



Fire Services Examinations Board

**REPORT TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY
PRIME MINISTER AND THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS ON THE QUALIFYING
EXAMINATION FOR PROMOTION TO THE RANK OF
SUB-OFFICER PART II – PRACTICAL TEST 2004**

1. This was the eighteenth occasion on which the practical test was conducted by the Board in accordance with the rules and syllabuses published in May 2003.

It consisted of three sections:

SECTION A	The conduct of one standard 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 Lead Assessor and Mr Ian Kerr (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. 366 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 304 after late entries and withdrawals had both been accepted. 63 (20.7%) absented themselves from the examination. Thus, the number of candidates who attended the examination was 241.

RESULTS

6. Of the 241 candidates who attempted the test 194 (80.5%) were awarded a pass and 47 (19.5%) failed. The 194 successful candidates are now qualified for promotion to the rank of Sub-Officer.
7. Of the 15 female firefighters who attempted the test, 12 (80.0%) were successful.
8. 63 candidates were absent from the examination. There were no appeals from candidates since this was the last practical test to be held and candidates would be unable to carry forward any successful appeals.
9. 6 candidates have failed to pass their Part II within the three year period which means they must now re-sit their Part I examination or enter directly into the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) process.

GENERAL COMMENTS

10. The practical test for the qualifying examination to the rank of Sub-Officer held during 2004 was the eighteenth held under the auspices of the Fire Services Examinations Board. This was the last to be so organised as the test will be replaced by workplace assessments in the future as part of the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS).
11. The personnel within the fire and rescue service who are eligible to complete their qualification by taking and passing this test are those who have achieved a pass in all four papers of the Part I written examination at this level and have yet to pass the Part II test within the specified period following their achievements in Part I. For the 2004 Part II test, this number was 355, made up from the 256 candidates who achieved the Part I pass in 2003 plus 99 candidates within the examination system who, having achieved their pass in Part I, had not yet passed the Part II test within the specified period.
12. Of the 304 who entered the test, 63 (20.7%) absented themselves leaving 241 candidates actually taking the test. 194 (80.5%) were awarded a pass.
13. When compared to the figures relating to last year's test, the figures for 2004 indicate a decrease of 172 (-36%) in the number of candidates entering the examination, and a further regrettable increase from 40 (8.4%) to 63 (20.7%) in the number of candidates absenting themselves. The overall result of this was a significant decrease in the number of candidates taking the test from 436 to 241 (-44.7%). However, although the number of candidates achieving a pass fell from 324 to 194 (-130) the pass rate increased to 80.5% from 74.3%.
14. The Assessor for the practical test, the Lead Assessor and the Secretary of the Board visited a number of the examination centres to assess the facilities provided and to observe the tests in progress. Where improvements associated with the organisation of the local board arrangements were considered necessary, advice was given. Examiners were observed and questioned regarding their assessments and were considered competent and fair. The considerable amount of pre-planning applied to the successful provision of these tests is fully realised and the efforts of all personnel involved were greatly appreciated.

15. The test consisted of three sections. Section A required candidates to organise a composite drill for two crews using their appliances and equipment. In this section of the test, 93.4% of the candidates achieved a pass, which is an improvement from 89.2% achieved last year. It is difficult to identify general weaknesses for the 16 (6.6%) candidates who failed to achieve the necessary standard in this test but the lower marks were realised in the assessment areas relating to their command and control of crews and safety issues.
16. For Section B of the test, candidates were 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 the recorded pass rate was 87.6% which was very similar to the 87.1% achieved last year. The general weaknesses of those who failed this section of the test were again difficult to identify in any general sense, but the lower marks were again realised in the assessment areas relating to their command of the crews, reviewing their assessment of the risks, and safety issues.
17. Section C of the test required candidates to provide an instructional talk on a specified risk within their brigade area. In this section, 92.1% of the candidates achieved a pass, which continued the improved pass rate achieved over recent years and especially that of 87.6% achieved last year. The general weakness of the 19 (7.9%) who failed was the unsatisfactory description of operational difficulties associated with the risk and the provision of an inadequate plan to effectively deal with the difficulties described should fire occur.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

