

EMBARGOED TILL 21 FEBRUARY 2024, 12PM

NEWS RELEASE



EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES, FIRE & ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS 2023

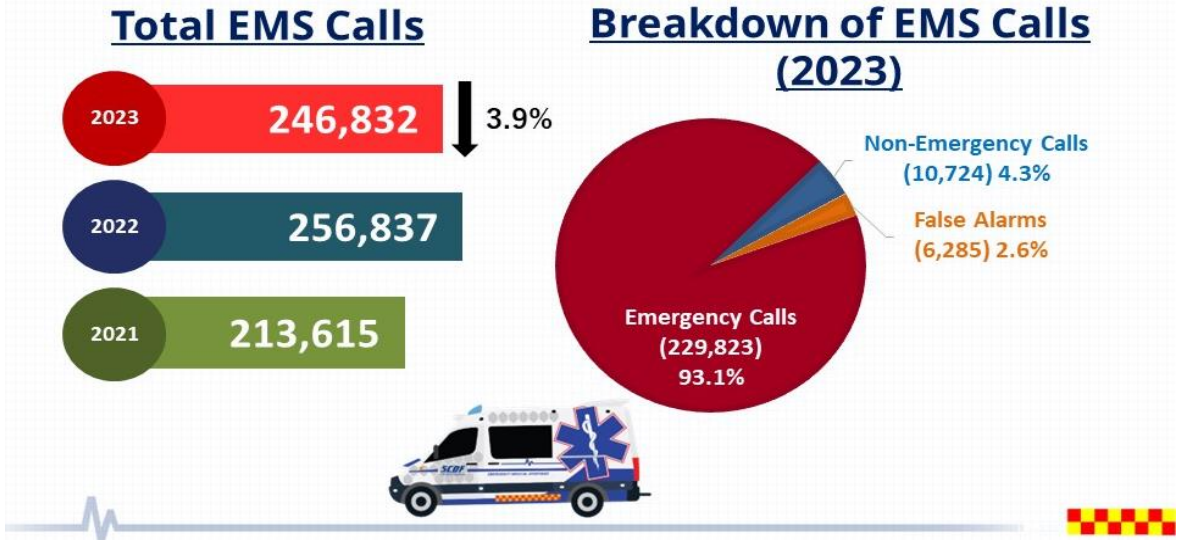
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1. The Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) responded to 246,832 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) calls in 2023. This was a 3.9% decrease compared to 2022**, when there was a spike in EMS demand due to the multiple waves of COVID-19 variants. However, overall EMS demand in 2023 remained high, with an average of 676 EMS calls daily, which was 30% higher than in 2019 (pre-pandemic).
- 2. The overall number of fires increased by 8.6% to 1,954 cases in 2023.** While the number of fires at non-residential premises fell by 6.9%, the number of fires at residential and non-building premises rose by 3.7% and 34.9% respectively.¹ Fires involving Active Mobility Devices (AMDs) increased by 31% compared to 2022.
- 3. SCDF stepped up the number of fire safety enforcement checks in 2023.** We conducted 15,044 fire safety enforcement checks and issued 1,466 Notices of Offence (NOOs) and 2,734 Fire Hazard Abatement Notices (FHANs).

¹ Examples of fires at non-building premises are vegetation fires, vehicle fires, and fires involving discarded items at open spaces like back alleys, areas near service roads, and grass patches.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES STATISTICS 2023

