

THIRD ANNUAL REPORT
of the
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
(CHICAGO CIVIL DEFENSE CORPS)

January - December, 1960

Richard J. Daley,
Mayor of Chicago.

Robert J. Quinn,
Acting Director,
Chicago Civil Defense Corps.

FIRE & RESCUE HDQRS,
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DEDICATION

- To: Mayor Richard J. Daley, for his inspiring leadership and imaginative planning in keeping Chicago great and progressing under its motto - "I WILL".
- To: Robert J. Quinn, Fire Commissioner and Acting Director of the Chicago Civil Defense Corps, for his personal guidance and interest in this organization, and for the cooperation of the Chicago Fire Department.
- To: The Firefighters of Chicago - a sincere "THANK YOU" for their words of encouragement and their training and helpful suggestions.

HISTORY AND PURPOSE

January 4, 1960, marks the third anniversary of the Fire and Rescue Service of the Chicago Civil Defense Corps. It was on New Year's Day of 1958, that the Fire and Rescue Service officially went "in service" under the direction of Fire Commissioner Robert J. Quinn, Acting Director of the Chicago Civil Defense Corps. The purpose of this organization is to provide a trained auxiliary force to assist at disasters and augment the Fire Department with specialized equipment and manpower should the need arise.

The inception of the service actually dates back to a meeting in the fall of 1957 between Commissioner Quinn, Mayor Richard J. Daley and Mr. Charles J. Johnson, a devoted Chicago Fire Buff. Here it was decided to form the Fire and Rescue Service with volunteer citizen members operating six heavy duty Civil Defense Rescue Trucks which were then assigned to other branches of the Civil Defense Corps.

It took the first handful of volunteers from October, 1957, to January, 1958 to put the six trucks in efficient operating condition. All tools and equipment were renovated completely by the members to restore peak effectiveness. On the first day of official recognition as an organization, the service responded to an extra-alarm fire in a cold-storage warehouse on the near north side. At that first alarm, the true value of this organization was evident and since that time, the Chicago Civil Defense Fire and Rescue Service has continued to prove to Chicago and the Nation that a service of this type can work with proper cooperation.

TRAINING

The Fire and Rescue Service maintains a continuous training program throughout the year. It is broken down into 3 parts:

1. Classroom Work,
2. Practical Exercise,
3. On-the-Scene Training.

All members of the Service are taught the Basic Civil Defense Rescue Techniques, fire department evolutions and First Aid. These three subjects are taught in the classroom on a weekly basis. During the Winter, classes are confined to indoor work and feature frequent motion pictures and demonstrations of equipment and tools by manufacturer's representatives. In the warmer months, much of the training moves out doors, where the techniques of rescue learned in the classroom are put into actual practice. One of the most educational outdoor classes is the simulation of actual disaster problems. Abandoned or condemned buildings are used for this training, with a dummy figure buried under debris, collapsed walls, etc. Members are divided into squads under a squad leader and given the problem of removing the victim under special conditions using the tools and equipment from the trucks. The entire operation is supervised and rated by Fire Department instructors and a thorough critique period is held with each "squad" upon completion of the problem.

The third phase of training is actual on-the-scene work at fires and various emergencies. In Chicago, any extra alarm fire provides any number of places for members to use equipment and gain experience. While working at these fires, the men are taught how to conduct themselves under emergency conditions at any disaster. There is constant supervision of members at these fires, with emphasis on alertness for personal safety.

FIRE DUTY

The Fire and Rescue Service responds automatically to all extra-alarm fires in Chicago, plus still-and-box alarm fires in hospitals, schools, airports, hotels and the like. Total responses for fire duty during 1960 was 340, or nearly one per day.

Among the many duties of members at fires are: assisting engine companies in laying hose lines to snorkels, high pressure wagons, jeep pressure or towers; replacing broken lengths of hose; helping set up ladders; and in general, assisting the Fire Department in all non-hazardous jobs at the fire scene. Also important at fires is the use of the special tools and equipment carried on the Rescue Trucks. All members are trained to use this equipment themselves or to equip firemen to use it in dangerous areas.

One of the most valuable and most frequently used pieces of equipment on the heavy-duty Rescue Trucks was the front-mounted 7-ton Winch. The winches were utilized at practically every major fire in some capacity, ranging from pulling down dangerous walls, to yanking bars from windows to permit entry by firemen. At several fires in garages, winches were used to pull trucks and cars to safety before the fire could reach them; and at a laundry fire a winch pulled many large bundles of clothing out of the way. At lumber yard fires, the winches moved huge piles of wood; and occasionally, they served to extricate fire apparatus from mud or ice.

Many of the electric, gas and air-operated entry tools received heavy use during the year at fires. The Chain Saws were time-savers in opening up flooring, cutting beams and timbers; while the Recipro-saw cut away metal and pipes to give firemen access to areas. Bolt cutters proved handy in cutting off locks from doors and windows and in breaking through wire fences for hose lines or vehicles. The Hydraulic Porto-Power Sets were used to open steel doors at several fires, while the Roto-Hammers opened holes in walls and roofs.

The sound-powered telephones proved helpful at a fire in a tall grain elevator to provide ground-to-roof communications for fire officers. The Reviv-A-Life resuscitators were utilized many times to give oxygen to victims and firemen at many smoky fires. Victims of several apartment fires were removed to the ground in the Service's metal Stokes basket litters. At several fires, members helped string fire lines with the police to hold back and control large and unruly crowds.

Winter's adverse weather conditions found members performing several special jobs at fires. Prime among these was the spreading of salt in the entire fire area to provide footing for firemen and prevent freezing of hose line connections. Hydrant thawers were also used to heat both hydrants and hose couplings in sub-freezing temperatures. In several fires where high winds posed a problem, members patrolled adjoining residential streets with hand pumps to put out fires caused by blowing embers.

