

administered by three Commissioners has not been adopted. The Bill retains the existing principle for administration of the local service by the local authority, but provides for general control of the whole service by a Fire Service Council of seven members. The office of Inspector of Fire Brigades will be discontinued. He will be replaced on the administration side by the Fire Service Council, and on the technical side by a chief officer who will be responsible to the Council and will have extended powers with respect to technical matters. The explanatory memorandum attached to the Bill on presentation to Parliament, which sets out the principal provisions, is attached as a Schedule to this report.

INSPECTION

• It has not been possible to carry out any routine inspection duties during the year, and the inspection work has been confined to special visits made in connection with the purchase of land, plant and equipment, and the erection of new buildings by Fire Boards, the distribution of Government plant and equipment, and the general development of the emergency organizations.

Attached (Table IV) are statistical returns covering the year under review.

I have, &c.,

R. GIRLING-BUTCHER,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

SCHEDULE

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM ATTACHED TO THE FIRE SERVICES BILL

1. This Bill consolidates all the existing legislation affecting fire brigades. It has three main purposes—to improve the standard of training and co-ordination of the fire service, especially in connection with its operation at serious fires; to improve the financial provision made for the small-town fire brigades; and to provide an emergency service which will function for rural fire-protection in peacetime and form the nucleus for the fire defence of the country in the event of war. The principal changes in the existing legislation are set out below.

Fire Service Council

2. The Bill sets up a Central Authority (*clause 3*) to be known as the Fire Service Council, which will be in general control of the fire service and responsible for its efficiency. The Council will consist (*clause 4*) of seven members, four nominated to represent the contributors of revenue, two the employers and employees in the larger centres, and one the volunteer brigades. The duties of this Council (*clause 8*) include the carrying out of experimental and research work into fire-service methods and equipment, the publication of technical information, the inspection of brigades, and the establishment of training courses for both officers and men. It may require any Urban Fire Authority to improve the efficiency of its service (*clause 11*) and the Authority must comply unless it can establish to a Magistrate or by arbitration that the requisition is in the circumstances unreasonable. The Council may delegate its functions (*clause 13*). This will enable provision to be made for some measure of regional control if this is considered desirable. The staff of the Council is to be provided from the Public Service (*clause 15*). The existing Inspector of Fire Brigades will be replaced by a Chief Officer (*clause 16*), who will have extended powers and be in more direct control of the technical side of the fire service.

Districts

3. The districts in which brigades operate are classified into united urban fire districts, urban fire districts, and secondary urban fire districts. The two first mentioned consist of the existing united fire districts and fire districts controlled by Fire Boards, the ^{names} set out in the *Third* Schedule, and other urban areas in which the water supply is approved and ^{adequate} to provide a good standard of