Overview

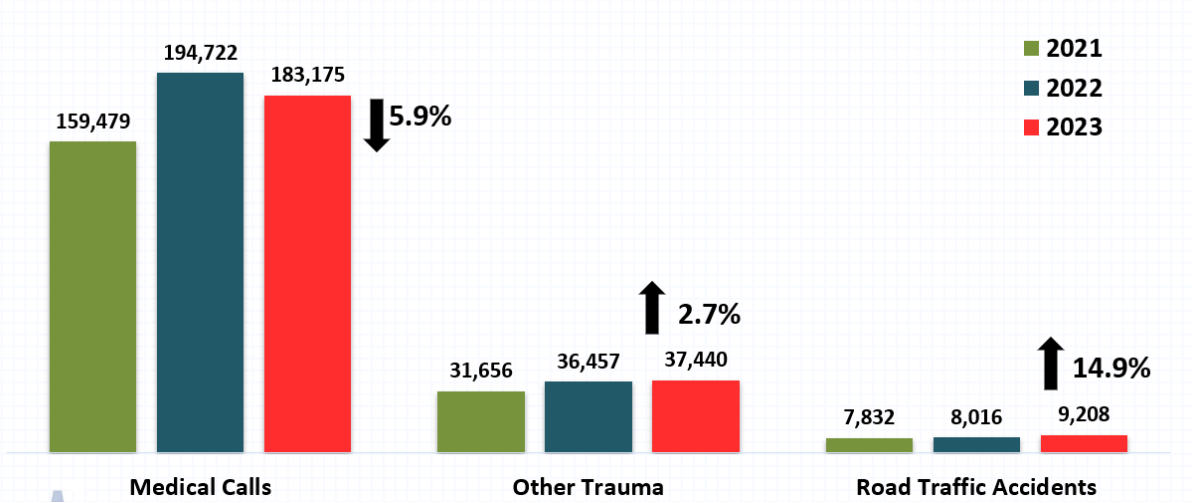


4. SCDF responded to 246,832 EMS calls in 2023, a decrease of 3.9% compared to the previous year. Of these, 229,823 (93.1%) were emergency calls, 10,724 (4.3%) were non-emergency calls, and 6,285 (2.6%) were false alarm calls.

Emergency Calls

5. Of the 229,823 emergency calls in 2023, 79.7% were medical-related (e.g., chest pain, breathlessness, unconsciousness, and cardiac arrest); 16.3% were trauma cases (e.g., industrial accidents, falls, and assaults); and the remaining 4% were road traffic accidents. EMS calls involving the elderly (aged 65 and above) made up the highest percentage (49.8%) of all EMS calls. The breakdown of emergency calls for EMS over the past three years is reflected in Chart 1.

Chart 1: Breakdown of emergency calls from 2021 to 2023



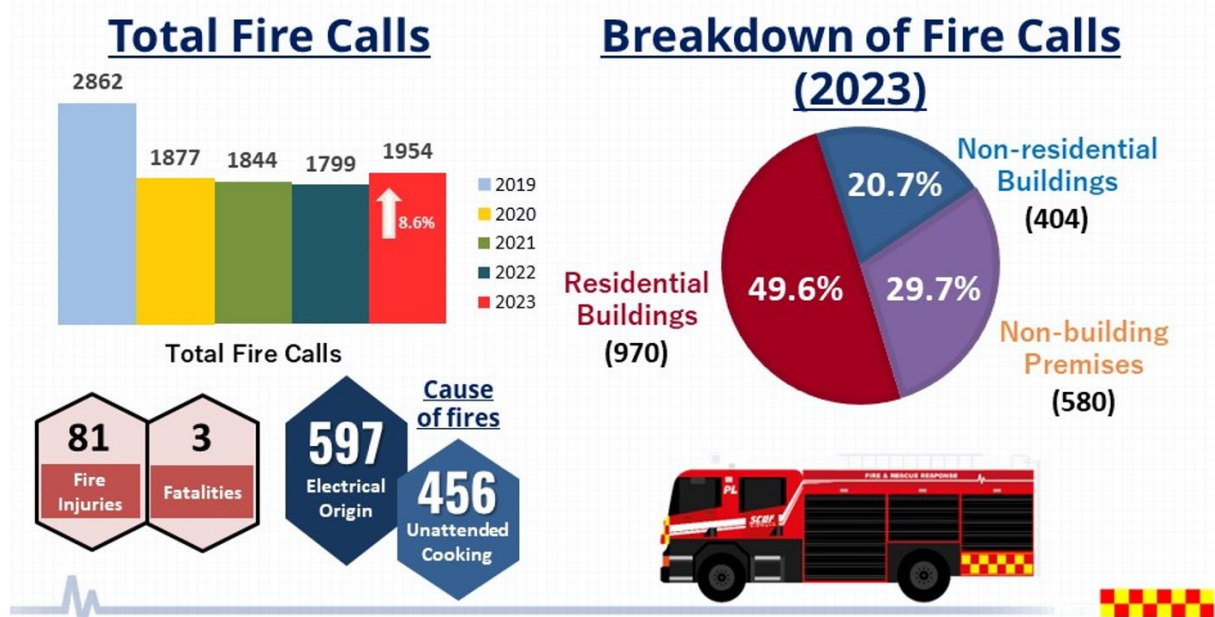
Non-Emergency and False Alarm Calls

6. Since 2017, SCDF has been actively raising public awareness on the importance of calling 995 only for emergencies. This public education drive has contributed to a decrease in non-emergency calls over the years. There were 10,724 non-emergency calls in 2023, a decrease of 7.1% compared to 11,538 in 2022. On the other hand, false alarm calls increased slightly by 3.2% from 6,089 in 2022 to 6,285 in 2023. While this is lower than pre-pandemic levels in 2019, it is still a concern as every false alarm call takes away an available resource for an emergency.²

7. The number of EMS calls beyond 2023 is expected to trend upwards in the longer term, due to the rising demand from Singapore's ageing population. To optimise our EMS resources and ensure swifter response to emergencies which are life-threatening, the SCDF has been implementing the EMS Tiered Response Framework in phases since 2017, to prioritise its response to medical cases based on severity.

