

THE STATUTES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

FIRE SERVICE ACT

(CHAPTER 110)

Act
6 of 1980

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Fire Service Act

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An Act to make better provision as to the constitution, duties and powers of the Singapore Fire Service and to make provision for the prevention and fighting of fires and for matters connected therewith.

[1st August 1980]

PART I

PRELIMINARY

- Short title. **1.** This Act may be cited as the Fire Service Act.
- Inter-pretation. **2.** In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires —
 “Auxiliary Fire Brigade” means the brigade constituted under Part V;
 “auxiliary fire officer” means a member of the Auxiliary Fire Brigade;
 “Director” means the Director of Fire Service appointed under section 3;
 “fire officer” means any person appointed under section 3;
 “Fire Service” means the Singapore Fire Service constituted under section 3;
 “national serviceman” has the same meaning as in the

“occupier”, in relation to any premises, means the person in occupation of any premises or having the charge, management or control thereof and, in relation to any part of any premises different parts of which are occupied by different persons, means the person in occupation or having the charge, management or control of that part;

“owner” means the person for the time being receiving the rent of any premises, whether on his own account or as agent or trustee or as receiver, or who would receive the same if the premises were let to a tenant and includes the person whose name is entered in the Valuation List authenticated under section 15 of the Property Tax Act;

Cap. 254.

“premises” includes messuages, houses, buildings, lands, tenements, easements and hereditaments of any tenure, whether open or enclosed, whether built on or not, whether public or private, and whether or not maintained under statutory authority;

“street” has the same meaning as in the Local Government Integration Act.

Cap. 166.

PART II

CONSTITUTION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE FIRE SERVICE

3. There shall be constituted and maintained an adequate and efficient fire service to be known as the Singapore Fire Service which shall consist of a Director of Fire Service and such number of Deputy Directors of Fire Service and other officers as the Minister may appoint (under whatever titles he may from time to time determine) for the purposes of this Act.

Constitution
of Singapore
Fire Service.

4. The Director shall be charged with the direction and administration of the Fire Service subject to the orders and control of the Minister.

Administra-
tion of Fire
Service.

5. The Director may, subject to such conditions as he thinks fit, delegate to any fire officer employed in the administration of this Act all or any of the powers and duties vested in him by this Act.

Delegation of
powers.

PART III

DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE FIRE SERVICE

Duties of
Fire Service.

6. The duties of the Fire Service shall be to —
- (a) take lawful measures for extinguishing fire;
 - (b) take lawful measures for protecting life and property in case of fire;
 - (c) provide and maintain an adequate emergency ambulance service;
 - (d) ensure effective co-ordination between the Fire Service and other fire services in Singapore; and
 - (e) execute such other duties as may be imposed on it by this Act or any other written law.

Powers of
Fire Service
in the event
of fire.

7. The Director or any other fire officer in charge of a fire-brigade in the event of a fire or a suspected fire may, by himself or with other fire officers under his command —
- (a) enter, break into or through and take possession of or demolish or cause to be taken possession of or demolished any premises or thing for the purpose of extinguishing or preventing the spread of the fire;
 - (b) take any equipment required to be used into, through, or upon any premises where he thinks it necessary for the purpose of carrying out his duties;
 - (c) remove from any building or structure which is on fire or is in the near neighbourhood of the fire, any flammable, combustible, explosive or dangerous material found therein without responsibility for any consequent loss or damage;
 - (d) for the purpose of extinguishing or preventing the spread of the fire, cause any building or structure which is on fire, or which is adjacent to or in the vicinity of any building or structure which is on fire, to be pulled down, either wholly or partially, or otherwise destroyed or damaged;
 - (e) cause water to be shut off from, or turned into, any main or pipe in order to obtain a greater pressure and supply of water for the purpose of extinguishing the fire in consultation with the Public Utilities Board;

- (f) shut off or disconnect, or order any person having the control thereof to shut off or disconnect, the supply of gas, fuel oil, or electricity to any premises which is on fire or which is in the vicinity of the fire and no person or body (including the Government) shall be liable to any action, penalty or claim by reason of any such action;
- (g) close or cause to be closed any street in the vicinity of the fire or calamity;
- (h) remove any vehicle impeding the operation of the fire brigade and, where reasonably necessary for that purpose, he may use force or break into any such vehicle;
- (i) remove, using reasonable force if necessary, any person who, by his presence or otherwise, interferes with the fire-fighting operations or who is, in his opinion, endangered by the fire;
- (j) control and direct all operations for the extinguishing of the fire and all fire brigades present and all persons there who place their services at his disposal;
- (k) use any convenient supply of water; and
- (l) generally do all other things that are reasonably necessary for protecting life or property or for extinguishing the fire or for preventing the spread thereof.

