

NEWS RELEASE



FIRE, AMBULANCE AND ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS 2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The number of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) calls continued to increase in 2015. The Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) responded to 165,853 EMS calls last year, or more than 450 calls a day. This was 10,072 (6.5%) more EMS calls than the 155,781 in 2014. Despite the high volume of calls, SCDF responded to 84.9% of cases within 11 minutes, an improvement from 83.1% in 2014. The number of EMS calls has increased by an average of about 5% annually over the last five years. Singapore's changing demographics, especially our ageing population, will mean a continuing increase in load on EMS. SCDF has increased the number of emergency ambulances and personnel to cope with this upward trend. However, it is not possible to continue to increase this at the same rate. To deal with these challenges more effectively in the long term, SCDF will be adopting a data-driven, tiered and differentiated frontline response model to optimise its limited resources to deliver swift medical support to critical cases, and calibrate its response for non-critical cases.

2. **SCDF responded to fewer fire calls in 2015.** The number of calls fell by 2.5%, from 4,724 in 2014 to 4,604 last year. Dropped light¹ cases remained the highest contributing cause of fires, accounting for 2,529 cases (54.9%) of all fires in 2015. Rubbish fires (53.3%) continued to form the bulk of fires at residential premises. In non-residential premises, fires in commercial premises (48.7%) were the most prevalent. The number of vehicle fires fell by a substantial 14.6%. SCDF will continue to work closely with community partners to emphasise the important role that the public plays in minimising the risks of fire incidents, especially rubbish and vehicle fires.

3. **SCDF conducted 16,165 fire safety enforcement checks in 2015. This was a 16.3% increase from the 13,903 checks it conducted in 2014.** Following these checks, SCDF issued 3,748 Notice of Fire Safety Offences (NFSO)² and 3,149 Fire Hazard Abatement Notices (FHAN)³. SCDF conducts regular enforcement checks to ensure that fire safety standards are adhered to and potential fire hazards are detected and rectified. The public also plays an important role in reporting fire safety violations to ensure that the number of fire incidents in Singapore remains low.

¹ Dropped light refers to indiscriminate disposal of lighted materials such as lighted cigarette butts that were not completely extinguished, embers from charcoal and lighted incense sticks.

² An NFSO is issued when the contravention is of a serious nature which warrants a heavier penalty, e.g. unauthorised fire safety works. It carries a composition fine of up to \$5,000.

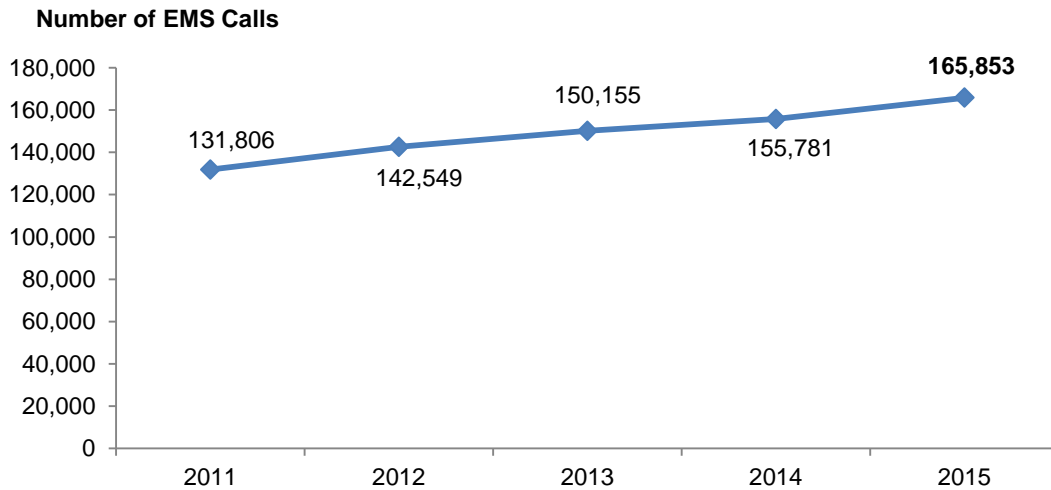
³ Under the Fire Safety Act, the FHAN is a warning given to building owners and management to remove fire hazards. The most common fire hazards are poor maintenance of hose reels and fire extinguishers as well as obstructed exits.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES STATISTICS (JANUARY – DECEMBER 2015)