FIRE STATISTICS 2023

Overview



8. SCDF responded to 1,954 fires in 2023, an increase of 8.6% compared with 2022. The increase was due to the increase in fires at residential premises and non-building premises. There were 81 fire injuries and three fire fatalities in 2023.³

9. The top two causes of fires were causes of electrical origin which accounted for

² False alarm calls include incidents where calls were cancelled or where no patients were found at the scene upon the arrival of the ambulance crew. There were 7,019 false alarm calls in 2019.

³ The cases of fire injuries include only patients who require hospital admission following conveyance by SCDF. Light injuries like small cuts/abrasions and mild smoke inhalation where patients do not require hospital admission are excluded from the statistics. There is also a change to the fatality figures for 2022 (from six to eight) as investigations for the last fatal incident concluded only after the Annual Statistics release last year.

597 cases (30.6%), and unattended cooking, with 456 cases (23.3%).

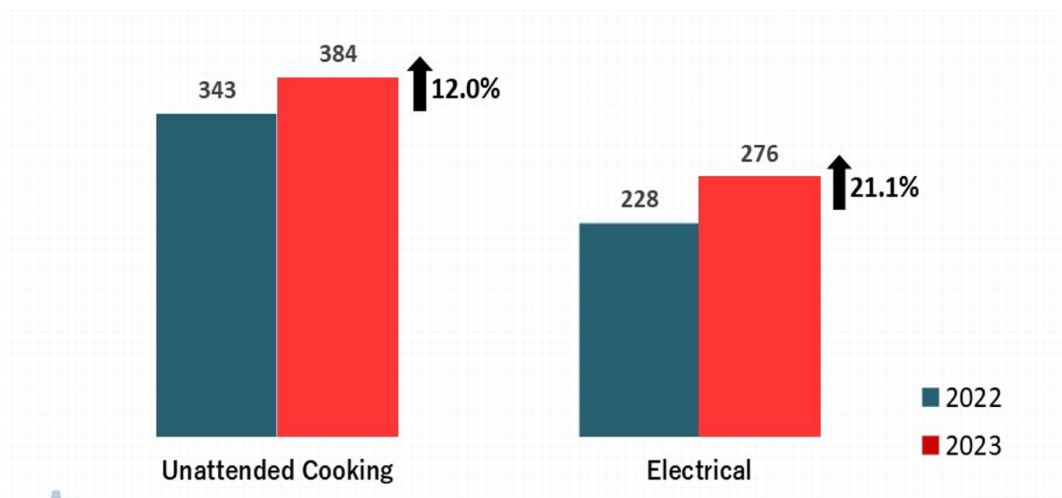
10. SCDF will continue to work with partners including the National Fire and Emergency Preparedness Council (NFEC) to promote fire prevention in the community through various public education campaigns and initiatives.⁴ In January 2024, SCDF launched the Responders Plus Programme (RPP) to equip members of the public with essential lifesaving and emergency preparedness skills.⁵

11. The SCDF has also started the progressive installation of fire extinguishers at the lift lobbies of one in every two HDB blocks since October 2023, which is expected to be completed by 2026. The fire extinguishers are located near the automated external defibrillators (AEDs) that were installed previously under the Save-A-Life Initiative.⁶ By placing these equipment in close proximity, residents will have a one-stop emergency resource point during fire or cardiac arrest emergencies.

Fires in Residential Buildings

12. There were 970 fires in residential buildings in 2023, an increase of 3.7% from 935 fires in 2022. Fires due to unattended cooking and fires of electrical origin remained the top two types of fires in residential buildings - see Charts 2 and 3 for a further breakdown.

