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THE HISTORY OF HUNGARIAN FIREFIGHTER TRAINING FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE CHANGE OF REGIME

Abstract

Fire prevention and suppression is one of the oldest organized human activities. As fire extinguishing tools and equipment grew, more and more knowledge was needed. The Hungarian National Fire Brigade Association was established in 1870 by the voluntary fire brigade associations. Between 1890 and 1902, the Budapest Voluntary Fire Brigade held 11 national firefighting courses. The country's fire brigade disintegrated as a result of war conditions and acts of war. In 1945, the Provisional National Government transferred the supervision and control of the unified Hungarian fire brigade to the Ministry of the Interior. In 1991, the organizational units providing fire protection education and research came under joint control, and the BM Fire Protection Training and Research Institute was established. This article provides an overview of the history of the Hungarian firefighter training from the beginning to the change of regime, the legal bases for the reorganization of fire brigades and fire police, and the general provisions regulating education.

Keywords: fire, prevention, history, fire safety, regulations, voluntary fire brigades

A MAGYAR TŰZOLTÓKÉPZÉS TÖRTÉNETE A KEZDETEKTŐL A RENDSZERVÁLTÁSIG

Absztrakt

A tűz megelőzése és megfékezése egyike a legrégebbi szervezett emberi tevékenységnek. Ahogy gyarapodtak a tűz oltására szolgáló eszközök, felszerelések, egyre több tudásra volt szükség. Az önkéntes tűzoltóegyletek 1870-ben hozták létre a Magyar Országos Tűzoltó



Szövetséget. A Budapesti Önkéntes Tűzoltó Testület 1890-1902 között 11 országos tűzoltótiszti tanfolyamot tartott. A háborús viszonyok és a harci cselekmények következtében az ország tűzoltósága szétesett. Az Ideiglenes Nemzeti Kormány az egységes magyar tűzoltóság felügyeletét és ellenőrzését 1945-ben a Belügyminisztérium feladatkörébe utalta. 1991-ben a tűzvédelmi oktatást és kutatást végző szervezeti egységek közös irányítás alá kerültek, megalakították a BM Tűzvédelmi Oktató és Kutató Intézetet. Ez a cikk áttekintést nyújt a magyar tűzoltóképzés történetéről a kezdetektől a rendszerváltásig, a tűzoltóság és a tűzrendészet újjászervezésének jogi alapjairól, az oktatást meghatározó általános rendelkezésekről.

Keywords: tűz, megelőzés, történelem, tűzbiztonság, szabályzatok, önkéntes tűzoltóságok

1. THE BEGINNINGS

Preventing fire and curbing its destruction is one of the oldest organized human activities. Back then experience in itself could not be sufficient enough, one had to learn and practice cooperation. From the experience of thousands of years, a group of people with special knowledge, equipment and working methods, firefighters, formed, who, among other things, took on this task in the public interest. The public entrusted them, but he also expected them to work in an age-appropriate manner, for which they had to prepare.

As fire extinguishing tools and equipment increased in number, more and more knowledge was needed to handle them safely. This could no longer be mastered by mere contemplation, firefighting, and the rules of fire prevention must have been learned. This is where the Hungarian fire brigade has started. In the Middle Ages, guilds and student fire brigades performed fire protection tasks, and in the 1870s the foundation and training of volunteer and later professional fire brigades has begun, which still takes place within an organized framework.



The first leaders and educators of the Hungarian voluntary firefighting movement got to know the tricks of firefighting abroad. In 1862, Count Ödön Széchenyi mastered the theoretical and practical rules of firefighting at the “Fire Brigad” in London.¹

Frigyes Rösch, commander of the Sopron Fire and Gymnastics Association, the first established organization after Trianon, and Waldemár Krause, the later chief of the capital fire brigade, acquired their firefighting skills on German soil.

