

TOPIC C

FIRE SAFETY ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS (JANUARY – DECEMBER 2014)

INCREASE IN NUMBER OF ENFORCEMENT CHECKS

SCDF conducts enforcement checks regularly to ensure that fire safety standards are observed and fire hazards detected and rectified. SCDF also conducts inspections in response to public feedback. Once fire hazards are verified, enforcement actions will be taken against the offenders. Such public feedback reflects the high level of fire safety consciousness in our community and more importantly, helps to keep offenders on their toes.

2. As shown in **Chart C1** below, SCDF conducted 13,903 enforcement checks in 2014, an increase of 8.3% from the 12,832 checks conducted in 2013.

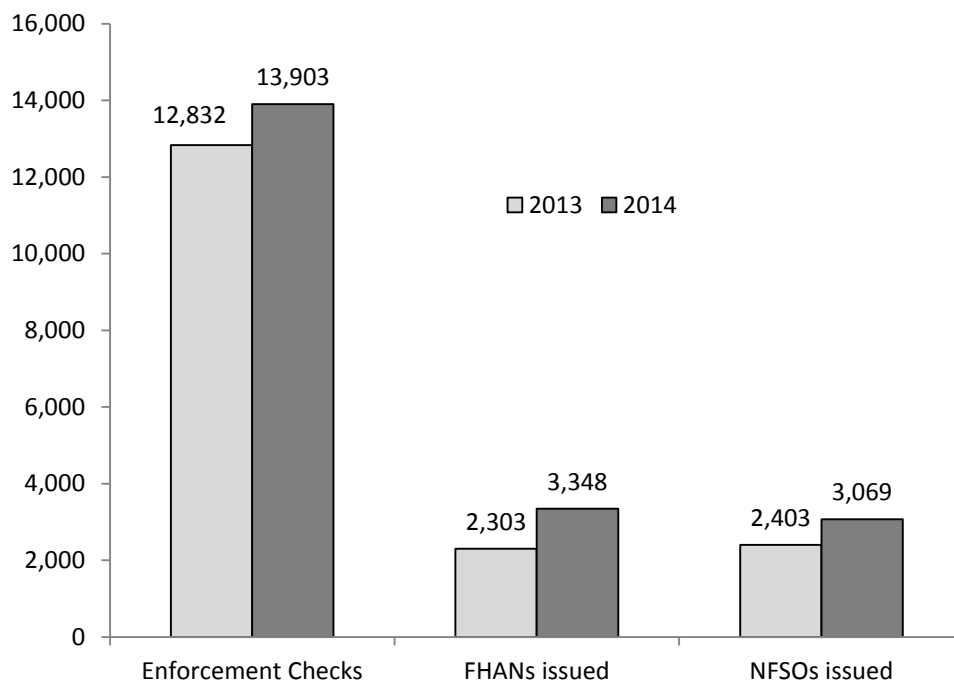


Chart C1: Number of Enforcement Checks, FHANs¹ and NFSOs² issued

MORE FIRE HAZARD VIOLATIONS DETECTED

3. Arising from the 13,903 enforcement checks, SCDF issued 3,348 FHANs, an increase of 45.4% from the 2,303 FHANs issued in 2013. A FHAN serves as a warning to building owners and management to remove the fire hazard.

¹ Fire Hazard Abatement Notices

² Notice of Fire Safety Offence

4. A NFSO is issued when the fire safety violation is of a serious nature that warrants a heavier penalty, for example when unauthorised fire safety works are carried out. It carries a composition fine of up to \$5000. Between Jan and Dec 2014, 3,069 NFSOs were issued, an increase of 27.7% from the previous year.

5. The overall increase in the number of FHANs and NFSOs issued is primarily due to targeted enforcement checks, where more of such notices were issued to industrial premises e.g. at terraced factories, waste treatment companies and warehouses. The number of FHANs issued to industrial premises rose by 52.0%, from 1,403 in 2013 to 2,133 in 2014 while the number of NFSOs issued to such premises rose by 53.5%, from 1,057 in 2013 to 1,623 in 2014.