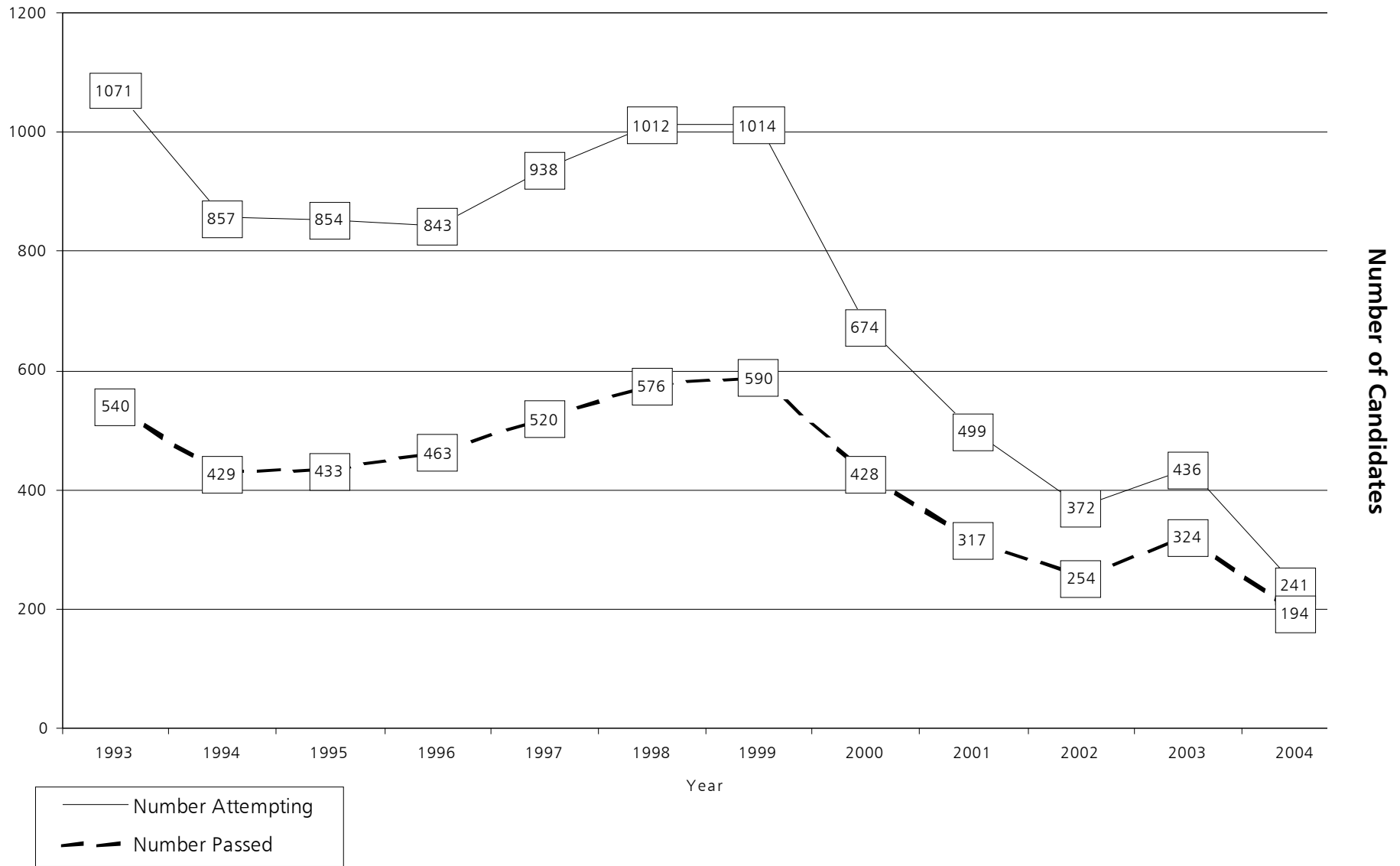
18. The following tables show the results of the examination as a whole in both graphical and tabular format. Graphs showing the numbers attempting and passing the examination and percentage passing is attached at Appendix A. A summary of the results as a whole and by individual sections of the examination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