Voluntary fire brigades formed the Hungarian National Fire Brigade Association (MOTSZ) in 1870. This association formed the backbone of the Hungarian fire protection. They assumed that expensive equipment would only be complete if it was operated by qualified operating personnel. Firefighting, as a dangerous occupation, requires essential theoretical and practical proficiency. The trainings, exercises and presentations gained the recognition of the observers early on, and many of the spectators tried the professional tricks themselves. The community of volunteer firefighters was organized in more and more places. However, their continuous preparation required adequate professional competence.²

The Budapest Voluntary Fire Brigade received state aid in 1873 on the condition that it promotes the training of fire brigades in the countryside. The task was completed by sending practicing masters for a period of 4-6 weeks. We are aware of about 12 similar cases.

In 1883, the Budapest Volunteer Fire Department organized a so-called guard commander's course. The following subjects were part of the curriculum: instrumentation, extinguishing and rescue, auxiliary subjects; general subjects; water rescue.

In 1884, the first volunteer firefighting officer course was organized.

The purpose of the 1890 national firefighting course was summarized as follows:

„... provide the opportunity anyone from anywhere, who wishes to take the firefighting business seriously, to acquire the material in the shortest possible time and at the lowest cost,

¹ MINÁROVICS János: *150 éve született Gróf Széchenyi Ödön* Budapest 1994, BM Tűz- és Polgári Védelmi Intézet 4-7. p.

² VASS János: *Magyarország türendészeti igazgatása s annak fejlődési irányzatai*. Eger, 1912, Egri Nyomda, 5-12. p



all that qualifies him as a firefighter, as an officer or non-commissioned officer, and provides a basis for training and self-training. "³

Between 1890 and 1902, the Budapest Voluntary Fire Brigade held 11 national firefighting courses. Of these, 337 students were certified as firefighters and non-firefighters.

2. MOTSZ - NEW REGULATION

MOTSZ took over the organization of the courses in 1903, and precise rules were drawn up for the course and the officer examination.

Based on the experience of the first two courses, the regulations had to be tightened. An exam had to be introduced that gave real value and esteem to the officer's diploma. This is how the amended course regulations were prepared. According to this, courses organized by county associations were recognized as equivalent to national courses only if they were organized with the approval of the MOTSZ. The course lasted for 19 days and only gave a certificate of attendance. Officer certification could only be obtained after passing a separate exam. The exam had to be passed before a committee sent by MOTSZ.

Only those who had two years of fire service and general education could take the exam. Only high school students were admitted to the national firefighting courses, and only high school graduates and reserve military officers were admitted to the firefighter exam. The training of professional and volunteer firefighters was conducted separately: two-week courses for volunteer firefighters were held in 3-4 major cities each year, and four-week fire policing courses in Budapest for the training of professional officers.

The training of subordinate firefighters belonged to the responsibility of commanders for both professional and volunteer firefighters. Trainings and exercises took place during the service hours for professionals and on Sunday afternoons for volunteers.

³ GÁTI István (szerk.): *A tűzoltó képzés és a tűzoltó tisztképző iskola története* Budapest, 1998, BM TOP TKI 5-7 p.



Along with the publication of Decree No. 254,300 / 1928, a new chapter in firefighting officer training has begun. It included regulations for the Hungarian National Fire Officer Training Course and for the establishment, organization and operation of district firefighting courses.⁴

The regulation defined the purpose of the course

- acquaint its students with fire policing, related administrative, public policing, technical issues and firefighting through regular theoretical and practical teaching
- the course is organized by the Minister of the Interior with the participation of MOTSZ, the capital of Budapest and the interested rural legislative cities;
- duration of the course: 6 months (of which 1 month must be spent at a rural fire brigade).

The decree regulated the organization of the course, its announcement, the application, the method of admission and the curriculum, which consisted of a theoretical and a field practical part.

Among the theoretical subjects, preventive fire protection knowledge, various extinguishing agents, water obtaining and firefighting tactics were included.

The field practical part included the physical training and order, firefighting installation, command, tactical attacks and their command, rescue exercises, testing and demonstration of new equipment. As well as the description and presentation of the emergencies and most important methods of intervention at theaters, motion picture plants, fire extinguisher factories, plantations, waterworks, warehouses, garages, gas stations, film depots, ambulance stations, etc., and finally the assignment to the professional fire brigades and the officer traineeship.