Emergency Medical Services Calls Increased by 6.5%

SCDF responded to 165,853 Emergency Medical Service (EMS) calls in 2015. This was 10,072 (6.5%) more calls compared to 2014. The number of EMS calls has increased by an average of about 5% annually over the past five years ([Chart A1](#)).

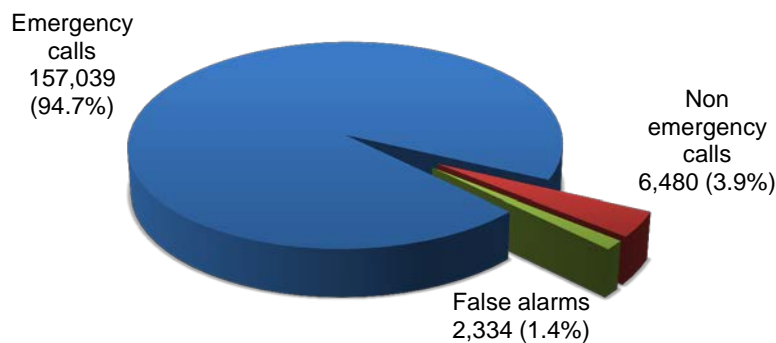
Chart A1: Total Number of EMS calls for 2011 - 2015



Breakdown of EMS Calls

2. Emergency calls made up 94.7% of the total calls. The remaining 3.9% were non-emergency calls and 1.4% were false alarms ([Chart A2](#)).

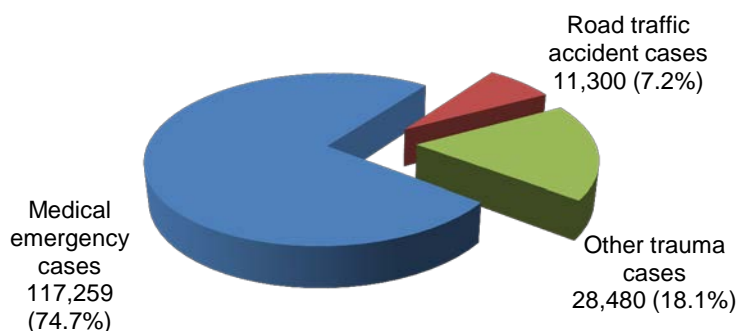
Chart A2: Breakdown of EMS Calls



Increase in Emergency and Non-Emergency Calls

3. Emergency calls increased by 5.7% to 157,039 calls in 2015. Of these, 74.7% were medical-related (e.g. chest pain, breathlessness, unconsciousness and cardiac arrest), 7.2% were related to road traffic accidents and the remaining 18.1% were related to other trauma cases [e.g. industrial accidents, falls and assaults] ([Chart A3](#)).