Chart 2: Top two types of fires in residential buildings

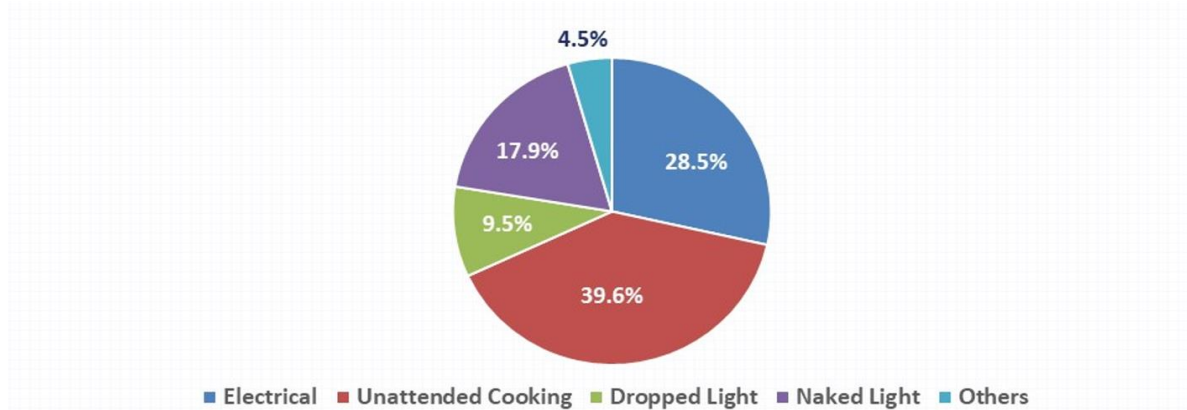


⁴ NFEC and SCDF have been actively encouraging members of the public to learn lifesaving skills and knowledge including the use of a fire extinguisher, administering CPR, and using an AED. NFEC and SCDF have also been engaging various residential, commercial, and industrial stakeholders to promote fire prevention and emergency preparedness.

⁵ First introduced in 2003, the three-tiered Community Emergency Preparedness Programme has been streamlined into a two-part RPP comprising online and in-person components. Find out more about the RPP at [https://www.scdf.gov.sg/home/community-volunteers/responders-plus-programme-\(rpp\)](https://www.scdf.gov.sg/home/community-volunteers/responders-plus-programme-(rpp))

⁶ To enhance community first response to cardiac arrest cases in the residential heartlands, SCDF, in partnership with Ministry of Health (MOH), Singapore Heart Foundation (SHF) and the People's Association (PA) introduced the Save-A-Life Initiative in 2015. The initiative entails the installation of AEDs at the lift lobbies of every one-in-two HDB blocks, providing CPR-AED training at community centres via the Dispatcher-Assisted first Responder (DARE) Plus Programme, and introduction of the myResponder app that alerts registered community first responders to minor fires and cardiac arrest incidents.

Chart 3: Breakdown of the Causes of Fire in Residential Buildings (2023)



13. Fires due to unattended cooking made up the largest proportion of fires in residential buildings. There were 384 fires due to unattended cooking in 2023, an increase of 12% compared to 2022.

14. There were 276 residential fires of electrical origin in 2023, an increase of 21.1% compared to 2022.⁷ Of these cases, 35 involved AMDs – an increase of 12.9% from 2022. The overall trend and statistics of AMD fires are further elaborated on Page 8.

15. There were 91 fires involving discarded items in 2023, a decrease of 8.1% from 99 in 2022. These fires typically occur in common areas, such as lift lobbies, staircase landings, and common corridors.

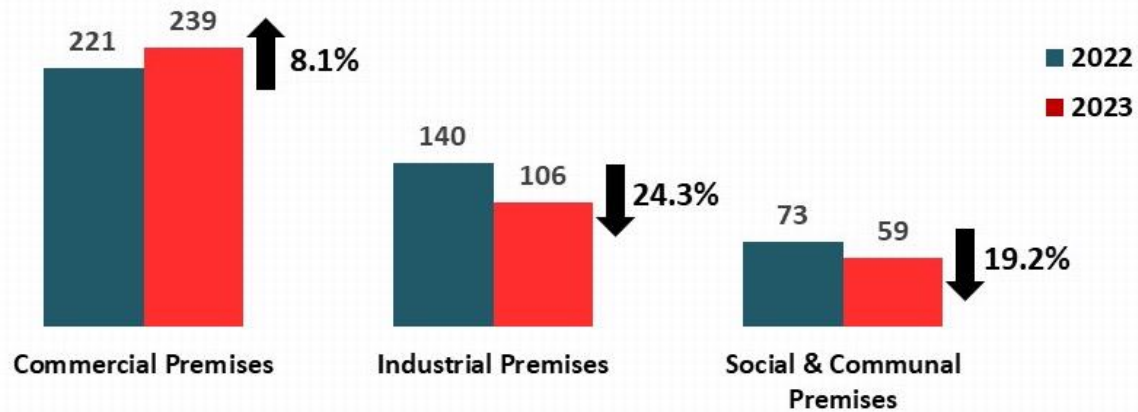
16. Since September 2020, SCDF has been screening fire safety advisory videos and infographics on the prevention of residential fires via the digital display panels at HDB blocks. SCDF will also continue its efforts to educate the public on fire prevention through its public engagement activities such as the Community Resilience Day events and SGSecure Roadshows.

