



# Fire Services Examinations Board

REPORT TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT  
AND THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS ON THE QUALIFYING  
EXAMINATION FOR PROMOTION TO THE RANK OF SUB-OFFICER  
PART II - PRACTICAL TEST 2000

1. This was the fourteenth occasion on which the practical test was conducted by the Board in accordance with the rules and syllabuses published in December 1996 (9th Edition).

It consisted of three sections:

SECTION A	The conduct of one composite drill.
SECTION B	Fireground procedure: taking charge of the situation and controlling the exercise.
SECTION C	An instructional talk on a specific fire risk within the candidate's brigade area.

2. Mr H E Wright was the Chairman of the Panel of Assessors and Mr Ian Kerr (CFO Shropshire) the Assessor for the practical tests.
3. The tests were held at local examination centres during the months of April, May and June.
4. The organisation of the tests was undertaken by 21 local examination boards.
5. 797 candidates initially entered for the examination as at the Board's closing date for entries (1 February). However, the final number of candidates entering the examination was 715 after late entries and withdrawals had both been accepted. 41 (5.7%) absented themselves from the examination. Thus, the number of candidates who attended the examination was 674.

## RESULTS

6. Of the 674 candidates who attempted the test 428 (63.5%) were awarded a pass and 246 (36.5%) failed. The 428 successful candidates are now qualified for promotion to the rank of sub-officer.
7. 9 female firefighters attempted the test, all of whom were successful.
8. 41 candidates were absent from the examination and under the Restriction of Entry Scheme 1 candidate (2.4%) appealed to the Board against their automatic barring from next year's examination. Under the delegated authority given to the Chairman the appeal was considered and upheld.

## GENERAL COMMENTS

9. The 2000 practical test for the qualifying examination for promotion to the rank of Sub-Officer was the fourteenth to be held under the auspices of the Fire Services Examinations Board.
10. Of the 715 candidates who entered the tests, 41 (5.7%) absented themselves leaving 674 candidates actually taking the test. Of these, 428 (63.5%) obtained a pass and are now qualified for promotion to the rank of Sub-Officer.
11. When compared to the figures relating to the previous year's test, the 2000 figures indicate an decrease in the number of candidates entering the test (-387), a reduction in the number of candidates absenting themselves, and a reduction in the number of candidates taking the test (-340). The pass rate is a reduction in numerical terms (-162) but an improvement in percentage terms (+5.3%) to that of 1999.
12. The Assessor for the practical tests and the Chairman of the Panel of Assessors visited a number of the examination centres to assess the facilities provided and observe the tests in progress. Few problems associated with the organisation and arrangements made by the local examination boards were found and the conduct of the various elements of the test were considered to be managed fairly and competently. Where matters required attention these were brought to the notice of local board officers.
13. Section A of the test requires candidates to organise a composite drill for two crews using their appliances and equipment. In this section of the test 87.4% of the candidates obtained a pass mark which is higher than that achieved last year. A number of Senior Examiners reported that the most common cause of failure continues to be a reluctance to take command of the crews, paying inadequate attention to safety aspects, and the poor debriefing of crews.

14. In Section B of the test, candidates are required to demonstrate their ability to take charge of a simulated operational incident, control the work of two crews and disperse the appliances and equipment satisfactorily. In this section of the test the recorded pass rate was 79.5% which is higher than that achieved last year. The weaknesses identified by the Senior Examiners were the slow gathering of information which resulted in an inadequate risk assessment and inappropriate actions being applied, together with those recognised in previous years such as the failure to delegate duties, establishing overall command and control of the crews, and providing a satisfactory de-briefing.
15. Section C of the test requires candidates to provide an instructional talk on a specified risk within their brigade, as determined by the examiners from a list of three such risks provided by the candidate's brigade. In this section 79.9% of the candidates achieved a pass mark which is higher than that achieved last year. The weaknesses identified in failed candidates by Senior Examiners related to inadequate preparation.
16. It continues to be the case that the majority of candidates who failed to obtain an overall pass have done so by failing to achieve a pass in only one of the three sections. Most brigades provide pre-examination courses which candidates may attend on a voluntary basis. However, it is reported that not all candidates avail themselves of this opportunity or fail to attend the complete course. It is of little surprise to note that the result of enquiries on this matter has indicated that the majority of those who fail to achieve an overall pass belong to this group.