Chart A3: Breakdown of Emergency Calls

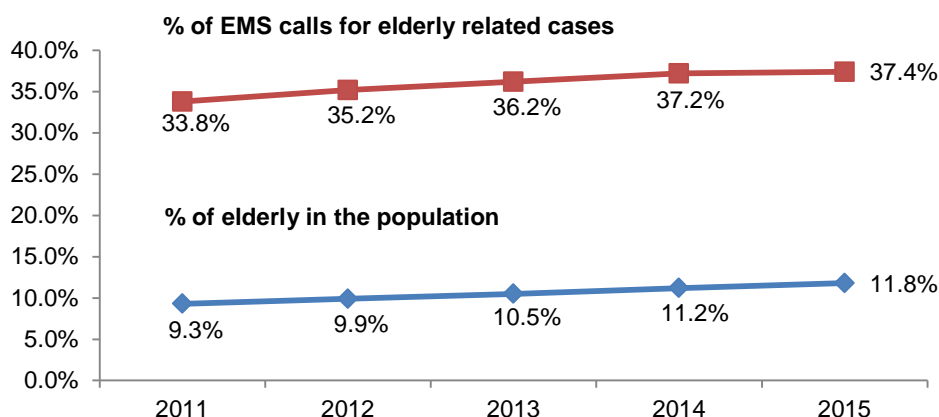


4. The number of non-emergency calls increased by 2,074 cases (47.1%) to 6,480 calls in 2015. For medical cases that are non-life threatening, members of the public are urged to call 1777 to engage the services of private non-emergency ambulance operators, or to proceed to their family doctors and general practitioners for medical consultation. This will allow emergency service resources to be freed up to attend to critical emergency cases.

Demand from the Elderly Grew by 7.1%

5. The number of calls received for cases involving the elderly (aged 65 and above) increased by 7.1%, from 57,931 calls in 2014 to 62,051 calls in 2015. This accounted for 37.4% of the total EMS calls (Chart A4). SCDF expects this trend to continue, given our ageing population.

Chart A4: Calls involving the elderly over the last five years



EMS Response Time

6. In December 2015, SCDF added five private emergency ambulances to its EMS fleet, increasing the total fleet size to 55 emergency ambulances. With a larger fleet, SCDF aims to improve the response time of the EMS. In 2015, SCDF was able to respond to 84.9% ambulance calls within 11 minutes, an improvement from 83.1% in 2014.

7. Singapore’s changing demographics, including an ageing population, will mean a continuing increase in load on the EMS. If demand continues to increase at 5% a year, this will mean a doubling of EMS calls in 15 years. It is not possible for SCDF to increase the number of emergency ambulances and ambulance personnel at the same rate. To deal with these challenges more effectively, SCDF will be adopting a data-driven, tiered and differentiated frontline response model to optimise its limited resources to deliver swift medical support to critical cases, and calibrate its response for non-critical cases.

8. SCDF has started cross-training its firefighters as Emergency Medical Technicians to provide the first line of medical response to victims of critical cases while waiting for the arrival of emergency ambulances.

9. In addition, SCDF's *Save-a-Life* initiative aims to build a network of trained community first responders to render assistance to time-critical cases such as cardiac arrests. They will be notified by SCDF through the *myResponder* mobile application in the event of a case in their vicinity. Members of the public who are trained in Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) usage will be able to register and use the application. SCDF has also begun installing AEDs at the lift lobbies of HDB blocks, where one AED is installed for every two to three HDB blocks, in six constituencies⁴ for use during medical emergencies.

10. These initiatives are aimed at optimising resources and achieving the best outcome for those who require emergency medical assistance.

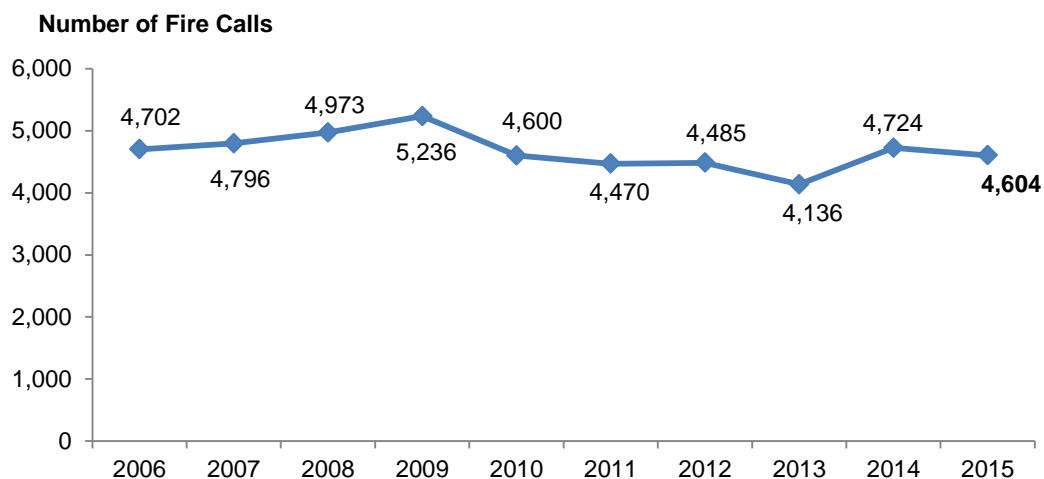
⁴ The six constituencies are Bedok, Bukit Panjang, Choa Chu Kang, Pasir Ris West, Radin Mas and Tampines West. SCDF will progressively extend this to all HDB estates by 2018.

