls?

(10 marks)

Bibliography: Study Note 1204 – Unnecessary Fire Calls, pages 6 and 7.

This topic is a key area in the risk reduction agenda facing the Service. It is therefore of some concern that this was a very poorly answered question. Candidates concentrated on specific types of alarms and their location rather than a clear process to include positive actions that would need to be adopted based on data collection, investigation, and recording and checking that appropriate action was being taken.

PAPER 3: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

GENERAL COMMENTS

Comments Relating to Questions

It was again pleasing to note a steady improvement in the quality of some responses which appears to be a continuing trend. This may well be linked to a positive approach by candidates to prepare and study for this examination whether as an individual or a member of a group. In a number of cases candidates produced high aggregate marks to gain a pass for this paper.

It is however, disappointing to report that the overall pass rate was slightly lower than last year. Whilst in the past, many candidates have noted and acted on the comments made by the Examiners, there is a vast number of others who attempted the questions with little or no regard for this guidance.

Far too often examiners have identified the following:

- Lack of study;
- Lack of preparation;
- No examination technique;
- Improper or inaccurate reading of the question;
- Limited understanding of the subject or the scenario;
- Provision of long lists of points, many which have been guessed, in the hope of attracting marks;
- The use of 'padding' in the answers to conceal a lack of knowledge;
- Reliance on the individual's own subjective experience or simply relating to what happens in the individual's own brigade, instead of offering the appropriate information from the bibliography.

In this year's attempts, in particular, the quality and use of the English language was poor and in many cases sentence construction and spelling left much to be desired. Handwriting also appears to have deteriorated, all of which presented problems for Examiners. There was also an increasing number of unattempted questions,

responses involving only a single sentence or the use of bland terms eg 'training' in the expectation that this may be appropriate.

Whilst there were encouraging signs of a growing understanding of health and safety and its issues, it was by contrast notable that knowledge of competence was below standard. The subject of leadership is fundamental to the role of the Crew Commander. It was of considerable concern to Examiners therefore, that this subject was poorly addressed with many candidates failing to demonstrate an understanding appropriate to the role that they apparently wish to fill. The link to leadership and the future success of the Service cannot be over emphasised.

Candidates must realise that achievement can only be reached through applied and continual study of the set bibliography. There is a considerable amount of information and guidance to support candidates. Those candidates who apply themselves will be successful. Those who do not will not only fail the examination due to an insufficient level of knowledge and understanding of management issues, but also waste their time and that of the Examiners.

SECTION A EMPLOYMENT

Attempt BOTH questions

- 1 A contract of employment is a written statement of terms of employment issued to an employee not later than two months after commencement of employment.

Provide examples of what should be included in a written contract of employment.

(10 marks)

Bibliography: *Study Note 1301 – Employment Rights Awareness, page 2.*

This question required candidates to identify the key words of 'employment', 'written contract' and to provide related examples. The bibliography provides five examples, but Examiners gave credit to other appropriate examples and terminology. Those who failed to achieve a suitable level of marks seemed to do so because they failed to read the question or clearly had not undertaken the required study. Again, far too many candidates relied on completing lengthy lists of examples in the hope that their 'second guessing' would attract marks.

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- 2 Following a series of lectures given by your Station Commander on the Fire Services (Discipline) Regulations, a session ends with questions being asked on the offences contained in the schedule to the Regulations. You are asked to respond to the issue of Falsehood.

In responding to your Station Commander outline the actions that would relate to the offence of Falsehood.

(10 marks)

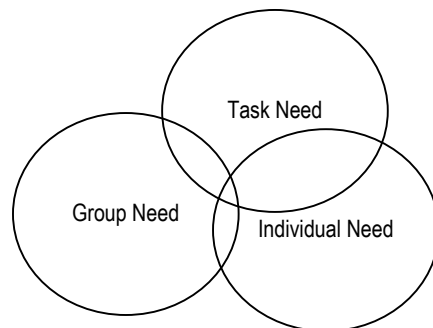
Bibliography: *Study Note 1303 – Fire Services Code of Discipline, page 3.*

It was disappointing that responses to this question were poor. Examiners went to great lengths to interpret an extensive range of examples of 'actions' which could be construed as 'Falsehood'. In some cases marks were awarded, but in many cases examples given confirmed that candidates did not fully understand this subject and possessed an inadequate level of detailed knowledge.

SECTION B TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Attempt BOTH questions

- 3 The functional approach to leadership is widely accepted as being relevant to the Fire Service. It contains three distinct areas, as shown in the diagram below, that can be applied to achieve an objective in various emergency or non-emergency situations.



When applying the TASK NEED there are a number of functions which need to be undertaken by the leader. List FIVE of these functions.

(10 marks)

Bibliography: Study Note 1305 – Leadership, Motivation and Communication, pages 4 and 5.

Leadership is a crucial aspect of the role of a Crew Commander. The functional approach is widely practised in the Service and candidates should be conversant with the subject if they are to be successful in that role. This question did produce some good results, with a number of candidates gaining high marks.