## ASSESSORS' REPORT

17. Detailed comments of the national assessor in connection with the practical test will be prepared and issued to brigades.

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

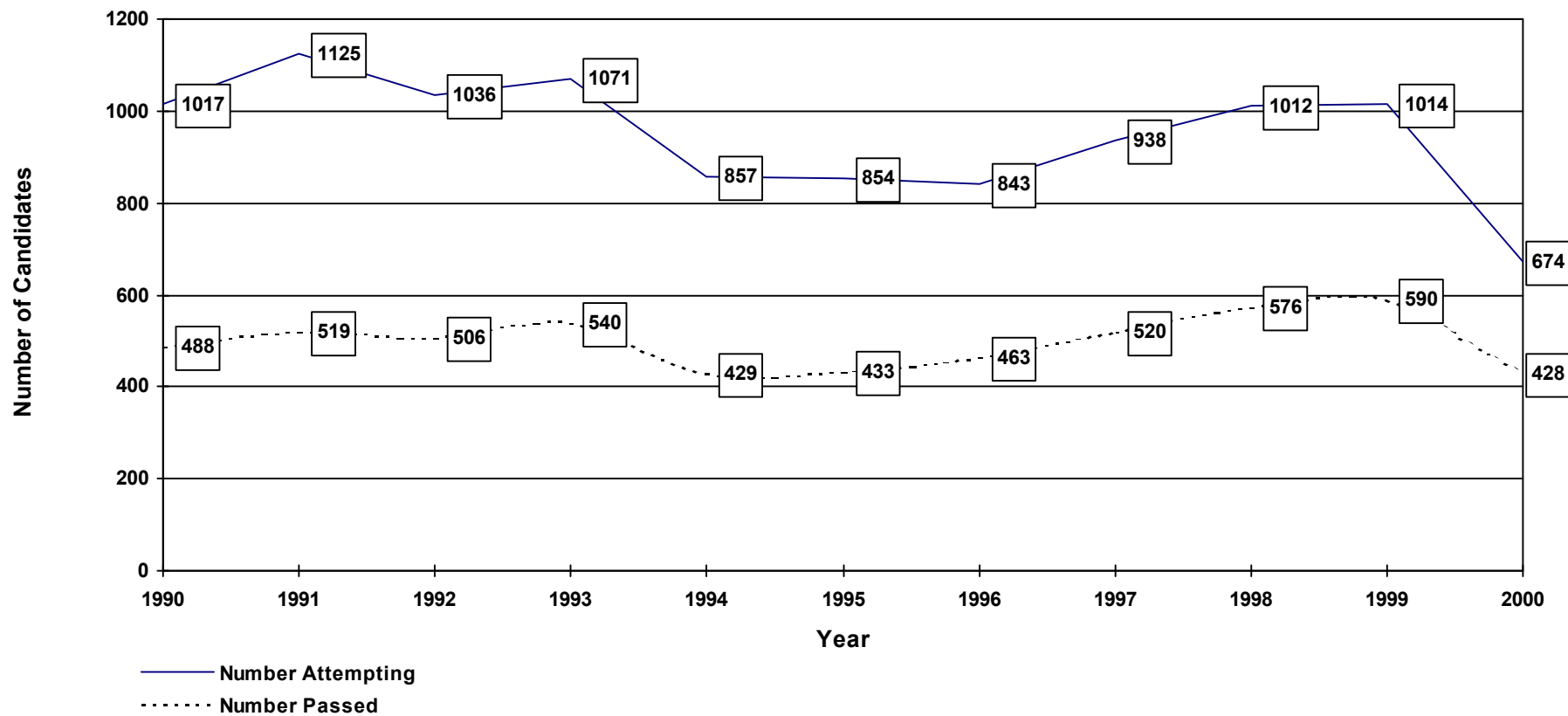
18. The following tables show the results of the examination as a whole in both graphical and tabular format. Graphs showing the numbers attempting and passing the examination and the percentage passing is attached at Appendix A. A summary of the results as a whole and by individual sections of the examination is attached at Appendix B and a full statistical report for the examinations, including an analysis by brigade is attached at Appendix C.