FIRE INCIDENT STATISTICS (JANUARY – DECEMBER 2015)

Total Fire Calls Decreased by 2.5%

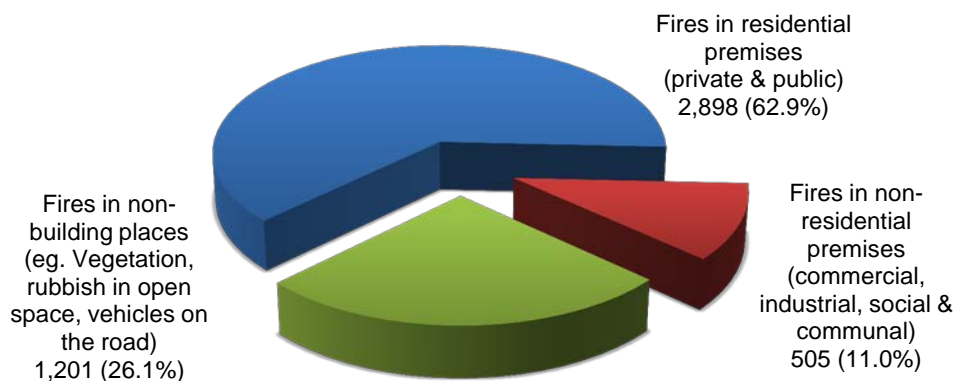
SCDF responded to 4,604 fire calls in 2015. This was a decrease of 120 cases (2.5%) from the 4,724 fires it responded to in 2014. The total number of fire calls over the last ten years is shown in [Chart B1](#).

Chart B1: Total number of fire calls for 2006 - 2015



2. A breakdown of fire calls classified by the type of premises is shown in [Chart B2](#). Of the 4,604 fires that SCDF responded to, 62.9% involved residential premises, 11.0% involved non-residential premises and 26.1% involved non-building places.

Chart B2: Breakdown of fires by types of premises



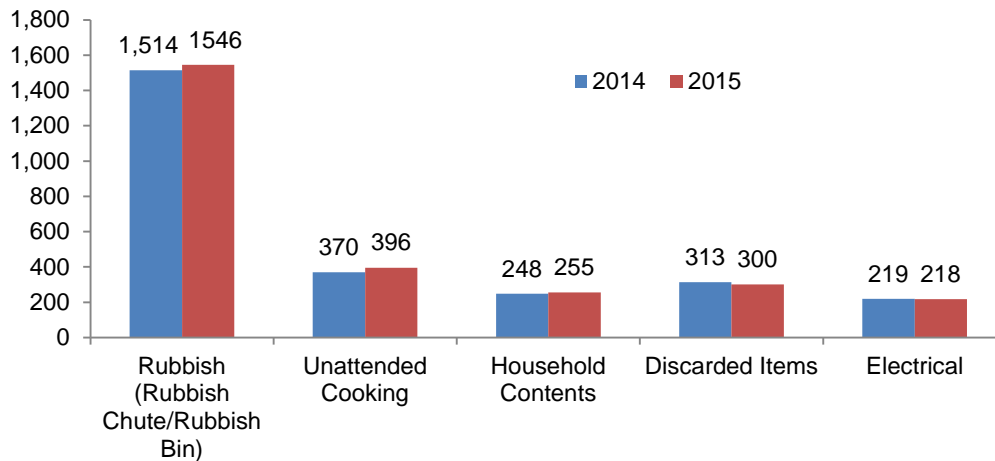
3. “Dropped light⁵ cases” remained the main contributing cause of fires. They contributed to 2,529 cases (54.9%) of all fires in 2015.