In the main, however, the overall standard was poor. The required answer needed a simple list of five functions. Again many candidates produced a long list of points, some pinning their hopes on Health and Safety Guidance HSG 65, which attracted no marks. Evidence in the scripts suggested poor preparation, a lack of understanding and insufficient study allocated to the bibliography.

4 During a meeting with your Station Commander about training programmes and performance standards, you are advised that a competency based framework is to be introduced onto your watch.

(a) When your Station Commander refers to 'competence', what do you understand by this term? (2 marks)

and

(b) In a Fire Service context, competence relates to four inter-related components. Identify TWO of these components, briefly describe them and provide an example for each. (8 marks)

Bibliography: Study Note 1306 – Performance Standards, page 2.

This is a topical question and a subject influencing the development of the Service, whilst almost every candidate attempted this question many only 'had a go' at defining competence and achieved some success. However, identification of the component parts and describing them proved problematical. Many candidates who had identified the components attributed the wrong description which suggested a broader lack of understanding. In this event, examiners were presented with a 'search procedure' to find areas of relevance and some aspect of understanding to award any of the available marks.

SECTION C HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE

Attempt BOTH questions

5 Your Station Commander advises you that your watch appears to have a lack of awareness of the COSHH Regulations and the assessment criteria that needs to be made to determine if there is justification for the brigade to inspect premises. You are asked to explain these.

(a) State the full title of the abbreviation 'COSHH'. (2 marks)

and

(b) List the factors you would consider when assessing if premises justify an inspection being made under the COSHH Regulations. (8 marks)

Bibliography: Study Note 1309 – Inspection of Local Risks, pages 5 and 6.

In general, the first part of the question was answered well with most candidates gaining full marks. It is of concern, however, that there were many other candidates who had no idea of the term or that the 'C' in COSHH meant 'Control' rather than any of the other 22 words beginning with 'C' that were offered as an answer. However, the overall standard of responses demonstrated a progressing level of understanding of health and safety as well as its integration with other functions.

Candidates who failed to reach a satisfactory level of marks did so through an apparent lack of study, or because they were confused as to which legislation provides for obtaining operational intelligence, ie many referred to fire safety or food hygiene or specific building construction issues and omitted to confine themselves with the issue of hazardous substances.

- 6 As a Leading Firefighter you are made responsible for the training on health and safety of your watch. In reviewing the training needs of the watch personnel you identify a shortfall in their awareness of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992. You decide to commence the training by informing them that it is the duty of employers to take certain actions under these Regulations.

Identify the actions that are the duty of employers to take under these Regulations.

(10 marks)

Bibliography: Study Note 1310 – Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, pages 3 and 4.

Overall, this was a poorly answered question.

The question clearly referred to the duties of the employer, but due to a lack of knowledge and understanding, many candidates included general health and safety requirements and the actions of individuals which attracted no marks.

Some credit was given to candidates who offered solutions which were seen as reducing risk. Examiners searched in vain for information that would justify the award of marks, but lists of bland statements, health and safety terms and the wide usage of 'training' attracted no marks.

PAPER 4: BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

GENERAL COMMENTS

Comments Relating to Questions

Once again, there has been a marked improvement in both spelling and grammar, although some scripts still had errors which lost candidates marks. Errors in spelling tended to be those highlighted in previous years, together with some which were actually included in the text of the question, with opportunity, amount, safety, benefit and budget being those most commonly mis-spelt, alongside the usual crop of maintenance, compliance and business. It was also pleasing to note improvements in handwriting which meant that marks were not deducted from the total score.

Perhaps most disappointingly in this year's paper were the number of candidates who only attempted one question. In many cases, the question answered received high marks, but without the support of marks from the second question, a pass in this paper will always be extremely difficult to secure. In other cases, candidates had not left sufficient time to complete both questions to a satisfactory standard. Candidates are reminded of the need to ensure that they allocate sufficient time to enable both questions to be considered, undoubtedly, if this principle had been applied this year it would have produced a higher pass rate.

It was again noticeable that the standard of answers in scripts from examination centres varied considerably, with a 'run' of well answered questions and then with other groupings which were very poor. This may reflect the different approaches being adopted by brigades or groups of individuals in preparing for these examinations.

Few candidates this year forgot to cross through their rough working which therefore made the role of the Examiner easier.

In the responses to both questions, candidates were asked to indicate the number of words used in each answer. Some clearly had left insufficient time to undertake this task, others had stated this incorrectly. Many candidates still appear to be using their own name and not correctly addressing their scripts to the recipient identified in the question. In all cases, marks are deducted. Candidates are therefore reminded of the need to read and comply with **all** elements of the question.

Please DO NOT use your name in any of the answers.