G Meldrum  
Chairman

D Stanley  
Secretary

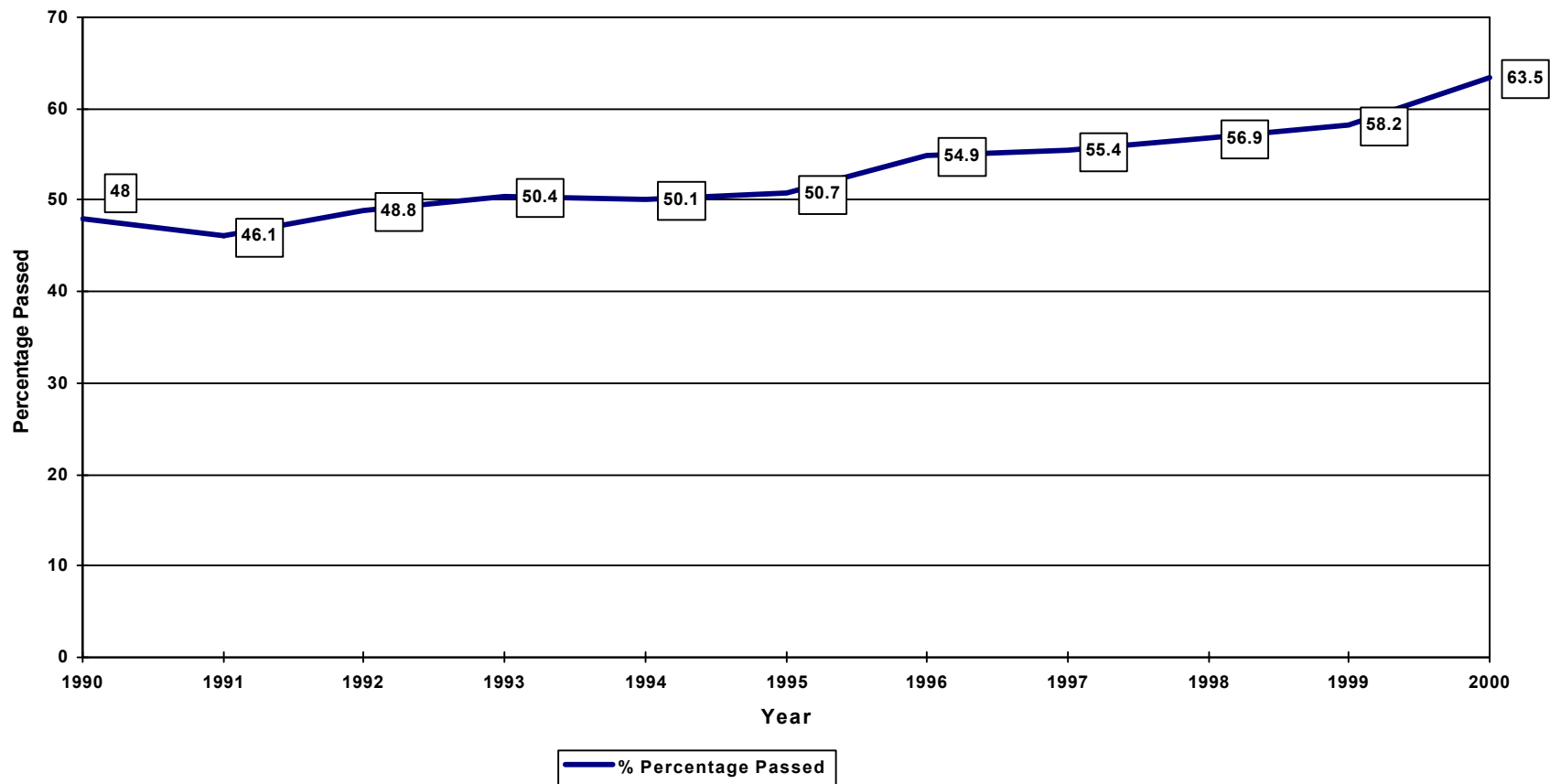
Sub-Officers' Practical Test 1990 to 2000

TABLE I



Sub-Officers' Practical Test 1990 to 2000

TABLE II



**Results in Test as a Whole**

Table I shows the results in the test as a whole.