AN ANALYSIS OF FHAN

Exits signs not illuminated

6. The most common fire hazard for the issuance of FHANs in 2014 is related to exit signs not being illuminated, which contributed to 796 (23.8%) of the total FHANs. As shown in **Chart C2**, this registered an increase of 276 cases (53.1%) from the 520 FHANs issued in 2013. Of the 796 FHANs issued, 559 (70.2%) occurred in industrial premises. Building owners need to ensure that the exit signs are illuminated at all times. During fire outbreaks and smoke logged situations, exit signs play an important role in helping occupants evacuate the premises in a safe and orderly manner.

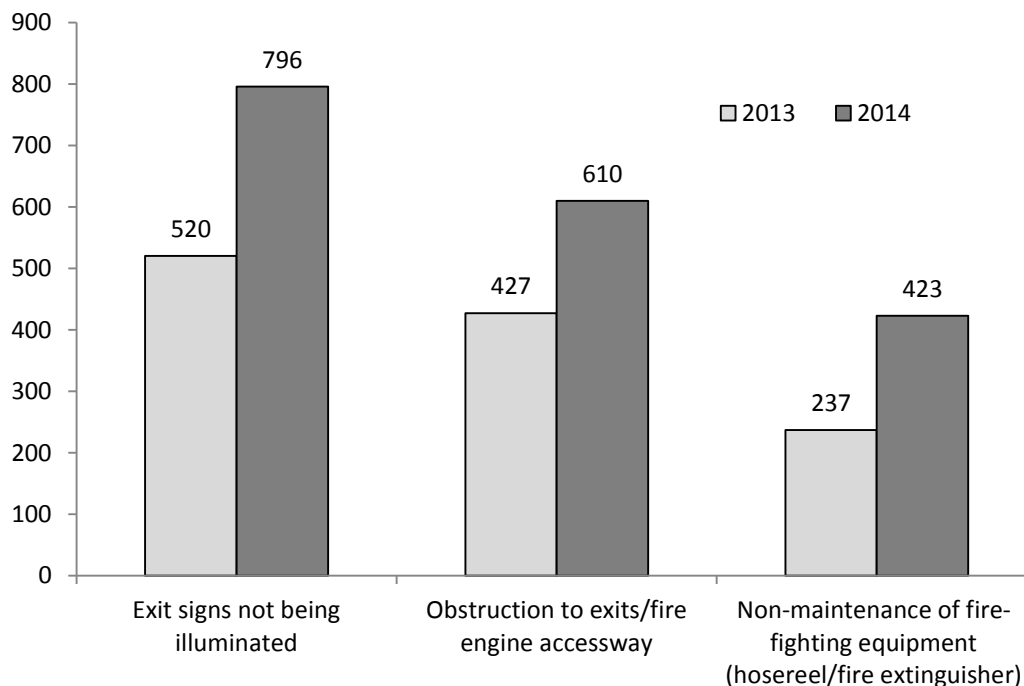


Chart C2: Breakdown of FHANs (top 3 types of fire hazard)

7. The second highest contributing factor for the FHANs relates to the obstruction of exits and fire engine access ways, which contributed to 610 cases (18.2%) of the total FHANs issued in 2014. During emergencies, such obstructions can impede the smooth evacuation of occupants from the affected premises and hamper SCDF operations.

8. The poor maintenance of fire fighting equipment (hose reels/fire extinguishers) contributed to 423 cases (12.6%) of the total FHANs issued in 2014. During fire outbreaks, the poor maintenance of fire fighting equipment can affect early mitigation of fires by occupants to extinguish or prevent the fire from spreading.

AN ANALYSIS OF NFSO

Unauthorised change of use

9. The most common fire safety violation contributing to the issuance of NFSOs is the unauthorised change of use of premises, which amounted to 1,448 cases (47.2%) of the total 3,069 NFSOs issued in 2014. As shown in **Chart C3**, the number of NFSOs issued for the unauthorised change of use of premises increased by 34.2% from 1,079 cases in 2013 to 1,448 cases in 2014.