Attempt BOTH questions

- 1 You are Leading Firefighter McLean of Green Watch at Longham Fire Station which is in Wessex Fire and Rescue Service. During the year, station personnel have been more involved in community fire safety work and, as a consequence, there has been less operational demand on the station. The station has a limited devolved budget, the details of which are shown below. You should assume the financial year has come to an end.

Fire Station Devolved Budget 2002/03		
Item	Budget allocation (£)	Amount spent (£)
Electricity	6,000	5,750
Gas	3,900	3,100
Water charges	1,500	1,375
Business rates	12,000	12,000
Repairs and maintenance	1,200	1,050
Uniform	6,800	6,200
Stationery	750	725
Postage	660	510
Telephone charges	2,500	3,270
Total	35,310	33,980

You have been asked by your Station Commander to analyse the budget position and report back with the spending variations together with reasons for the difference from the amounts which had been allocated.

As the brigade allows the surplus of the station's total budget to be spent in any way which benefits the whole of the station, you are also to make recommendations on how the surplus could be used.

This should be in the form of a memorandum which should be no more than 250 words in length.

You are to state the number of words used at the end of your answer.

(25 marks)

This question was in the main well answered with marks being awarded for the simple and correct mathematical calculations needed to provide the basis for analysis. A few candidates made this too difficult for themselves by providing the financial differences in percentage terms which were somewhat meaningless under the circumstances and which did not attract any additional marks.

A number of candidates spent unnecessary time copying the expenditure chart which attracted no marks. Marks also failed to be gained by those using the incorrect format or tone.

Candidates were able to achieve a high level of marks if they undertook analysis for each budget head and provided sound/plausible reasons for the individual variations.

In some cases, candidates missed the opportunity to provide explanations for the high level of telephone charges inferred within the text, but indicated mismanagement of the facility by station personnel without recognising the implications and responsibility to provide support for such allegations. Surprisingly, a few candidates actually spent more time explaining ways to spend the underspend than analysing the reasons for it.

A small minority of candidates failed to obtain available marks by not providing appropriate suggestions for using the underspend. One candidate even suggesting the money be split between the crews for a night out at a club!! However, the majority, recognising this was public money, wished the underspend to be used to improve existing fitness equipment or reinvested in additional fire safety activity.

Suggestions for altering the budget for future years attracted no marks.

- 2 You are Leading Firefighter Fairbank in the Training Department and you have been tasked to prepare a précis of the following text for inclusion in a health and safety training document. Your précis should consist of **between 155-180 words**. You are to state the number of words used at the end of your script.

Competence

'Arrangements need to be made to ensure the competence of all employees (including managers) if they are to make the maximum contribution to health and safety. All employees need to be able to work in a safe and healthy manner and managers need to be aware of relevant legislation and how to manage health and safety effectively. It may also be necessary to examine the abilities of contractors' staff where they work close to, or in collaboration with, direct employees.

Arrangements made by companies who manage health and safety well will include:

- Recruitment and placement procedures which ensure that employees (including those at all levels of management) have the necessary physical and mental abilities for their jobs, or can acquire these through training and experience. This may require assessments of individual fitness by medical examination and tests of physical fitness or aptitudes and abilities.
- Systems to identify health and safety training needs arising from recruitment, changes in staff, plant, processes or working practices. The need to maintain or enhance competence by refresher training and the presence of contractors' employees.

- Systems to provide the information, instruction, training and supporting communication effort needed to meet these needs.
- Arrangements to ensure competent cover for staff absences, particularly for staff with critical health and safety responsibilities.
- General health promotion and surveillance schemes which contribute to the maintenance of general health and fitness and include assessments of fitness for work, rehabilitation or job adaptation following injury or ill-health, however caused.

Training makes an important contribution to the achievement of competence. Experience of applying skills and knowledge is, however, another important ingredient and needs to be gained under adequate supervision at all levels. Proper supervision helps ensure the development and maintenance of competence and is particularly necessary for those new to a job or undergoing training.

The objective of ensuring the competence of employees is always to maximise their contribution to health and safety either individually or in groups. Working in compliance with performance standards and participating in initiatives such as hazard spotting, problem solving and improving standards all help to develop competence and to contribute to better health and safety performance.

Whatever levels of competence are achieved by managers, supervisors and other employees, professional health and safety advice will sometimes be needed. Advice can be obtained from outside consultancy organisations but successful organisations often employ in-house health and safety advisers.'

(25 marks)

(395 words)

Overall, this question achieved a satisfactory pass mark with generally well presented scripts.

Unfortunately, in quite a few cases there was clearly a lack of understanding of the requirements of the term 'précis' being to reduce the length of original text while retaining all the key points in a manner which demonstrates understanding.

Some candidates failed to demonstrate the skill in selecting the key information from the text and presenting these with either logic or understanding. Similarly, presenting a list of key phrases in bullet point form meant that several failed to secure the marks available.

A significant number of scripts were penalised for having too many or insufficient number of words. Candidates are expected to produce a script within the target number of words indicated. Where the total number of words fall outside the target penalties are high.

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