**TABLE I**

	2000		1999		1998		1997		1996		1995		1994		1993		1992		1991		1990	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Passed	428	63.5	590	58.2	576	56.9	520	55.4	463	54.9	433	50.7	429	50.1	540	50.4	506	48.8	519	46.1	488	48.0
Failed	246	36.5	424	41.8	436	43.1	418	44.6	380	45.1	421	49.3	428	49.9	531	49.6	530	51.2	606	53.9	529	52.0
TOTAL	674		1014		1012		938		843		854		857		1071		1036		1125		1017	

**Performance in each Section**

Table II shows the distribution of candidates by section and their performance in the 2000 test.

**TABLE II**

Section	Subject	Passed		Failed		Total
		No	%	No	%	
Section A	The conduct of one composite drill	588	87.4	85	12.6	673
Section B	Fireground procedure: taking charge of the situation and controlling the exercise	535	79.5	138	20.5	673
Section C	An instructional talk on a specific fire risk within the candidate's brigade area.	538	79.9	135	20.1	673



## Fire Services Examinations Board

### Qualifying Examination for Promotion to the Rank of Sub-Officer 2000 Practical Test

#### FULL STATISTICAL REPORT

#### ANALYSIS OF ENTRIES BY AGE GROUP

The following table shows the distribution of candidates by age and their performance in the above examination.

Table I

Age Group	Passed		Failed		Total Sat	Total Entered	% of Grand Total
	No	%	No	%	No	No	
Up To 20 Years	0		0		0	0	0.00
20 To 24	15	83.33	3	16.67	18	18	2.52
25 To 29	118	67.43	57	32.57	175	183	25.59
30 To 34	174	64.93	94	35.07	268	281	39.30
35 To 39	90	56.60	69	43.40	159	170	23.78
40 To 44	28	60.87	18	39.13	46	52	7.27
45 To 49	3	50.00	3	50.00	6	9	1.26
50 +	0	0.00	2	100.00	2	2	0.28
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>63.50</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>36.50</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>ANALYSIS OF ENTRIES BY RANK</b>
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The following table shows the distribution of candidates by rank and their performance in the above examination.

**Table II**

Rank	Passed		Failed		Total Sat	Total Entered	% of Grand Total
	No	%	No	%	No	No	
Firefighter	287	62.12	175	37.88	462	493	68.95
Leading Firefighter	141	66.51	71	33.49	212	222	31.05
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>63.50</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>36.50</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>ANALYSIS OF ENTRIES BY GENDER</b>
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The following table shows the distribution of candidates by gender and their performance in the above examination.

**Table III**

Gender	Passed		Failed		Total Sat	Total Entered	% of Grand Total
	No	%	No	%	No	No	
Female	9	100.00	0	0.00	9	9	1.26
Male	419	63.01	246	36.99	665	706	98.74
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>63.50</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>36.50</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>ANALYSIS OF ENTRIES BY LENGTH OF SERVICE</b>
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The following table shows the distribution of candidates by length of service and their performance in the above examination.

**Table IV**

Length of Service Years	Passed		Failed		Total Sat	Total Entered	% of Grand Total
	No	%	No	%	No	No	
0	0		0		0	0	0.00
1	1	50.00	1	50.00	2	2	0.28
2	35	74.47	12	25.53	47	49	6.85
3	56	73.68	20	26.32	76	79	11.05
4	45	64.29	25	35.71	70	72	10.07
5	61	69.32	27	30.68	88	91	12.73
6	29	54.72	24	45.28	53	58	8.11
7	38	66.67	19	33.33	57	60	8.39
8	25	58.14	18	41.86	43	44	6.15
9	16	45.71	19	54.29	35	40	5.59
10	26	81.25	6	18.75	32	33	4.62
11	20	57.14	15	42.86	35	36	5.03
12	13	59.09	9	40.91	22	23	3.22
13	8	53.33	7	46.67	15	16	2.24
14	11	61.11	7	38.89	18	18	2.52
15	10	66.67	5	33.33	15	17	2.38
16	7	46.67	8	53.33	15	19	2.66
17	0	0.00	5	100.00	5	6	0.84
18	4	57.14	3	42.86	7	11	1.54
19	2	100.00	0	0.00	2	2	0.28
20	6	46.15	7	53.85	13	13	1.82
21	9	69.23	4	30.77	13	14	1.96
22	4	57.14	3	42.86	7	7	0.98
23	2	66.67	1	33.33	3	3	0.42
24	0	0.00	1	100.00	1	1	0.14
25	0		0		0	1	0.14
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>63.50</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>36.50</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>100.00</b>