The curriculum was intended to provide a thorough training for firefighters, so in addition to firefighting subjects, it also included materials from related disciplines. MOTSZ was responsible for selecting lecturers and providing textbooks.

Tuition, admission and examination fees were set by the Minister of the Interior. A separate chapter discussed the responsibilities of students. In the sessions, students were required to appear in uniform and were required to follow the instructions of the commander and lecturers.

⁴ PARÁDI Ákos: *A magyar rendvédelem civil szerveződései 1867–1945 Rendvédelem-történeti Füzetek (Acta Historiae Preasidii Ordinis)* HU ISSN 1216-6774 XV. évf. (2008) 18. sz 64-67 p.



Anyone who, although proven, missed more than 10 theoretical or 20 practical hours, or even only one hour unjustifiably, was not eligible for the exam.

The course was completed by a written, oral and practical final exam. The diploma of firefighter officers could only be obtained by a student who passed the qualification exam.

The Minister of the Interior attended the national fire officer course for professional fire officers and county fire police inspectors in accordance with Decree no. 256.210 / 1928. VIII.

According to the decree, appropriate fire policing has two conditions: firstly, all cities and villages in the country must be provided with the prescribed fire extinguishers; secondly, all fire brigades must be operating under the direction of a qualified commander at the height of their profession

For the latter purpose, the completion of a national firefighter officer course has been made compulsory for the post of professional firefighter or commander. Between 1928 and 1941, eight courses were held. A total of 250 firefighter qualifications were obtained at the National Firefighter Training Courses District and country courses were held along the lines of the National Courses.

The examination schedule of the Hungarian National Fire Officer Training Course was re-regulated by a decree of the Minister of the Interior on June 4, 1929.⁵ According to this, the course was completed with a final exam consisting of a written, oral and practical part.

In 1929, the Minister of the Interior laid down in a decree the disciplinary regulations of the Hungarian National Firefighter Training Course and the district firefighting courses.

3. ARTICLE X OF ACT 1936, THE FIRST FIREFIGHTER ACT

Article X of Act 1936, the first Firefighter Act, made the organization of fire departments general and strengthened the institution of fire policing supervision. Decree No. 180.000/1936 on fire police further regulated the training.

⁵ KERTES Ferenc (szerk.): *Az intézményi tűzoltóképzés hat évtizede* Budapest, 2008, KOK 17 p.



According to a survey conducted in the middle of 1944, the number of professional fire brigades in 52 towns was as follows: 157 firefighter officers, 1,793 firefighters and deputy officers, consequently approx. one trained officer in 11 firefighters.

These measures required the recruitment of more and more firefighters with technical and administrative knowledge. The standard of firefighting training kept pace with the requirements. Dr. Jenő Vitéz Roncsik wrote textbooks on the topic of firefighting administration, Kornél Szilvay on firefighting technical knowledge, which significantly contributed to the expansion of professional knowledge.

As a result of the war and acts of war, the country's fire brigade disintegrated. Many of the firefighters lost their lives, became disabled or were taken as prisoners of war. The equipment suffered heavy losses, a significant part of which was taken away from the country. As a result, fire protection across the country has been minimized and reorganization was required. The fights were still going on in a significant territory of Hungary, when the reorganization of the public administration began in the liberated parts of the country. The Provisional National Government among its first instructions managed to deal with public safety and, as part of it, fire protection.

The legal basis for the reorganization of fire brigades and the fire police was adopted by the Decree No. 10.280 / 1945 ME of the Provisional Government⁶, which was issued on 16 November. The decree stipulated: "In the territory of the country, all tasks that are referred to the tasks of the fire brigade by a legal act shall be performed by the members of the unified Hungarian fire brigade." The decree stated: "All municipalities, as well as all cities with county and legislative powers, as well as large-scale industrial, agricultural and public transport companies designated by a separate decree by the competent minister, are required to maintain a fire brigade."

