

Drop in fires on board

LATEST FIRE statistics for Royal Navy ships show a significant drop in all but minor incidents.

During last year there was only one serious and four medium-scale fires compared with four major and seven medium incidents in 1995. In all, there were 88 fires in 1996 compared with 94 the previous year. The number of fires which occurred in submarines – five – was half the 1995 total.

The only serious fire virtually destroyed the funnel of the Hunt-class minehunter HMS Hurworth, alongside at Portsmouth. It was one of only 13 fires that required more than first-aid action.

More fires than the previous year were extinguished by the person finding it, indicating the extra vigilance being shown by ships' staffs. The biggest single cause was electrical or electronic faults – responsible for 29 fires – and over a third of the total number of fires took place in machinery spaces. Just over half took place in vessels at sea.

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