8.—(1) Subject to this section, the Director or any person authorised by him in writing on producing, if so required, the writing showing his authority shall have a right to enter any premises at all reasonable hours for the purpose of —

General powers of entry.

- (a) ascertaining whether there is or has been, on or in connection with the premises, any contravention of any of the provisions of this Act or any regulations made thereunder;
- (b) obtaining information required for fire-fighting purposes with respect to the character of the premises, the availability of water supplies and the means of access thereto and other material circumstances relating to fire-fighting purposes;

- (c) conducting fire-drills and exercises provided prior reasonable notice in writing is given to the owner or occupier of those premises;
- (d) ascertaining whether there exists in those premises any fire hazard;
- (e) determining the cause or causes of any fire which has occurred in those premises;
- (f) ascertaining whether or not any place of public assembly or premises used for purposes of entertainment or recreation are being used to accommodate a larger number of persons than is permitted under the provisions of any building regulations;
- (g) checking and testing fire-fighting facilities; and
- (h) the performance by the Director or the Fire Service of his or its powers under this or any other written law.

(2) The Director or any person authorised by him in writing shall not exercise the right of entry conferred by this section in respect of such premises as are not a place of public entertainment or public assembly, factory, workshop or workplace nor premises otherwise used for business purposes, unless 24 hours' notice in writing of the intended entry has been given to the occupier.

Obstruction
in doorway
or fire
escape.

9.—(1) Where the Director is of the opinion that in any premises there are obstructions or other impediments in any door, means of escape or fire escape which will render the escape by persons in those premises difficult in case of a fire, the Director may by notice in writing require the occupier of the premises to remove the obstructions or impediments within the time specified in the notice.

(2) If the notice is not complied with, the Director may, at any time after the expiration of the time so specified, cause the obstructions or impediments to be removed and any costs and expenses reasonably incurred in so doing shall constitute a debt due from the occupier of the premises to the Government and shall be recoverable as such.

Power to fix
plate showing
position of
fire-hydrant.

10.—(1) Upon giving 7 days' notice in writing to the owner or occupier of any property situate in the vicinity of a fire-hydrant or water supply, the Director may thereafter cause a plate indicating the location of the fire-hydrant or

water supply to be fixed to any part of the property as may, in the opinion of the Director, be best suited to indicate the location.

(2) Any person who refuses to allow the fixing of any such plate referred to in subsection (1) or obstructs any person in the course of the fixing thereof or removes or defaces any such plate after it has been so fixed shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$1,000.

11. The Director may place or cause to be placed fire alarms and fire-hydrants or other appliances, equipment and apparatus as he may think necessary at convenient places in streets or roads.

Power to install fire-hydrants, etc.

PART IV

FIRE SERVICE WELFARE FUND

12.—(1) There shall be established a fund to be known as the Fire Service Welfare Fund.

Fire Service Welfare Fund.

(2) The Fire Service Welfare Fund shall consist of —

- (a) all sums forfeited by or fines inflicted on fire officers under powers conferred by this Act or the regulations made thereunder; and
- (b) donations offered to the Fund and accepted by the Director.

(3) The Fire Service Welfare Fund shall be administered by the Director subject to regulations made under section 32, and applied for the purposes of —

- (a) rewarding fire officers for extra or special services rendered by them;
- (b) providing comforts, conveniences or other advantages not chargeable to the public revenue;
- (c) providing assistance in the form of loans or otherwise to needy members of the Fire Service or retired fire officers; and
- (d) such other uses as may be prescribed by regulations made under section 32.

PART V

AUXILIARY FIRE BRIGADE

Constitution
of Auxiliary
Fire Brigade.

13. There may be constituted a brigade to be known as the Auxiliary Fire Brigade which shall consist of such number of officers (under whatever titles) as the Minister may from time to time decide.

Enrolment of
members of
Auxiliary
Fire Brigade.

14. The Director may enrol in the Auxiliary Fire Brigade —

- (a) any volunteer offering his services and desiring to serve as a member therein; and
- (b) any national serviceman.

Discharge
and
dismissal.

15. No person who has been called up for national service in the Auxiliary Fire Brigade shall be discharged or dismissed except with the prior approval of the proper authority appointed under the provisions of any written law for the time being in force relating to national service or enlistment.

Identification
card.