G Meldrum
Chairman

D J Stanley
Secretary

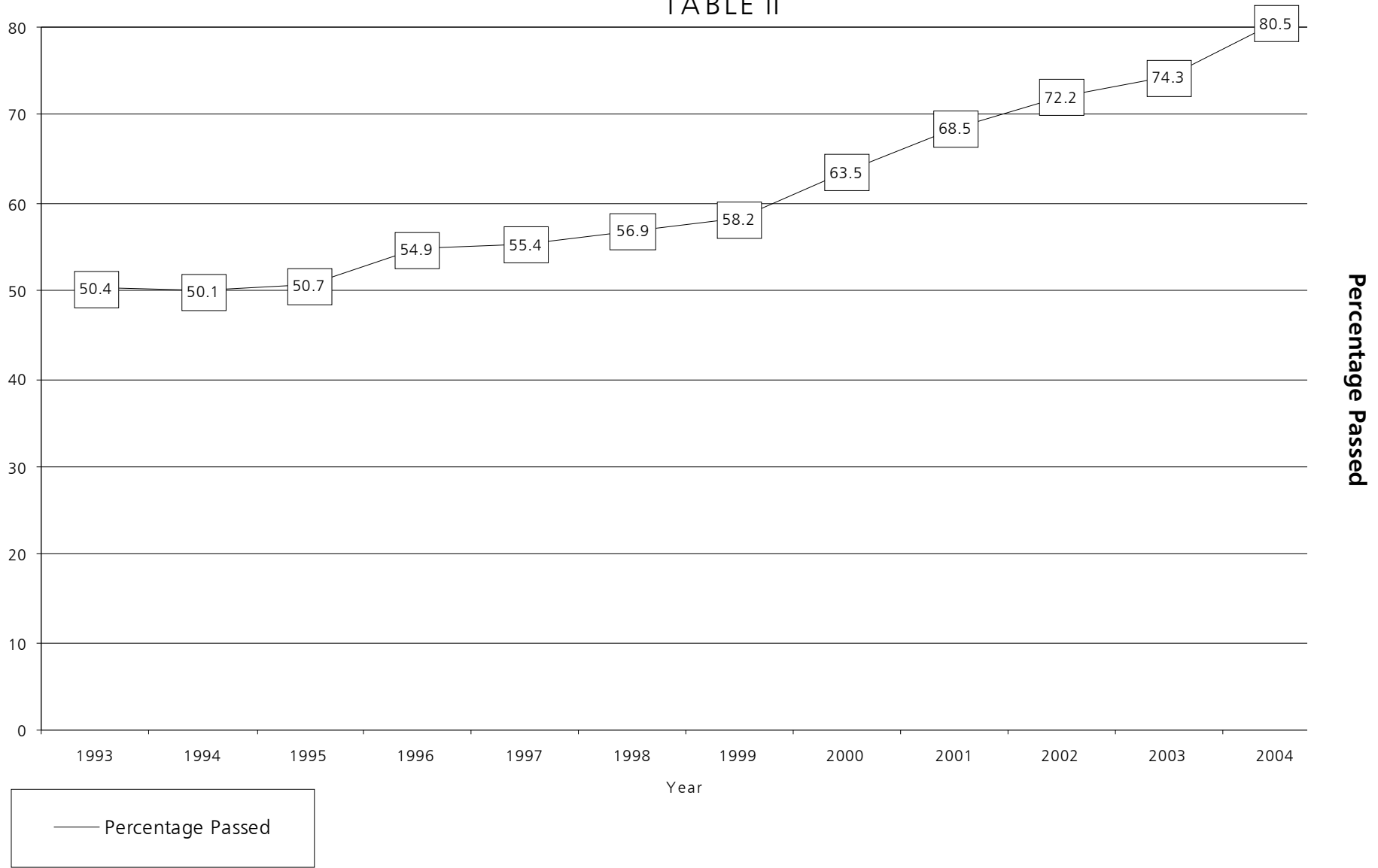
Sub-Officers' Practical Examination 1993 - 2004

TABLE I



Sub-Officers' Practical Examination 1993- 2004

TABLE II



RESULTS IN TEST AS A WHOLE

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

TABLE I

	2004		2003		2002		2001		2000		1999		1998		1997		1996		1995		1994	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Passed	194	80.5	324	74.3	254	72.2	317	68.5	428	63.5	590	58.2	576	56.9	520	55.4	463	54.9	433	50.7	429	50.1
Failed	47	19.5	112	25.7	98	27.8	146	31.5	246	36.5	424	41.8	436	43.1	418	44.6	380	45.1	421	49.3	428	49.9
Totals	241		436		352		463		674		1014		1012		938		843		854		857	

Performance in each Section

Table II shows the distribution of candidates by section and their performance in the 2004 test.