The decree transferred the supervision and control of the unified Hungarian fire brigade to the Ministry of Interior.

⁶ Dr. Dévényi Endre: A tűzrendészet szabályozás és magyarázata; Budapest 1949. 38. p



On the implementation of the government decree the Decree No. 271 000/1946 of the Ministry of Interior⁷ took action.

It defined the basic purpose of the fire policing work in prevention, rescue and reconnaissance activities. It stipulated as a general condition of the firefighter's board membership that: A firefighter may only be the person who proves that he has a high school diploma and obtained a diploma in firefighting at the advanced firefighting course.

Designated firefighter officers, non-commissioned officers and officers who, at the time of entry into force of this regulation, did not have the specific qualifications required to obtain it within three years, at the expense of dismissal.

Chapter IV of the regulation dealt with the training of members of the fire department, stating that: "... the training of firefighters takes place partly in boards and partly in courses. College training is for the training of novice firefighters and is provided by the fire chief. ”

The establishment of fire brigade organizations, personnel, material and accommodation conditions in most places could only be provided with great difficulty.

The Commander-in-Chief and Officers of the National Fire Brigade played a significant role in this activity. First of all, the expectation was that the Hungarian fire brigade, with its incomplete number and professional equipment, would ensure its position in the situation of the country at that time, in the protection of the extremely depleted material assets.

There have been more and more fires with great damage, often not only with destructive elements, but also with human irresponsibility and arson.

⁷ Dr. Dévényi Endre: A tűzrendészet szabályozás és magyarázata; Budapest 1949. 38. p



4. THE GENERALIZATION OF NATIONALIZATION

The generalization of nationalization and the increased protection of public property justified the issuance of Decree No. 9.812 / 1947 of the Ministry of Interior, which ordered the organization of state fire brigades at certain companies (plants).⁸

Decree No. 331.500 / 1947 of the Ministry of Interior issued on the subject of the regulations on the organization and service of city fire brigades occupied a significant place in the organizational development of fire brigades, required all legislative and county towns to maintain a fire department.

For nearly eight decades, organizational firefighting training has taken place without any institutional form.

Taking into account the spread of organized and professional firefighting, it was necessary to regulate firefighter training, primarily officer training. Many regulations provided legal conditions, but the relatively small number of students to be trained at one time did not justify the establishment of a permanent educational institution.

The firefighter training also started in tow at the unified Hungarian fire brigade. Trainers were rarely found because the officer staff was either absent or considered to be unreliable.

The remaining equipment proved to be insufficient for firefighting and rescue, therefore the training of firefighters took place during the live deployments by passing on experience.

In accordance with the centralizational aspirations of the age, Government Decree No. 5090/1948⁹ was published on the organization of the state fire brigade.

By the government decree, a state fire brigade was established on May 1, 1948, under the central control of the Ministry of Interior, organized on a military basis. The participation of local governments in the fire protection administration and in the operation of fire brigades has ceased to exist.

⁸ Gáti István (szerk): A tűzoltóképzés és a tűzoltó tisztképző iskola története, Budapest, 1998., BM TOP TKKI 29 p.

⁹ Dr. Dévényi Endre: A tűzrendészet szabályozás és magyarázata; Budapest 1949. 16. p



The firefighter and the firefighter officer training arrangements, organization and operation regulations of the State Fire Service dealt with establishing a highly professional training of the members of the fire department.

The establishment of new organizational units of the fire brigade, the significant increase in their number, required an increase in the preparation for the performance of professional tasks.

New regulations have also been published to facilitate this development and to place the implementation of the tasks on uniform principles, which determine training in an outstanding way. Of these, Decree No. 271,000 / 1946 of the Ministry of Interior regulated the requirements for the basis and further development of the training.

The decree played a prominent role in the organization of vocational firefighting vocational schools providing basic firefighting training and then interdependent mid-level and upper-level vocational training. The decree of the Minister of the Interior stated, among other things, that „... the training of firefighters takes place partly in boards and partly in courses.” The basic principle in the course training was gradation and interdependence in accordance with the requirements of the service.