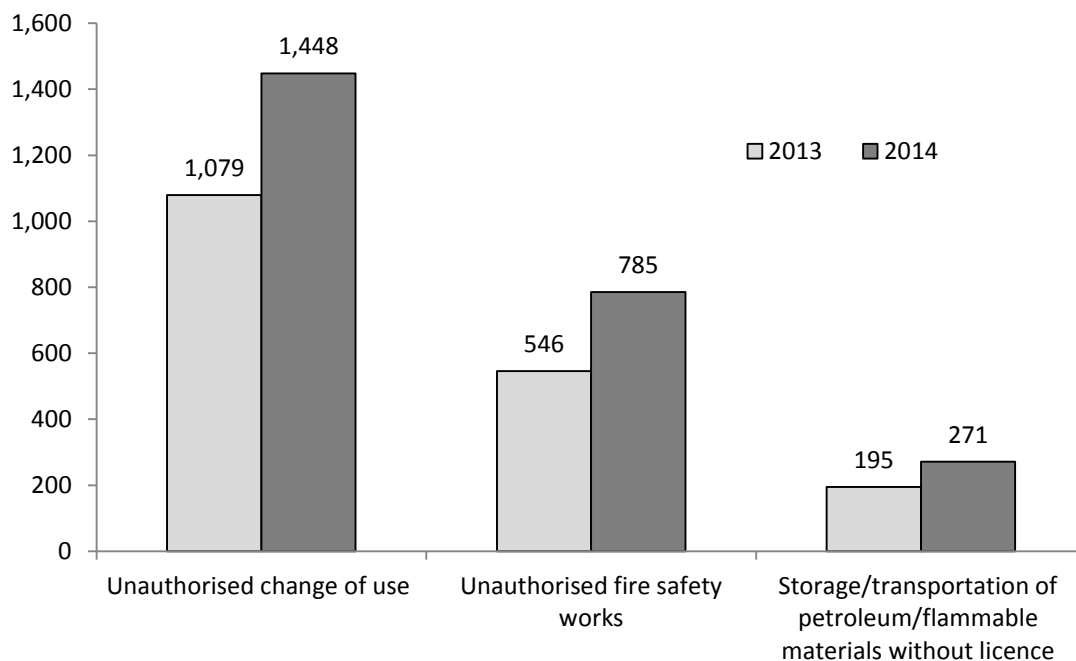


Chart C3: Breakdown of NFSOs (top 3 types of offences)

10. Of the 1,448 NFSOs issued for unauthorised change of use of premises, 752 cases (51.9%) occurred in industrial premises, of which 349 cases were for the change of use of car parks into storage areas and 205 cases were for the conversion of the factory spaces into workers' dormitories. The conversion of residential premises into workers' dormitories registered 519 cases (35.8%) of the 1,448 NFSOs issued for unauthorised change of use.

11. For any unauthorised change of use, the owner of the premises will be issued with a fine and SCDF will re-inspect the premises to ensure compliance with the fire

safety requirements. Follow-up enforcement action will be taken against owners who fail to comply.

12. The number of NFSOs for carrying out unauthorised fire safety works is the second highest contributing factor for the NFSOs issued in 2014, at 25.6%. The number of NFSOs issued for this category increased by 43.8% from 546 cases in 2013 to 785 cases in 2014.

13. The storage and/or transportation of petroleum and/or flammable materials without licence, which contributed to 8.8% of the total NFSOs issued in 2014, is the third highest contributing factor. The SCDF views such violations very seriously and will continue to step up its efforts to enforce against such hazardous activities.