ANALYSIS OF ENTRIES BY ETHNIC ORIGIN
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The following table shows the distribution of candidates by ethnic origin and their performance in the above examination.

**Table V**

Ethnic Origin	Passed		Failed		Total Sat	Total Entered	% of Grand Total
	No	%	No	%	No	No	
Black-Caribbean	3	60.00	2	40.00	5	5	0.70
Black-Other	0	0.00	1	100.00	1	1	0.14
Declined To Say	10	52.63	9	47.37	19	20	2.80
Indian	0	0.00	2	100.00	2	2	0.28
Other	5	83.33	1	16.67	6	6	0.84
White	410	63.96	231	36.04	641	681	95.24
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>63.50</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>36.50</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>100.00</b>

ANALYSIS OF ENTRIES BY BRIGADE
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The following table shows the cumulative results achieved in each brigade (grouped in local examination boards).

Table VI

Board	Brigade	Passed		Failed		Absentees	Total Sat	Total Entered	% of Grand Total
		No	%	No	%	No	No	No	
A	Cleveland	3	60.00	2	40.00	0	5	5	0.70
A	Durham & Darlington	2	33.33	4	66.67	0	6	6	0.84
A	Northumberland	3	100.00	0	0.00	0	3	3	0.42
A	Tyne & Wear	7	63.64	4	36.36	1	11	12	1.68
	<b>Sub-Totals:</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>60.00</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>40.00</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>3.64</b>
B	Humberside	8	88.89	1	11.11	0	9	9	1.26
B	North Yorkshire	3	75.00	1	25.00	1	4	5	0.70
B	South Yorkshire	13	86.67	2	13.33	0	15	15	2.10
B	West Yorkshire	8	66.67	4	33.33	2	12	14	1.96
	<b>Sub-Totals:</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>80.00</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>20.00</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>6.01</b>
C	Cumbria	4	57.14	3	42.86	1	7	8	1.12
C	Greater Manchester	12	32.43	25	67.57	3	37	40	5.59
C	Lancashire	14	70.00	6	30.00	2	20	22	3.08
	<b>Sub-Totals:</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>46.88</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>53.13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>9.79</b>
D	Cheshire	10	83.33	2	16.67	0	12	12	1.68
D	Isle of Man	1	100.00	0	0.00	0	1	1	0.14
D	Merseyside	17	73.91	6	26.09	1	23	24	3.36
	<b>Sub-Totals:</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>77.78</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>22.22</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>5.17</b>
E	Shropshire	1	33.33	2	66.67	0	3	3	0.42
E	Staffordshire	9	69.23	4	30.77	1	13	14	1.96
E	Warwickshire	4	57.14	3	42.86	4	7	11	1.54
E	West Midlands	22	43.14	29	56.86	3	51	54	7.55
E	Hereford and Worcs	2	33.33	4	66.67	2	6	8	1.12
	<b>Sub-Totals:</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>47.50</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>52.50</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>12.59</b>
F	Derbyshire	2	100.00	0	0.00	0	2	2	0.28
F	Leicestershire	9	90.00	1	10.00	0	10	10	1.40
F	Nottinghamshire	8	66.67	4	33.33	0	12	12	1.68
	<b>Sub-Totals:</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>79.17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>20.83</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>3.36</b>
G	Cambridgeshire	10	76.92	3	23.08	1	13	14	1.96
G	Lincolnshire	4	66.67	2	33.33	0	6	6	0.84
G	Norfolk	4	57.14	3	42.86	2	7	9	1.26
	<b>Sub-Totals:</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>69.23</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>30.77</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>4.06</b>
H	Bedfordshire & Luton	1	100.00	0	0.00	1	1	2	0.28
H	Northamptonshire	3	75.00	1	25.00	0	4	4	0.56
H	Oxfordshire	8	72.73	3	27.27	0	11	11	1.54
	<b>Sub-Totals:</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>75.00</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>25.00</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2.38</b>
I	Essex	10	71.43	4	28.57	2	14	16	2.24
I	Hertfordshire	6	85.71	1	14.29	0	7	7	0.98
I	Suffolk	4	80.00	1	20.00	0	5	5	0.70
	<b>Sub-Totals:</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>76.92</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>23.08</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>3.92</b>
J	London	30	46.88	34	53.13	3	64	67	9.37
	<b>Sub-Totals:</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>46.88</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>53.13</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>9.37</b>
K	East Sussex	3	42.86	4	57.14	1	7	8	1.12
K	Kent	17	77.27	5	22.73	0	22	22	3.08
K	Surrey	6	85.71	1	14.29	1	7	8	1.12
K	West Sussex	7	70.00	3	30.00	0	10	10	1.40