The decree of the Minister of the Interior prescribed and determined the duration of the course, the curriculum - the theoretical and practical subjects - and the order and method of admission and examination for each course. It contained in more detail the requirements related to the advanced firefighting course. Upon passing the examination of the advanced firefighting course, a diploma of firefighter officer shall be issued.

There is a high degree of similarity between the ministerial regulations on the organization of courses in the 1930s and the regulations for restarting them. The similarity is not accidental. The previous principles have proved their worth, the new ones have been formulated in part by the old firefighters, but it also proves that the professionally supported ideas could still be put into practice at this time.

In order to implement government decrees, he ordered the Ministry of Interior to launch an advanced firefighter course. The management and cooperation of the training was the responsibility of the National Fire Brigade.



In order to obtain the said qualification, an advanced firefighting course was ordered from 1 September 1947 to 30 April 1948.

After such an antecedent, the training of officers, who were not yet state firefighters, began.

Decree No. 464 725/1948 IV/2 of the Ministry of the Interior was published for the organization of the Central Fire Department, according to which the National Fire Brigade Headquarters - in addition to the already operating state recruitment department in Újpest - organized two more recruitment training departments (in the capital) and an officer training department (in Makón and Nagykanizsa, respectively). This is the beginning of institutional firefighting training. There was a change in the locations, but the school-like operation was continuous and this fundamentally changed the organizational framework of firefighter training.

Decree No. 464 725/1948 IV/2 of the Ministry of the Interior¹⁰ was issued to implement the government decree ordering the nationalization of the fire brigade on the regulation of the training of members of the State Fire Brigade.

The first state fire officer training class began on June 18, 1948.¹¹ Organizing study, ministry, and community work was one of the most important tasks for the students of the courses. Leisure time was ensured by the creation of the library, the formation of choirs, theater and village groups. Vocational education, regular individual learning and activities in the learning circles took place in increasingly improving placement conditions. Students were increasingly excluded from having several years of fire service. The organization and maintenance of state fire officer training has resulted in a qualitative change in the professional training of fire officers. In addition to vocational training, political-ideological activity played an increasingly important role in training.

In the meantime, there has been a change in the organization of the national management of the fire department. On December 30, 1950, 302/1950 was published. Decree No. MT, which abolished the position of the Commander-in-Chief of the National Fire Brigade and provided for the establishment of a Fire Police Department in the Ministry of Interior. This meant further centralization and restriction of professional autonomy. Movement elements were also

¹⁰ Dr. Dévényi Endre: A tűzrendészet szabályozás és magyarázata; Budapest 1949. 61. p

¹¹ Biczó István: A tűzvédelem szolgálatában 1948-1983. Budapest 21 p.



increasingly integrated into firefighting training. True, they were ambiguous because the school once bore a personal name in its history.

5. PETŐFI FIREFIGHTER OFFICER TRAINING SCHOOL

From April 1951, the State Firefighters' Department operated under the name "Petőfi Firefighter Officer Training School".¹²

Decree No. 375 980/1951 of the Ministry of Interior on "distinction between those who excel and are at the forefront of learning in firefighter schools" ordered the distinctive designation "Excellent Learner" and "Outstanding Student" labels to encourage students.

In recognition of the results of the school, in April 1952, at the end of the school year, the officer training school received a team flag. The team flag was donated by the employees of the Small Engine and Machine Factory to the "Petőfi" Fire Brigade Training School.¹³

The atmosphere of the fifties was characterized by events that also affected the school system:
- in 1953, there were women (8 people) among the graduating students for the first time in history.

Order No. 0047/1953 of the Minister of the Interior on the conduct of the final examination of the officer training schools and the ceremony of the inauguration on the basis of uniform principles.

Order No. 0019/1953 of the Minister of the Interior was on "guidelines for the preparation, conduction and performance of tasks in interior vocational schools and courses". The order stated, among other things, that: "The unification of school training and education in the armed and uniformed bodies of the Ministry of Interior requires that the schools of each body be prepared and conducted according to uniform criteria and on a uniform basis." He ordered an entrance exam for all schools.