⁵ Dropped light refers to indiscriminate disposal of lighted materials such as lighted cigarette butts that were not completely extinguished, embers from charcoal and lighted incense sticks.

Fires in Residential Premises

4. In 2015, a total of 2,898 fire incidents occurred in residential premises, a marginal increase of ten cases (0.3%) from 2014. The top five types of fires in residential premises are shown in Chart B3. Rubbish fires (53.3%) continued to form the bulk of residential fires.

Chart B3: Fires in residential premises (top five types)



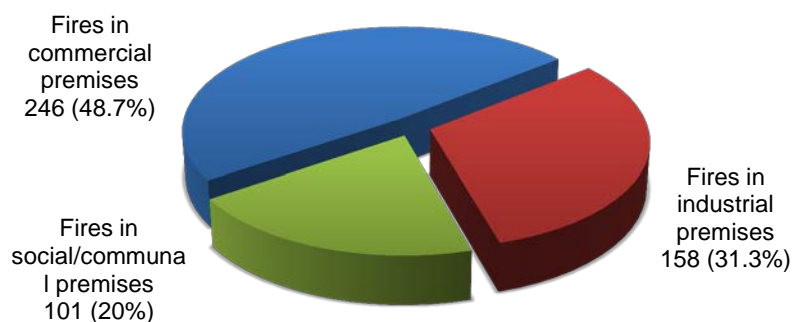
Increase in the Number of Fires Involving Unattended Cooking

5. The second largest source of fires in residential buildings involved unattended cooking. The number of fires caused by unattended cooking rose by 7.0% in 2015, reversing the declining trend observed for such type of fires since 2011. SCDF will continue to work closely with its community partners on outreach efforts to reduce fires in residential premises.

Fires in Non-Residential Premises

6. SCDF responded to 505 fire incidents in non-residential premises. This was a decrease of 60 cases (10.6%) compared with 2014. The breakdown of fire incidents in non-residential premises is shown in Chart B4.

Chart B4: Breakdown of fires in non-residential premises



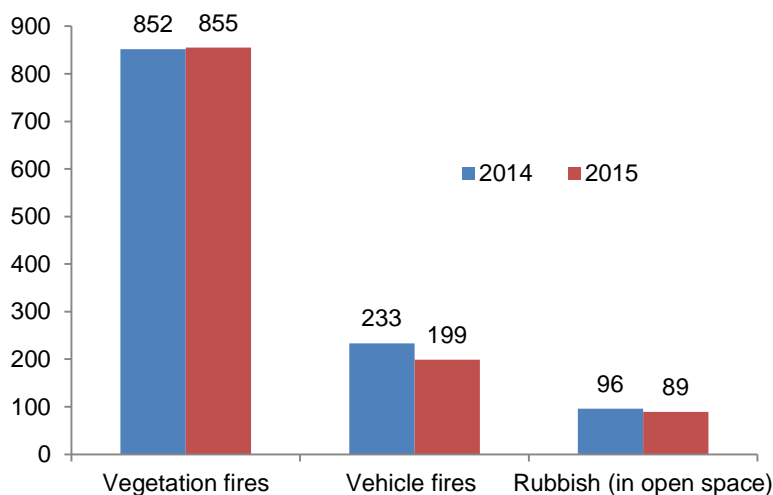
Decrease in Fires at Eating Establishments

7. Fires in eating establishments (such as restaurants, coffee shops, canteens and hawker centres) fell by 17 cases (25.4%) to 50 cases in 2015. Of these, 15 cases (30.0%) were due to unattended cooking. In 2015, SCDF worked with the National Fire and Civil Emergency Preparedness Council (NFEC), Singapore Foochow Coffee Restaurant and Bar Merchants Association to organise a fire safety awareness workshop for F&B operators and owners.