⁷ The majority of electrical fires in residential buildings were caused by faults in electrical wiring or electrical appliances, or due to the overloading of electrical sockets.

Fires in Non-Residential Buildings

17. SCDF responded to 404 fires in non-residential buildings in 2023, a decrease of 6.9% from 434 in 2022. [Chart 4](#) provides a breakdown of fires in non-residential buildings.

Chart 4: Breakdown of fires in non-residential buildings

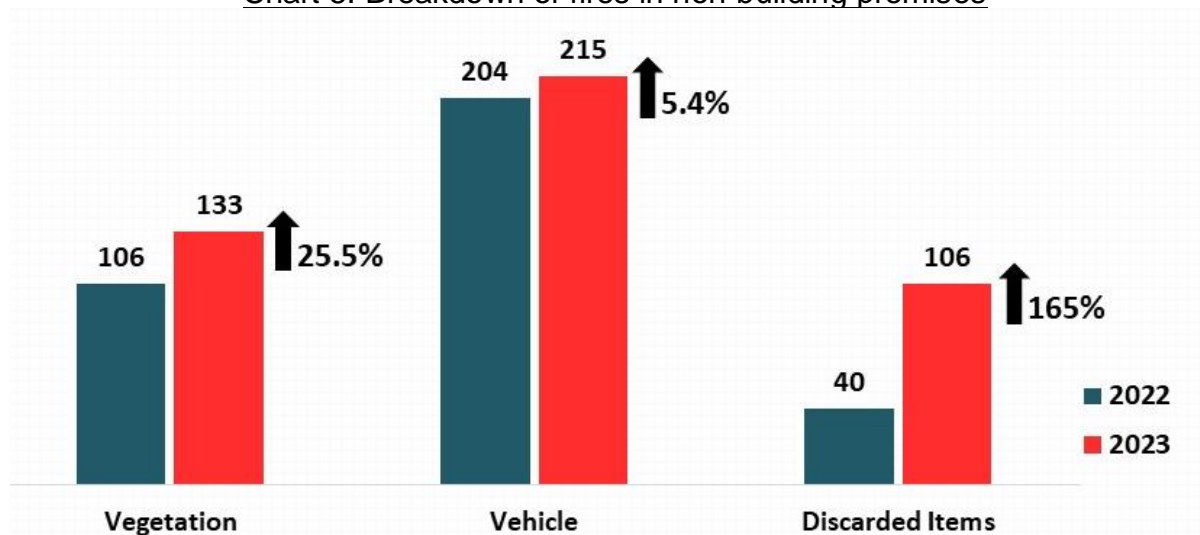


18. The decrease in the number of fires in non-residential buildings in 2023 could be attributed to the fire prevention efforts by SCDF and NFEC to engage building owners and fire safety managers. SCDF will continue to make regular enforcement checks to ensure that these premises comply with fire safety regulations.

Fires in Non-building Premises

19. There were 580 non-building fires in 2023, an increase of 34.9% from 430 in 2022. [Chart 5](#) provides a breakdown of fires in non-building premises.

Chart 5: Breakdown of fires in non-building premises



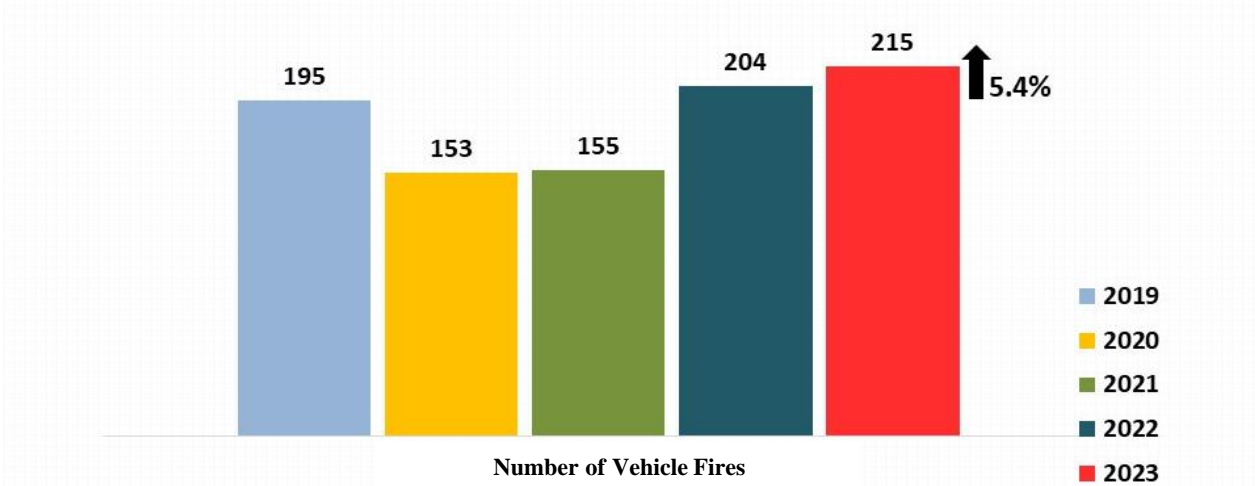
20. There were 133 vegetation fires in 2023, an increase of 25.5% from 106 in 2022. The increase could be due to drier weather conditions in 2023 compared to 2022.