¹² Biczó István: A tűzvédelem szolgálatában 1948-1983. Budapest 26 p.

¹³ Gáti István (edited): A tűzoltóképzés és a tűzoltó tisztképző iskola története, Budapest, 1998., BM TOP TKKI 40 p.



The order also set out general provisions for the order and work of the school. Among other things: The school master and school leaders are responsible for the smooth running of the work at the school, for ensuring the right standard of study, and for the preparation of the lecturers. The school commander should organize in-service training for the teaching staff. In schools, the daily working time should be 10 hours. Saturday at 6 p.m. Students should be qualified based on their answers, their work, and their exam results.

In order to achieve the stated goals, the members of the tribe participated in a three-week pedagogical training. A basic aspiration, a prescribed requirement, was to teach and train students to organize and manage the internships in a professional, determined manner.

In 1955, an organizational and methodological instruction was issued for officer and officer training schools of the Ministry of Interior. The instruction was interesting in several ways. For instance, it required the planning of educational work, including the preparation of the curriculum, the subject matter, the educational work plan, the timetable, the consultation plan, the audit plan; systematized the evaluation of the students' academic development, its cases, the way and the forms of the exams, as well as the requirement to prepare the characterizations. Furthermore, it defined the forms of the educational process. These forms could be lecture, seminar and class work, students' independent learning, consultation, external and internal field practice.

In February 1956, Order No. 12 by the Minister of Interior was issued, which prescribed the further development of the efficiency of fire protection work, the professional training of the fire brigade, and the improvement of technical equipment. This meant expanding the content of knowledge at the school, developing educational methods, and getting to know the technical tools more perfectly.

During this period, the position of the officer training school and the application of theoretical training in practice are exemplified by three significant events: the flood of the Danube in 1954; the January 1956 earthquake; and participation in the rescue of the March 1956 ice flood on the Danube.

In the second half of 1956, significant changes took place in the body of the officer training school. Many new people were added to the staff from the reorganized or closed firefighting vocational schools.



Based on the assessment of the situation resulting from the revolutionary events, the decision to suspend the training of officers (October 28) was considered to be appropriate.

At the same time, most of the instructors stayed together, participated in an organized manner, and stood up to the elimination of fire and damage, the cleanup of the ruins, and the reconstruction.

In the initial period (1948-1956), the school system of firefighter officer training was a total of 7 inauguration ceremonies. The training period lasted from 8 to 14 months. The total number of successful graduates - including those who completed the advanced firefighter course - was 638.

Of course, the political image of the age also had an impact on firefighter training. This is also reflected in the mentioned document excerpts. It seems as if the profession has taken a back seat. However, in the shadow of passwords, serious efforts were made to train firefighters to meet the requirements of a changing economy.

Teachers consisted of highly knowledgeable professionals who had been removed from the circle of previous fire chiefs due to their views. They guaranteed a professional standard.

This was much needed because a significant proportion of those who went to school began their studies with incomplete foundations. On the one hand, this had to be made up for, on the other hand, vocational training, which shortened the time spent on political education, had to be used more effectively.

New sources of danger have emerged, such as large-scale construction built at a rapid pace - and with many shortcomings as a result - emerging industrial cities and the increasing use of hazardous energy sources.

The firefighters had to get acquainted with the new professional products of the Hungarian industry (vehicle syringes, extinguishing agents) and the new extinguishing methods as well as tactical elements related to them.

During the period of spring 1956, the first comprehensive post-war statutory regulation, the 13th Legislative Decree of 1956 on the Fire Brigade and Fire Police¹⁴, came into being. Getting

¹⁴ Magyar Tűzoltó IX. évf., 8. sz., 1957. december 3.



familiar with the new legislation and preparing the trainings already belonged to the tasks of the school's next period.

