

TOPIC 2

FIRE SAFETY ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS (JAN – DEC 2010)

FIRE HAZARD ABATEMENT NOTICE (FHAN)

SCDF conducts enforcement checks on a regular basis to ensure that fire hazards are detected and rectified. Enforcement actions are also taken when feedback is received from the public, for example, through e-mails, letters and hotline calls. Such public feedback shows the fire safety consciousness of our community and more importantly helps to keep offenders on their toes, enhancing our fire safety environment.

2. Last year, SCDF conducted 11,570 enforcement checks, a decrease of 1682 from the 13,252 checks conducted in 2009. Arising from the 11,570 enforcement checks in 2010, SCDF issued 3017 Fire Hazard Abatement Notices (FHAN). This is a decrease of 8% from the 3288 FHANs issued in 2009. The Fire Hazard Abatement Notice (FHAN) is a warning given to building owners and management to remove the fire hazard. The types of enforcement actions taken against fire safety offenders are shown in **Annex A**.

3. The most common fire hazard resulting in FHANs was the poor maintenance of hose reels and fire extinguishers. During fire outbreaks, poorly maintained fire extinguishers and hosereels can affect early mitigation of fires by occupants. Although the number of FHANs for this offence continues to be high, it is encouraging to note that there is a drop of 17% from the number of FHANs issued in 2009, as shown in **Table 1**.

Type of Fire Hazard	Jan – Dec 2009	Jan – Dec 2010	Absolute Change	% Change
Non-maintenance of fire-fighting equipment (Hose reel/Fire Extinguisher)	733	607	-126	-17%

Table 1: Fire Hazard Abatement Notice

UNAUTHORISED CHANGE OF USE REMAINS MAIN CONTRIBUTING FACTOR FOR NOTICE OF FIRE SAFETY OFFENCE (NFSO)

4. A Notice of Fire Safety Offence (NFSO) is issued when there is direct contravention of the Act, for example, when unauthorised fire safety works are carried out. It carries with it a composition fine of between \$300 and \$500. A

total of 2183 NFSOs were issued in 2010, an increase of 31% from the 1661 NFSOs issued in 2009.

5. The main contributing offence for the increase in NFSO was unauthorised change of use, which saw a slight increase of 4% in 2010. Of the 1177 NFSOs issued for unauthorised change of use, a large proportion was due to the conversion of carpark areas at multi tenanted industrial premises for storage and processing of goods, detected during our inspections. Such fire safety violations may have serious consequences, affecting the early mitigation of fires and impede evacuation in case of fires.

Type of Offence	Jan -Dec 2009	Jan- Dec 2010	Absolute Change	% Change
Unauthorised change of use	1134	1177	43	4%

Table 2 : Notice of Fire Safety Offence

SCDF TAKES FIRM ACTION ON FIRE SAFETY VIOLATIONS

6. SCDF takes violations of fire safety requirements seriously and will not hesitate to take firm actions against building management who do not promptly take action to rectify fire safety violations despite warnings and fines. Court action will be taken for serious cases. For general fire safety violations, the maximum penalty can be up to \$10,000 and/or jail term not exceeding 6 months. For carrying out unauthorised fire safety works, the building management can be fined up to \$50,000 and/or jailed for a term not exceeding 12 months.

7. Between Jan to Dec 2010, 149 charges were filed for court actions against fire safety offenders. Majority of the charges were for unauthorised change of use. Of the 149 court actions, 68% (102 cases) were for unauthorised change of use.

Type of Offence	Jan -Dec 2009	Jan- Dec 2010	Absolute Change
Unauthorised change of use	16	102	81

Table 3 : Court Action

8. On 22 June 2010, M/S Grand City Investment, the carpark operator of People's Park Complex was fined a total of \$60,000 for two counts of fire safety infringements: a) carrying out unauthorized fire safety works; and b) change of use without approval. Part of the fifth storey of the People's Park Complex multi storey carpark had been illegally converted into storage areas. The illegal structures rendered existing fire safety provisions inadequate and also hindered

containment and fire extinguishment efforts by our fire fighters during the fire on 21 April 2010.

SCDF TO STEP-UP ON ENFORCEMENT CHECKS DURING CHINESE NEW YEAR

9. With the Chinese New Year approaching, shopping centers and public entertainment outlets can see an increase in patronage. SCDF would like to remind owners and management of public buildings and places of recreation/entertainment including hotels and shopping centres to ensure compliance to all fire safety requirements. Escape passageways should be free of obstruction and fire exit doors should be kept accessible for use during emergencies. Overcrowding in building premises especially public entertainment outlets such as discotheques and pubs, should be avoided as it would impede the safe evacuation of people from the premises in the event of fire.

10. SCDF will be stepping up inspections at commercial buildings to check on fire safety violations. The public is also encouraged to report fire hazards to the SCDF at 1800-2800000.

ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS TAKEN AGAINST FIRE SAFETY OFFENDERS

Enforcement Action	Description
Fire Hazard Abatement Notice (FHAN)	Under the Fire Safety Act, the FHAN is a warning given to building owners and management to remove the fire hazard. Most common fire hazards spotted resulting in FHANs are poor maintenance of hose reels and fire extinguishers and obstructed exits.
Notice of Composition (NOC)	Offenders who failed to rectify the violations after being issued with FHANs will then served with a fine termed NOC of between \$300 and \$500.
Notice of Fire Safety Offence (NFSO)	When the offence is of a more serious nature for example carrying out unauthorised fire safety works carried out, a NFSO is issued. The NFSO carries with it a composition fine of between \$300 and \$500.
Court Action	Court action will be taken for serious cases. For general fire safety violations, the maximum penalty can be up to \$10,000 and/or jail term not exceeding 6 months. And for carrying out unauthorised fire safety works, the building management can be fined up to \$50,000 and/or jailed for a term not exceeding 12 months. In extreme cases, SCDF is empowered to effect temporary closure of premises.