Board	Brigade	Passed		Failed		Absentees	Total Sat	Total Entered	% of Grand Total
		No	%	No	%				
<b>Sub-Totals:</b>		<b>33</b>	<b>71.74</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>28.26</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>6.71</b>
L	Berkshire	4	44.44	5	55.56	1	9	10	1.40
L	Buckinghamshire	4	57.14	3	42.86	2	7	9	1.26
L	Hampshire	4	57.14	3	42.86	1	7	8	1.12
<b>Sub-Totals:</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>52.17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>47.83</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>3.78</b>
M	Cornwall	4	50.00	4	50.00	0	8	8	1.12
M	Devon	12	70.59	5	29.41	0	17	17	2.38
<b>Sub-Totals:</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>64.00</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>36.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>3.50</b>
N	Dorset	4	80.00	1	20.00	0	5	5	0.70
N	Somerset	3	100.00	0	0.00	0	3	3	0.42
N	Wiltshire	4	100.00	0	0.00	0	4	4	0.56
<b>Sub-Totals:</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>91.67</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8.33</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1.68</b>
O	Avon	9	81.82	2	18.18	0	11	11	1.54
O	Gloucestershire	5	71.43	2	28.57	0	7	7	0.98
<b>Sub-Totals:</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>77.78</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>22.22</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2.52</b>
P	Mid & West Wales	8	57.14	6	42.86	0	14	14	1.96
P	North Wales	4	50.00	4	50.00	0	8	8	1.12
P	South Wales	13	72.22	5	27.78	0	18	18	2.52
<b>Sub-Totals:</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>62.50</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>37.50</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>5.59</b>
Q	Strathclyde	28	71.79	11	28.21	1	39	40	5.59
<b>Sub-Totals:</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>71.79</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>28.21</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>5.59</b>
R	Fife	6	66.67	3	33.33	2	9	11	1.54
R	Grampian	3	75.00	1	25.00	0	4	4	0.56
R	Highlands and Islands	1	50.00	1	50.00	0	2	2	0.28
R	Tayside	12	66.67	6	33.33	0	18	18	2.52
<b>Sub-Totals:</b>		<b>22</b>	<b>66.67</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>33.33</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>4.90</b>
S	Central Scotland	5	71.43	2	28.57	0	7	7	0.98
S	Dumfries & Galloway	1	50.00	1	50.00	0	2	2	0.28
S	Lothian and Borders	7	63.64	4	36.36	1	11	12	1.68
<b>Sub-Totals:</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>65.00</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>35.00</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2.94</b>
T	Northern Ireland	6	54.55	5	45.45	1	11	12	1.68
<b>Sub-Totals:</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>54.55</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>45.45</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1.68</b>
U	Guernsey	5	100.00	0	0.00	0	5	5	0.70
U	Jersey	1	100.00	0	0.00	0	1	1	0.14
<b>Sub-Totals:</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.84</b>
<b>TOTALS:</b>		<b>428</b>	<b>63.50</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>36.50</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>100.00</b>

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