Changes have been made several times to the naming, organization and educational activities of the school. The school operated as an Advanced Firefighting Course until 1948, as a Firefighter Training Department from 1948 to 1951, and from 1951 (until 1963) as the "Petőfi" Firefighter Officer Training School.

6. OFFICER TRAINING SCHOOL OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

Officer training was suspended between October 1956 and August 1958. Participants in renewable education after consolidation were students whose studies had been interrupted two years earlier.

Education in the full-time officer training system began in August 1958 and in the correspondence courses in September. The year 1959 brought a significant change in the performance of teaching and educational work, in general and specialist management, and in supervision, because with the Order No. 18/1959 (August 7) of the Ministry of Interior¹⁵, the Department of Firefighter Officer Training came under the authority of the Department of Studies and Methodology.

According to the Order No. 0011/1963 (June 3) of the Ministry of Interior¹⁶ due to the change in the organization of the training, between 1963 and 1971 the officer training took place at the Fire Department of the Academy of Sciences, within the 2-year full-time and the 3-year correspondence department. The students were only enrolled in the school, as the scientific knowledge (mathematics, physics, chemistry) that formed the basis of the subjects was indispensable in the teaching of fire prevention, firefighting and technical knowledge.

In 1971, the name of the school was changed to "BM Tisztképző Iskola - Officer Training School of the Ministry of Interior". Its organization - as an independent educational institution

¹⁵ Biczó István: A tűzvédelem szolgálatában 1948-1983. Budapest 40-41p.

¹⁶ Biczó István: A tűzvédelem szolgálatában 1948-1983. Budapest 42 p.



- is the IV. Main Group Headquarters of Ministry of Interior, its professional supervision was the competence of the National Command of the Fire Department of Ministry of Interior.

The 1972 year brought a significant change in the organization of the State Fire Department. As of January 1, 1972, the territorial bodies of the State Fire Brigade became the institutions of the councils in the framework of increasing the power of the territorial administration. The legal bases have also changed, with the entry into force of Decree-Law No. 13 of 1973 on fire protection and fire fighting.¹⁷ Its implementing provisions also regulated firefighter and fire protection training. Fire safety education tasks in educational institutions and business organizations have been defined. Legislation formulating fire protection as a general social obligation required the professional fire brigade to coordinate and manage it professionally.

This also meant a new task in officer training. The next chapter was brought about by the abolition of the unified BM academic system. The BM Police Officers' College was established, and the training of officers of other law enforcement agencies was returned to the given organization. The BM Firefighting Officer Training School started its operation in September 1971, the duration of the training remained unchanged in each department. More and more colleges and universities graduated from the correspondence department, and the enrollment of young people who had only finished high school a few years ago also came to the fore in the full-time department. This has made it possible to strengthen educational requirements.

The scope of the school expanded, material and placement conditions improved, and several up-to-date textbooks and notes (Fire and Extinguishing Materials Fire Testing) helped students prepare.

In addition to the “traditional” firefighter tasks, such as fire prevention (official, professional, control work), firefighting, damage prevention and fire inspection, the management of the professional activities of corporate and voluntary fire brigades and fire protection organizations, the population - and especially young people - played an important role - information and awareness-raising work carried out among. A new task has been to work with councils as general managers. The structure of the economy has also changed significantly.

¹⁷ Tűzvédelem XXVI. évf., 1. sz., 1974. január 3. p.



From the end of the 1960s, the extraction and use of crude oil and natural gas increased greatly, the development of the chemical industry based on hydrocarbons, the generalization of prefabricated housing and public buildings, the mechanization of agriculture and the expansion of road freight transport also changed firefighting.

The basic objective was to prepare firefighters for these new tasks at various levels of training, and to ensure that the knowledge of previous graduates was expanded during further training.

To this end, basic knowledge of science, technology and administration has been increasingly integrated into the curriculum, and external firefighters with extensive practical experience and theoretical knowledge have been more widely involved in the teaching of skills.