21. There were 106 fires involving discarded items at non-building premises in 2023, an increase of 165% from 40 cases in 2022. The significant increase could be attributed to a rise in indiscriminate disposal of unwanted items and materials at open spaces like back alleys, areas near service roads and grass patches.

22. SCDF will continue to work with relevant agencies and NFEC to step up enforcement checks and public education efforts for such fires. This includes dissemination of fire safety advisories to advise against discarding items at open spaces (e.g., roadside areas and back alleys), or at common areas (e.g., corridors and lift lobbies), as these items may easily become fuel for fires when burning materials are thrown on them, such as cigarettes.

23. There were 215 vehicle fires in 2023, an increase of 5.4% from 204 in 2022.⁸ See [Chart 6](#) for the number of vehicle fires over the past five years, and [Annex A](#) on tips for preventing vehicle fires.

Chart 6: Trends of vehicle fires in non-building premises (2019 to 2023)

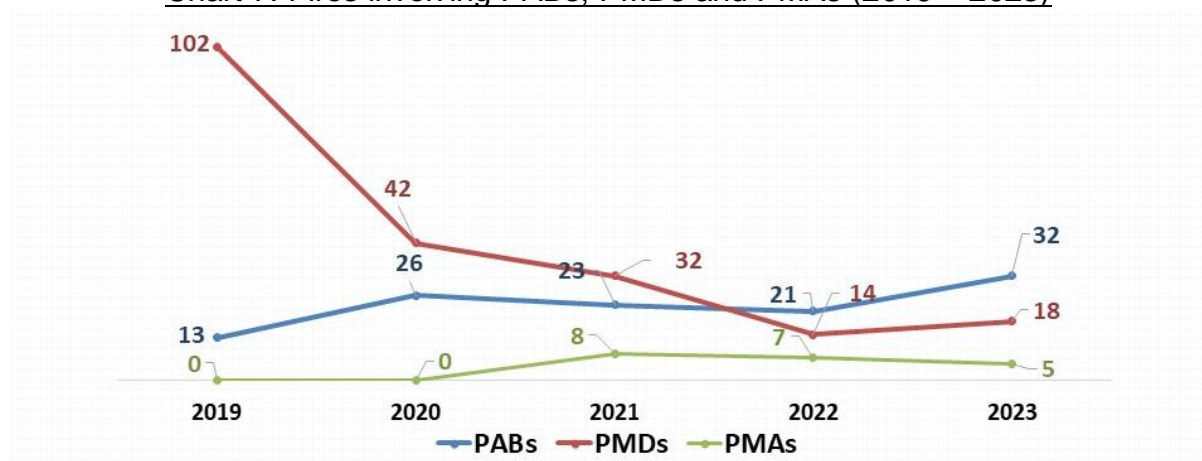


⁸ Vehicle fires in non-building premises include those occurring on roads and in open-air carparks. Of the 215 fires, only one involved an electric vehicle.

Fires Involving Active Mobility Devices

24. There were 55 fires involving AMDs, such as Personal Mobility Devices (PMDs), Power Assisted Bicycles (PABs) and Personal Mobility Aids (PMAs) in 2023, compared to 42 fires in 2022 (see [Chart 7](#) below).

Chart 7: Fires involving PABs, PMDs and PMAs (2019 – 2023)



25. AMD fires remain a key fire safety concern, especially in residential premises. See the table below for the breakdown of AMD fires based on the type of premises.