TABLE II

Section	Subject	Passed		Failed		Total
		No	%	No	%	No
Section A	The conduct of one composite drill	225	93.4	16	6.6	241
Section B	Fireground procedure: taking charge of the situation and controlling the exercise	211	87.6	30	12.4	241
Section C	An instructional talk on a specific fire risk within the candidate's brigade area	222	92.1	19	7.9	241



Fire Services Examinations Board

Qualifying Examination for Promotion to the Rank of Sub-Officer 2004 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		Sat	Total Entered	% of Grand Total
	No	%	No	%	No	No	
Up To 20 Years	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0.00
20 To 24	4	100.00	0	0.00	4	5	1.64
25 To 29	35	74.47	12	25.53	47	59	19.41
30 To 34	71	82.56	15	17.44	86	104	34.21
35 To 39	62	86.11	10	13.89	72	97	31.91
40 To 44	16	64.00	9	36.00	25	28	9.21
45 To 49	6	85.71	1	14.29	7	11	3.62
50+	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0.00
TOTALS:	194	80.50	47	19.50	241	304	100.00

ANALYSIS BY RANK

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

Table II

Rank	Passed		Failed		Sat	Total Entered	% of Grand Total
	No	%	No	%	No	No	
Firefighter	110	77.46	32	22.54	142	170	55.92
Leading Firefighter	84	84.85	15	15.15	99	134	44.08
TOTALS:	194	80.50	47	19.50	241	304	100.00

ANALYSIS BY GENDER

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

Table III

Gender	Passed		Failed		Sat	Total Entered	% of Grand Total
	No	%	No	%	No	No	
Female	12	80.00	3	20.00	15	19	6.25
Male	182	80.53	44	19.47	226	285	93.75
TOTALS:	194	80.50	47	19.50	241	304	100.00

ANALYSIS BY LENGTH OF SERVICE

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		Sat	Total Entered	% of Grand Total
	No	%	No	%	No	No	
0	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0.00
1	2	100.00	0	0.00	2	2	0.66
2	22	75.86	7	24.14	29	29	9.54
3	34	89.47	4	10.53	38	42	13.82
4	19	82.61	4	17.39	23	31	10.20
5	28	80.00	7	20.00	35	45	14.80
6	14	77.78	4	22.22	18	24	7.89
7	12	85.71	2	14.29	14	20	6.58
8	8	88.89	1	11.11	9	16	5.26
9	5	71.43	2	28.57	7	10	3.29
10	6	75.00	2	25.00	8	12	3.95
11	5	83.33	1	16.67	6	8	2.63
12	6	100.00	0	0.00	6	6	1.97
13	4	66.67	2	33.33	6	6	1.97
14	2	50.00	2	50.00	4	4	1.32
15	8	80.00	2	20.00	10	12	3.95
16	3	75.00	1	25.00	4	7	2.30
17	4	100.00	0	0.00	4	6	1.97
18	2	66.67	1	33.33	3	6	1.97
19	2	100.00	0	0.00	2	2	0.66
20	2	50.00	2	50.00	4	5	1.64
21	1	50.00	1	50.00	2	3	0.99
22	1	100.00	0	0.00	1	2	0.66
23	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0.00
24	1	50.00	1	50.00	2	2	0.66
25	3	75.00	1	25.00	4	4	1.32
TOTALS:	194	80.50	47	19.50	241	304	100.00

ANALYSIS BY ETHNIC ORIGIN

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

Table V

Ethnic Origin	Passed		Failed		Sat	Total Entered	% of Grand Total
	No	%	No	%	No	No	
Any Other	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	1	0.33
Black-Caribbean	6	100.00	0	0.00	6	9	2.96
Black-Other	2	100.00	0	0.00	2	2	0.66
Declined To Say	185	79.74	47	20.26	232	291	95.72
Indian	1	100.00	0	0.00	1	1	0.33
TOTALS:	194	80.50	47	19.50	241	304	100.00

ANALYSIS BY BRIGADE

The following table shows the cumulative results achieved in each brigade (grouped in local examination boards).