COURT ACTION

Increase in court action against offenders

14. SCDF views violations of fire safety requirements seriously and will not hesitate to take firm action against building management who do not promptly rectify the fire safety violations despite warnings and fines. Court action will be taken against serious cases or repeat offenders. For general fire safety violations, the maximum penalty can be up to \$10,000 fine and/or jail term not exceeding six months. For carrying out fire safety works without an approval from SCDF (unauthorised fire safety works), the person responsible (owner, building management, MCST) can be fined up to \$200,000 and/or jailed for a term not exceeding 24 months. In extreme cases, SCDF is empowered to effect temporary closure of premises.

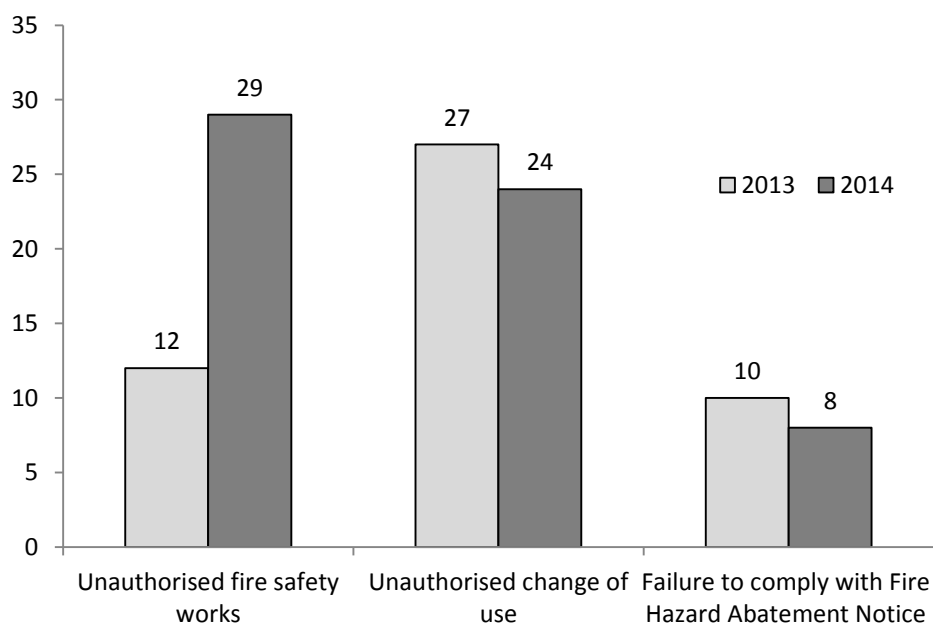


Chart C4: Court Prosecution Charges (top 3 offences)

15. Between Jan and Dec 2014, 70 charges were filed in court against fire safety offenders, an increase of 12 cases (20.7%) from the 58 charges for 2013. Of the 70 charges in 2014, 29 cases (41.4%) were for unauthorized fire safety works. The top three offences which resulted in court action are shown in **Chart C4** above. For example, a company operating at Sungei Kadut was fined a total of \$4,000 in October 2014 for two counts of fire safety infringements. The company had carried out unauthorised fire safety works (involving the erection of metal containers) and unauthorised change of use (converting part of the factory premises to office area without approval).

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

16. As the number of patrons and customers are usually higher during the festive season, we would like to remind owners and management of public buildings and places of recreation/entertainment including hotels and shopping centres to ensure compliance with all fire safety requirements. Escape passageways should be free from obstruction and fire exit doors should be kept accessible for use during emergencies. Operators of public entertainment outlets, such as discotheques and pubs, should ensure that there is no overcrowding as this would impede the safe evacuation of patrons in the event of fire. SCDF will be stepping up inspections at commercial buildings to check on fire safety violations.

17. We urge members of the public who spot any fire hazard to report it to the SCDF. They can do so by calling our fire hazard reporting line at 1800-280-0000 or email us at SCDF_Fire_Safety_Feedback@scdf.gov.sg. In addition, the public can also submit photos and a brief description of the fire hazard using the “mySCDF” mobile phone application which can be downloaded from Apple and Android App stores.