Fires in Non-Building Premises

8. There were a total of 1,201 fire incidents in non-building premises in 2015, a decrease of 70 cases (5.5%) from 1,271 cases in 2014. The top three types of fires in non-building places is shown in Chart B5. Vegetation fires continued to form the bulk of such fires at 71.2%, which occurred mostly during the dry spell from January to March 2015.

Chart B5: Fires in non-building places (top three types)



Vehicle Fires Decreased by 14.6%

9. The number of vehicle fires that occurred while the vehicles were on the road decreased by a substantial 14.6%. Since 2013, SCDF has been reaching out to motorists to raise their awareness about vehicle fires. SCDF disseminated brochures which provided tips to minimise the risk of vehicle fires. The brochures were distributed at petrol kiosks throughout the island. In addition, SCDF collaborated with the National Fire and Civil Emergency Preparedness Council (NFEC), the General Insurance Association of Singapore and the Automobile Association of Singapore to publish advisories on vehicle fires in the local print media and magazines such as *Highway*. SCDF will continue to incorporate fire safety advisories in media reports on vehicle fires and leverage its social media platforms to reach out to the public.

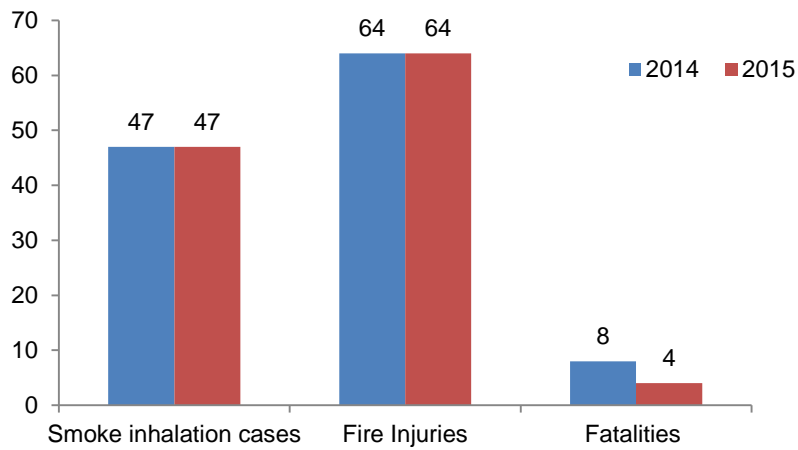
Fire Injuries and Fatalities

10. There were 111 fire injuries (47 of them were smoke inhalation cases⁶ and 64 fire injuries⁷) and four fatalities from the 4,604 fire incidents which occurred in 2015 (Chart B6). The number of fire injuries remained the same as 2014 while the number of fatalities decreased by half from 2014.

⁶ Smoke inhalation refers to injury due to inhalation of smoke or gaseous product of combustion into the respiratory system.

⁷ Fire injuries refer to burns sustained from fire incidents. 1st degree burn is a superficial burn that affects only the epidermis or superficial skin; 2nd degree burn is a partial thickness burn where the damage penetrates into some of the underlying layers of the skin and the skin is blotched and often blistered; and 3rd degree burn involves serious injury to all layers of the skin where the skin is dry, leathery and often white or charred.