Table VI

Board	Brigade	Passed		Failed		Absentees	Sat	Total Entered	% of Grand Total
		No	%	No	%				
A	Durham & Darlington	2	100.00	0	0.00	0	2	2	0.66
A	Tyne & Wear	9	100.00	0	0.00	2	9	11	3.62
Sub-Totals:		11	100.00	0	0.00	2	11	13	4.28
B	Humberstone	6	85.71	1	14.29	2	7	9	2.96
B	North Yorkshire	2	66.67	1	33.33	0	3	3	0.99
B	South Yorkshire	5	100.00	0	0.00	1	5	6	1.97
B	West Yorkshire	10	76.92	3	23.08	6	13	19	6.25
Sub-Totals:		23	82.14	5	17.86	9	28	37	12.17
C	Cumbria	1	50.00	1	50.00	0	2	2	0.66
C	Greater Manchester	12	80.00	3	20.00	1	15	16	5.26
C	Lancashire	4	80.00	1	20.00	2	5	7	2.30
Sub-Totals:		17	77.27	5	22.73	3	22	25	8.22
D	Cheshire	2	66.67	1	33.33	0	3	3	0.99
D	Isle of Man	0	0.00	1	100.00	0	1	1	0.33
D	Merseyside	1	50.00	1	50.00	1	2	3	0.99
Sub-Totals:		3	50.00	3	50.00	1	6	7	2.30
E	Shropshire	6	100.00	0	0.00	0	6	6	1.97
E	Staffordshire	0	0.00	3	100.00	1	3	4	1.32
E	Warwickshire	2	66.67	1	33.33	0	3	3	0.99
E	West Midlands	5	83.33	1	16.67	5	6	11	3.62
E	Hereford and Worcs	2	66.67	1	33.33	0	3	3	0.99
Sub-Totals:		15	71.43	6	28.57	6	21	27	8.88
F	Derbyshire	2	50.00	2	50.00	1	4	5	1.64
F	Leicestershire	1	100.00	0	0.00	2	1	3	0.99
F	Nottinghamshire	1	100.00	0	0.00	0	1	1	0.33
Sub-Totals:		4	66.67	2	33.33	3	6	9	2.96
G	Cambridgeshire	2	100.00	0	0.00	0	2	2	0.66
G	Lincolnshire	2	100.00	0	0.00	1	2	3	0.99
G	Norfolk	6	100.00	0	0.00	0	6	6	1.97
Sub-Totals:		10	100.00	0	0.00	1	10	11	3.62

Continues...