Breakdown of AMD Fires based on the Type of Premises

Year	Residential	Non-Residential	Non-Building (On the roads / open spaces)	Total
2022	31	4	7	42
2023	35	2	18	55

26. Members of the public are reminded to remain vigilant when handling their AMDs, as these fires can result in serious injuries and damage to property. Owners should dispose of their unwanted devices safely, through authorised e-waste recyclers, e-waste collection points, or during periodic collection drives by Town Councils.

27. SCDF continues to disseminate fire safety advisories on AMD fires to the public. This includes reminders not to charge batteries for a prolonged period or leave them charging unattended overnight, and to refrain from purchasing or using non-original batteries. SCDF has also been supporting the “Be Device-Safe” Roadshows organised by the Land Transport Authority (LTA) to increase awareness on the dangers of AMD fires and to reiterate the importance of using AMDs which are compliant with the regulations. See [Annex B](#) on what the public should do to reduce safety risks.

Community First Responders for Minor Fires and Suspected Cardiac Arrest Emergencies

28. The Community First Responder (CFR) initiative was launched in 2015. Members of the public who are registered as CFRs via the SCDF myResponder app will receive alerts to minor fires and suspected cardiac arrest cases in their immediate vicinity.

29. Over the years, there has been an encouraging increase in the CFR response rate to incident activations via the SCDF myResponder app. The number of potential cardiac arrest cases responded to by CFRs in 2023 increased by 78 cases (5.1%) to 1,612 cases. Minor fires responded to by CFRs, however, decreased by 62 cases (7.7%) to 740 cases.

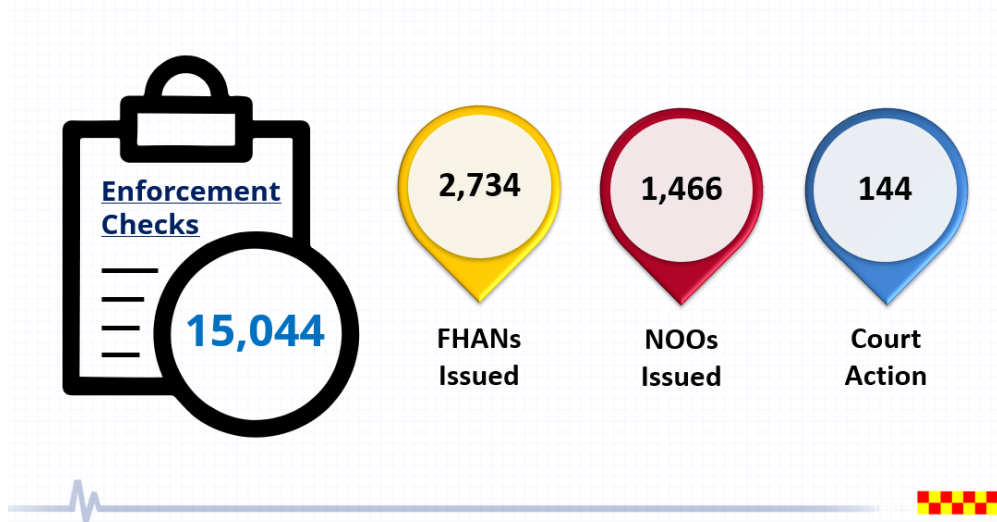
30. There were 35,267 new signups on the SCDF myResponder app in 2023, an encouraging 49.8% increase from 23,547 signups in 2022. As of 31 January 2024, there are now over 160,000 Responders in the community.

31. SCDF is heartened by the involvement of the community as CFRs and would like to encourage more members of the public to sign up via the myResponder app. CFRs who step forward to help a cardiac arrest victim or assist in putting out a minor fire are making a major difference to the community. While it is not necessary to have prior training before becoming a CFR, knowing these life-saving skills will give CFRs greater confidence when rendering assistance.

32. Anyone can sign up for SCDF's Responders' Plus Programme to learn life-saving skills free of charge. Please visit www.scdf.gov.sg/savealife/heartware and [responders-plus-programme\(rpp\)](http://www.scdf.gov.sg/responders-plus-programme(rpp)) for more information. Members of the public who are yet to be trained can still contribute to lifesaving efforts by directing the EMS crew to the exact incident site or helping to fetch the AED. In addition, CFRs can be guided on how to perform CPR-AED, either verbally by SCDF Operations Centre specialists, or by referring to the animation of CPR procedures sent via SMS.