Chart B6: Breakdown of fire injuries and fatalities



11. The four fire fatalities in 2015 were from the following fire incidents:

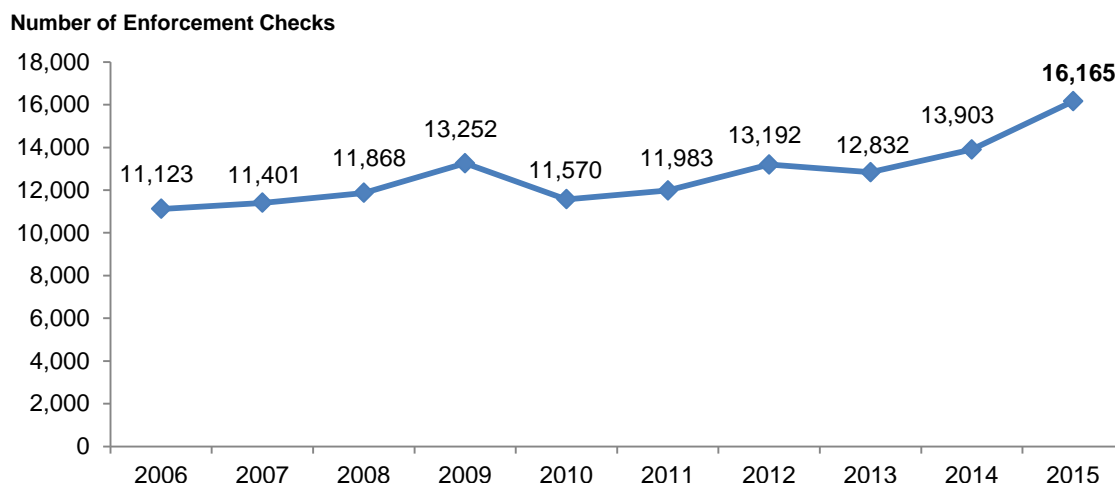
- a) Two fatalities from a residential fire at Lorong 6 Geylang on 3 April 2015; and
- b) Two fatalities from a residential fire at Parry Avenue on 9 June 2015.

FIRE SAFETY ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS (JANUARY – DECEMBER 2015)

Number of Enforcement Checks Increased by 16.3%

SCDF conducted 16,165 enforcement checks in 2015. This was an increase of 2,262 checks (16.3%) from the 13,903 checks conducted in 2014 ([Chart C1](#)). The rise in the number of checks is attributed to an increase in surprise enforcement checks conducted by SCDF as well as public feedback. As a result of these checks, SCDF issued 3,748 Notice of Fire Safety Offences (NFSOs) and 3,149 Fire Hazard Abatement Notices (FHANs).

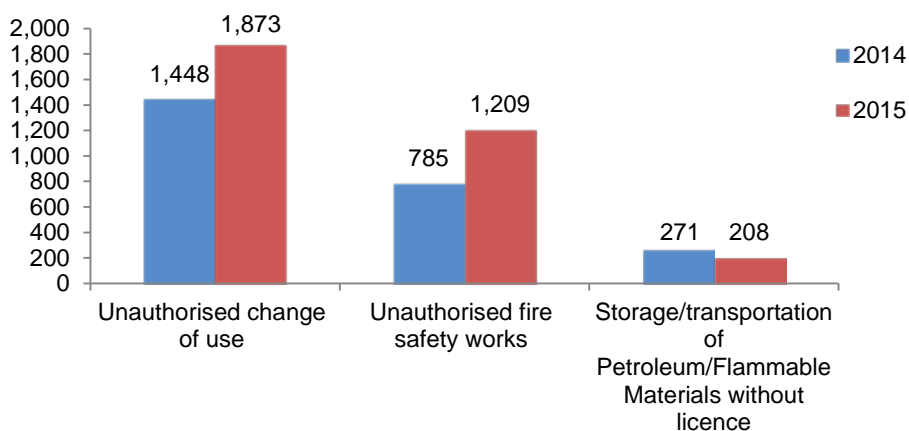
Chart C1: Number of Enforcement Checks Conducted (2006 - 2015)



Notice of Fire Safety Offence (NFSO)

2. 3,748 NFSOs were issued in 2015. This was an increase of 679 notices (22.1%) from the 3,069 NFSOs issued in 2014. The most common fire safety violation is the unauthorised change of use of premises, which accounted for 50% of the total NFSOs issued in 2015. ([Chart C2](#)). SCDF views such violations seriously and will continue to step up its efforts to reach out to companies to reduce the number of such violations.