Board	Brigade	Passed		Failed		Absentees	Sat	Total Entered	% of Grand Total
		No	%	No	%				
H	Bedfordshire & Luton	1	100.00	0	0.00	0	1	1	0.33
H	Northamptonshire	3	100.00	0	0.00	0	3	3	0.99
H	Oxfordshire	4	100.00	0	0.00	0	4	4	1.32
Sub-Totals:		8	100.00	0	0.00	0	8	8	2.63
I	Essex	3	60.00	2	40.00	1	5	6	1.97
I	Hertfordshire	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	0	2	0.66
I	Suffolk	1	16.67	5	83.33	1	6	7	2.30
Sub-Totals:		4	36.36	7	63.64	4	11	15	4.93
J	London	2	66.67	1	33.33	12	3	15	4.93
Sub-Totals:		2	66.67	1	33.33	12	3	15	4.93
K	East Sussex	0	0.00	1	100.00	2	1	3	0.99
K	Kent	4	100.00	0	0.00	0	4	4	1.32
K	Surrey	2	100.00	0	0.00	1	2	3	0.99
K	West Sussex	3	100.00	0	0.00	0	3	3	0.99
Sub-Totals:		9	90.00	1	10.00	3	10	13	4.28
L	Berkshire	4	100.00	0	0.00	1	4	5	1.64
L	Buckinghamshire	4	100.00	0	0.00	0	4	4	1.32
L	Hampshire	9	81.82	2	18.18	0	11	11	3.62
Sub-Totals:		17	89.47	2	10.53	1	19	20	6.58
M	Cornwall	3	100.00	0	0.00	0	3	3	0.99
M	Devon	2	66.67	1	33.33	3	3	6	1.97
Sub-Totals:		5	83.33	1	16.67	3	6	9	2.96
N	Dorset	1	100.00	0	0.00	0	1	1	0.33
N	Wiltshire	3	75.00	1	25.00	0	4	4	1.32
Sub-Totals:		4	80.00	1	20.00	0	5	5	1.64
O	Somerset	1	100.00	0	0.00	0	1	1	0.33
O	Avon	5	100.00	0	0.00	0	5	5	1.64
O	Gloucestershire	1	33.33	2	66.67	0	3	3	0.99
Sub-Totals:		7	77.78	2	22.22	0	9	9	2.96
P	Mid & West Wales	2	66.67	1	33.33	3	3	6	1.97
P	North Wales	2	100.00	0	0.00	2	2	4	1.32
P	South Wales	5	71.43	2	28.57	3	7	10	3.29
Sub-Totals:		9	75.00	3	25.00	8	12	20	6.58
Q	Strathclyde	10	76.92	3	23.08	2	13	15	4.93
Sub-Totals:		10	76.92	3	23.08	2	13	15	4.93

Continues...

Board	Brigade	Passed		Failed		Absentees	Sat	Total Entered	% of Grand Total
		No	%	No	%	No	No	No	
R	Fife	4	80.00	1	20.00	1	5	6	1.97
R	Grampian	9	81.82	2	18.18	0	11	11	3.62
R	Highlands and Islands	2	100.00	0	0.00	0	2	2	0.66
R	Tayside	5	100.00	0	0.00	0	5	5	1.64
Sub-Totals:		20	86.96	3	13.04	1	23	24	7.89
S	Central Scotland	4	100.00	0	0.00	0	4	4	1.32
S	Dumfries & Galloway	1	50.00	1	50.00	0	2	2	0.66
S	Lothian and Borders	2	100.00	0	0.00	4	2	6	1.97
Sub-Totals:		7	87.50	1	12.50	4	8	12	3.95
T	Northern Ireland	8	88.89	1	11.11	0	9	9	2.96
Sub-Totals:		8	88.89	1	11.11	0	9	9	2.96
U	Jersey	1	100.00	0	0.00	0	1	1	0.33
Sub-Totals:		1	100.00	0	0.00	0	1	1	0.33
TOTALS:		194	80.50	47	19.50	63	241	304	100.00

**APPEALS AGAINST EXAMINATION RESULTS
SUB-OFFICERS' PRACTICAL TEST 2004**

1. REPORT

- 1.1 Following the introduction of the Appeals against Examination Results, 10 appeals were received from 9 candidates asking for their failed sections of their practical test to be re-assessed.

Section A	1
Section B	7
Section C	<u>2</u>
TOTAL	<u>10</u>

- 1.2 The Senior Examiner of the candidate's local examination board was asked to investigate the appeal and provide a report recommending whether to support or reject the appeal. As part of the investigation, the Senior Examiner was required to obtain statements from the examiners concerned and provide copies of all documentation relevant to the examination process.
- 1.3 The Appeals Panel, consisting of the Secretary of the FSEB, the Lead Assessor and the National Assessor for the Practical Tests reviewed all appeals in the light of the Senior Examiners report, examiners comments and the candidate's original submission. The decision of the Appeals Panel was:

Appeals Successful and Examination Result now 'Passed'	0
Appeals Successful but decision to Re-test candidates	1
Appeals Unsuccessful	<u>8</u>
TOTAL	<u>9</u>

- 1.4 Candidates and Chief Officers have been notified of the decision of the Appeals Panel.

Published by:
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PDF version produced for FSEB by Electronic Equipments Ltd. elnet@ntlworld.com

This PDF file was produced on 16 February 2005.