The rapid development of the economy made it necessary for Hungarian firefighters to participate in advanced firefighter training. However, such a level of training was provided only in foreign vocational schools - in the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic - for the advanced fire protection vocational training of Hungarian firefighting officers: from the academic year, in the GDR, at the "Hermann Matern" Firefighter Vocational School. from the school year 1973/74 to the end of 1983. Students in the Soviet Union obtained a degree in firefighter engineering, while graduates in the GDR obtained a degree in firefighter plant engineering.

By the end of the 1970s, there had been a radical change in approach to economic governance. The strict planning system was relaxed, trade and relations with the capitalist countries were expanded.

Firefighters had to be prepared for all this in theory and practice.

7. FIGHTER TRAINING CENTRE

After more than a year of preparatory work, in 1980 the Ministry of Interior Fire Fighter Training Centre was established. The institution was founded as the legal successor of the Firefighter Training School. With this, the school-based training of firefighters was concentrated in two institutions. These were the Fire Fighting Training Centre - hereinafter BM



TKK - and the Fire Protection Department established at the Ybl Miklós College of Technical College Of Construction.

In the fall of 1981, the training of fire engineers for the fire brigade and other areas of the economy began at the college.

The BM TKK and the Department of Fire Protection operated under the general management of the Ministry of Interior Education and Public Culture Group Headquarters and under the professional supervision of the National Command of the Fire Brigade.

The fire protection plant engineer training was operating at the YBL Miklós College of Technical College Of Construction. After the department was managed by the Ministry of Interior, the training operated in a closed system, with students transferred from the professional staff of the fire department to the full-time and correspondence departments. For them, general science and construction foundation subjects were the most troublesome.

The Ministry of Interior Fire Protection Training Center started operating in 1981. The conditions for training based on each other (basic, deputy, ensign, officer and plant engineer) were gradually created. Here, it was also possible to differentiate the specialties, because the balanced, then more theoretical education of the upper levels could be built on the practical training of the lower levels.

The teaching staff was gradually renewed, partly with firefighting engineers and plant engineers who graduated abroad (Soviet Union, GDR), and partly expanding with those from Hungarian colleges and universities. The slow pace of building renovations gradually alleviated placement concerns. The material conditions of the training were only available to a limited extent, which made the practical preparation difficult.¹⁸

During the performance of the training tasks, special attention was always paid to the further training of the staff.

The significance of this was also expressed in the fact that the legal regulations following the nationalization of the fire brigade were learned, applied and implemented on a uniform basis, primarily in the framework of course training.

¹⁸ Biczó István: A tűzvédelem szolgálatában 1948-1983. Budapest 58 p.



In 1991, the organizational units providing fire protection education and research came under joint control, and the Fire Protection Training and Research Institute was established under the authority of the Ministry of Interior. In addition to the traditional school-based training and research activities, this new organization also professionally embraced the supervision of various forms of education and the national coordination of fire protection research. The Institute also had a college Fire Department. The year 1993 brought new tasks. The Government has decided to merge the national management of the fire brigade and civil defense. This affected the background institutions related to the central bodies. The Institute of Fire and Civil Protection of the Ministry of Interior started operating on 1 July 1997, performing its duties until 1 January 1997. The Firefighter Museum and the Firefighter Musician Band also operated in the organization of the institute.

Not only the preparation of school-based civil protection education as a new direction was meaningful in the change of training, but the fire protection and firefighting training system had to be adapted to the requirements of state vocational training. Vocational training for firefighters has been included in the National Training Register, so the qualification has received national recognition. The retraining of officers, in addition to the training of firefighter technicians and firefighters, has also enriched civil defense education with several new features. The logistical conditions of the training gradually improved. The psychic training track was in use, also the Hatvan-Nagygyombos training track became suitable for more and more tasks. Firefighting equipment and vehicle stock were still inadequate.

Following the separation of fire and civil protection training, firefighting and fire protection training remained the responsibility of the Fire Training Institute. Act XXXI of 1996 on fire protection, technical rescue and fire brigade. Its law and its implementing provisions were intended to regulate legal and operational conditions clearly and in the longer term. An integral part of this was the development of firefighting and fire protection training procedures.



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