Chart C2: Breakdown of NFSOs (top three types of offences)

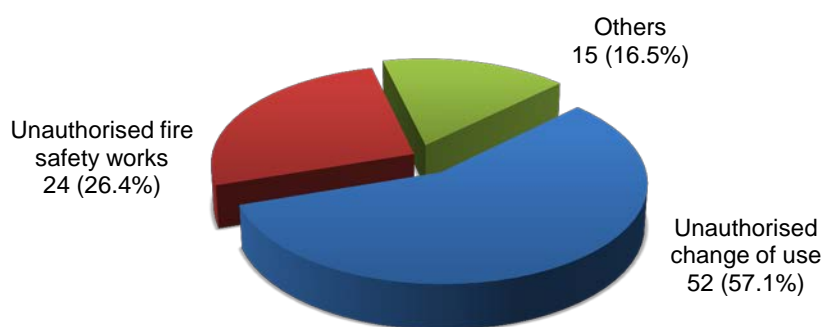


Unauthorised Change of Use Accounted for 57.1% of Court Action

3. 91 cases of fire safety violations were brought to court in 2015. This was an increase of 21 cases (30%) compared to 2014. The top two offences included unauthorised change of use (57.1%) and unauthorised fire safety works (26.4%) (Chart C3).

4. SCDF views the violation of fire safety requirements seriously and will not hesitate to take firm action against those who do not make prompt rectifications despite warnings and fines. SCDF's enforcement powers against fire safety offenders are listed at Annex A.

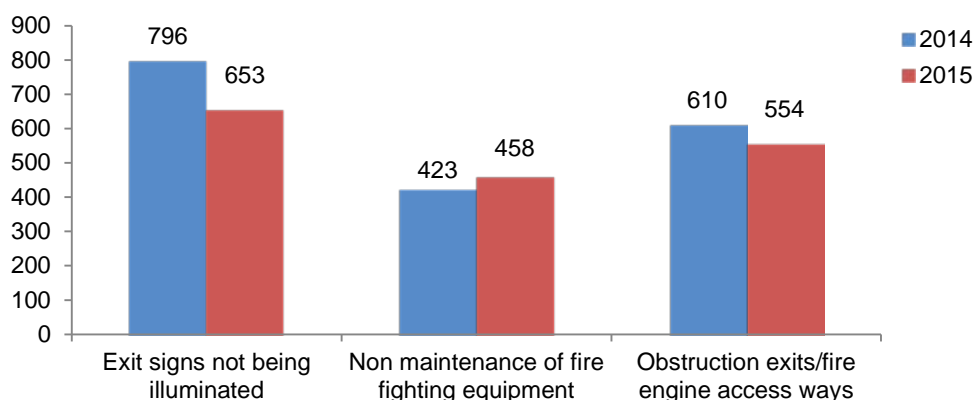
Chart C3: Court Prosecution Charges



Fire Hazard Abatement Notice (FHAN)

5. SCDF issued 3,149 FHANs in 2015; this was 199 (5.9%) fewer FHANs compared to 2014. The most common violation relates to exit signs not being illuminated (20.7%) (Chart C4).

Chart C4: Breakdown of FHANs issued (top three types)



Fire Safety Feedback

6. Members of the public who encounter any fire hazard are encouraged to report to SCDF directly. The public can submit photos and a brief description of the fire hazard using the *mySCDF* mobile application which can be downloaded from the Apple and Android App stores. They can also call the fire hazard reporting line at 1800-280-0000 or email SCDF_Fire_Safety_Feedback@scdf.gov.sg.

SCDF's Enforcement Powers 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 fire hazards. One of the most common fire hazards are obstructed exits.
Notice of Composition (NOC)	Offenders who fail to rectify the violations after being issued with FHANs will be served with an NOC of up to \$5,000.
Notice of Fire Safety Offence (NFSO)	An NFSO is issued when the contravention is of a serious nature which warrants a heavier penalty, e.g. unauthorised works that may pose fire safety risks. It carries a composition fine of up to \$5,000.
Court Action	<p>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.</p> <p>For carrying out unauthorised fire safety works, the person responsible (eg. owner, building management, MCST⁸) can be fined up to \$200,000 and/or jailed for a term not exceeding 24 months.</p> <p>In extreme cases, SCDF can exercise its powers to require a temporary closure of the premises.</p>

⁸ Management Corporation Strata Title (MCST) refers to the managing body of a condominium or any compound which has multiple owners and shared public facilities.