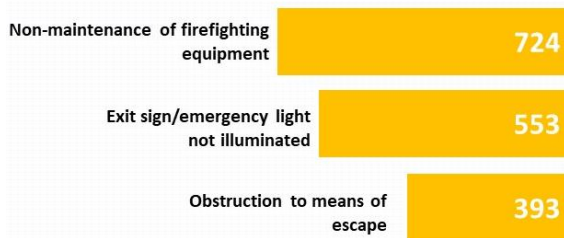
FIRE SAFETY ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS 2023

Overview

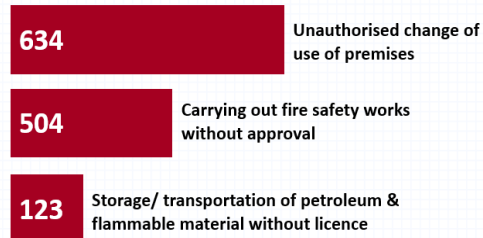


33. SCDF conducted 15,044 enforcement checks in 2023, an increase of 17.6% compared to 12,792 in 2022. SCDF had conducted more enforcement checks following the full resumption of business activities in 2023. Arising from the checks, 2,734 FHANs and 1,466 Notices of Offence (NOOs) were issued.⁹

Top 3 Types of FHANs Issued 2023



Top 3 Types of NOOs Issued 2023



34. The most common fire hazard was the non-maintenance of firefighting equipment, which accounted for 26.5% of all FHANs issued. The most common fire safety violation was the unauthorised change of use of premises, which accounted for 43.2% of all NOOs issued.

⁹ A Fire Hazard Abatement Notice (FHAN) is a written warning to the errant party to abate the fire hazard within a specified period.

A Notice of Offence (NOO) will be issued if the fire safety offence is of a higher severity, for e.g. unauthorised change of use of premises and unauthorised fire safety works. The NOO requires the errant party to rectify the offence within a specified timeline, following which an offer to compound the offence may be made. Prosecutorial actions may be taken if the fire safety offence is not rectified as required in the NOO.

Court Action: Top 2 Violations (2023)



35. There were 144 fire safety violations that were prosecuted in court in 2023. The majority were due to unauthorised change of use of premises (103 cases or 71.5%), followed by unauthorised fire safety works (19 cases or 13.2%). The following is an example of a fire safety violation that led to court actions being taken:

“In January 2023, the SCDF took a business operator to Court for failing to obtain approval for plans for change of use. The business operator was fined \$11,000 for various violations that compromised the building’s fire safety. These violations included the conversion of the vehicle parking area and its surrounding area into storage areas.”

36. SCDF takes a serious view of fire safety compliance and has been conducting frequent enforcement checks, both proactively and in response to public feedback. SCDF and NFEC will continue to engage stakeholders (e.g., JTC, Town Councils, Association of Strata Managers) through dialogues and seminars to share fire case studies and statistics, and reiterate the importance of fire safety and strengthen the management of fire safety in their respective premises.

37. We encourage members of the public to report any fire hazards that they come across. They can do so by submitting photographs and a brief description of the fire hazard using the myResponder app, calling the fire hazard reporting line at 1800-280-0000, or emailing SCDF_Fire_Safety_Feedback@scdf.gov.sg.

TIPS ON PREVENTING VEHICLE FIRES



The primary cause of vehicle fires in Singapore is due to ignition sources such as overheating and electrical faults within the engine compartment.

Prevent your vehicle from catching fire by following these tips:

1.



Service your vehicle **regularly** at **authorised workshops only**



2.



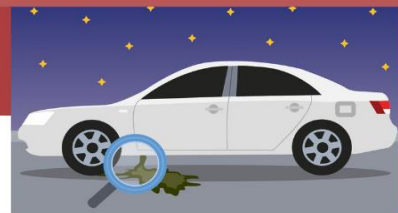
During servicing, ensure that the vehicle's **electrical, engine and fuel systems** are checked for any defects.



3.



Outside of the scheduled servicing period, **conduct visual checks** for any sign of oil leakages,



Fire Safety Tips on PMDs, PABs and PMAs:

- Do not leave batteries or devices charging for a prolonged period or charging them unattended overnight.
- Do not charge PABs/PMDs/PMAs immediately after use.
- Do not charge PABs/PMDs/PMAs or their batteries near combustible materials or along an escape path.
- Do not tamper with, modify, or attempt to repair a device on your own.
- Do not buy or use non-original batteries.
- Do not purchase PMDs that do not have the UL2272 Certification
- Do not purchase PABs that do not have the EN15194 certification and affixed with LTA's orange seal of approval.
- Charge PABs/PMDs/PMAs on a hard, flat surface to allow for optimal dissipation of heat.
- Use a power adaptor that carries the Safety Mark and is recommended by the manufacturer.
- Examine batteries regularly for any damage or deformities such as bloating, corrosion or powdery residue.