16. An identification card shall be issued to every auxiliary fire officer and shall be evidence of his appointment under this Act.

Resignation
from
Auxiliary
Fire Brigade.

17. Any volunteer may, except when mobilised as hereinafter provided, resign from the Auxiliary Fire Brigade on —

- (a) giving to the Director 14 days' notice in writing of his intention to resign; and
- (b) delivering in good order (fair wear and tear only excepted) all property belonging to the Government issued to him.

Mobilisation.

18.—(1) The Director may, with the permission of the Minister, mobilise the Auxiliary Fire Brigade or part thereof to perform either general or special fire service duties. Such service shall continue until an order is made by the Director with the approval of the Minister stating the date of demobilisation.

(2) Every auxiliary fire officer who is so mobilised shall be bound to assemble at such time and place and perform such service as the Director directs.

19. When the Auxiliary Fire Brigade or any part thereof is not mobilised, the Director may employ, without pay, any auxiliary fire officer who volunteers for such duty to assist the Fire Service in the execution of its duty. Every auxiliary fire officer when so employed shall have the same powers and duties and the same protection and immunities as if he had been mobilised for active service.

Employment of auxiliary fire officers.

20. Every auxiliary fire officer when mobilised shall have the same powers and duties and the same protection and immunities as a fire officer in the Fire Service of corresponding rank.

Powers and duties of auxiliary fire officers.

21. Every auxiliary fire officer mobilised for active service who without reasonable excuse, the proof whereof shall lie on him, refuses or neglects to serve shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both.

Penalty for refusing to serve when mobilised.

22. The Minister may make regulations to provide for all or any of the following matters with respect to auxiliary fire officers:

Fire Service regulations in respect of auxiliary fire officers.

- (a) uniforms and equipment;
- (b) training;
- (c) duties and responsibilities when not mobilised for service;
- (d) the manner of mobilisation and of discontinuing the same;
- (e) discipline;
- (f) salaries and allowances;
- (g) awards in respect of death and personal injuries;
- (h) duties and responsibilities of members called up for national service with the Auxiliary Fire Brigade;
- (i) any other matter necessary or expedient for carrying out the purposes of this Part.

PART VI

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Damaging,
etc., of fire-
hydrants.

23.—(1) Any person who —

(a) not being a member of the Fire Service takes water from a fire-hydrant other than for the extinguishment of a fire without the consent of the Director or the Public Utilities Board, as the case may be; or

(b) wilfully damages a fire-hydrant,

shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$2,000.

(2) Any person convicted of an offence under subsection (1) (b) shall, in addition to the fine imposed on him under subsection (1), also be liable to pay compensation to the Public Utilities Board for any expenses reasonably incurred in repairing or replacing the hydrant.

False alarm.

24.—(1) Any person who knowingly gives or causes to be given a false alarm of fire to the Fire Service or to the Police shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$2,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both.

(2) For the purpose of this section, “false alarm of fire” includes a false call for the ambulance or other services provided by the Fire Service.

Assaulting
or obstruct-
ing fire
officers, etc.

25. Any person who assaults, obstructs, resists or interferes with any fire officer or any police officer or person assisting the Fire Service or acting under the orders of the Director or other fire officer in charge on the occasion of a fire shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$1,000.

Power to
arrest with-
out warrant.

26.—(1) The Director or any fire officer duly authorised in writing in that behalf by the Director or any police officer may without warrant arrest any person whom he reasonably suspects to have committed an offence under this Act or any regulations made thereunder —

(a) if the name and address of the person are unknown to him;

- (b) if the person declines to give his name and address;
or
- (c) if there is any reason to doubt the accuracy of the name and address, if given.

(2) A person arrested under this section may be detained until his name and address are correctly ascertained.

(3) No person so arrested shall be detained longer than is necessary for bringing him before a court unless the order of a court for his detention is obtained.

27. Nothing in this Act shall prevent any person from being prosecuted under any other written law for any act or omission which constitutes an offence under this Act or any regulations made thereunder or from being liable under that other written law to any other or higher punishment or penalty than that provided by this Act or any regulations made thereunder but no person shall be punished twice for the same offence.

Saving of prosecutions under other laws.

28. No person shall be personally liable in respect of any act done by him in the execution or purported execution of this Act and within the scope of his employment if he did it in the honest belief that his duty under this Act required or entitled him to do it.

Protection for officers.

29. Every fire officer shall obey all lawful orders whether given verbally or in writing and shall obey and conform to regulations and orders made under this Act.

Duty to obey lawful orders.

30.—(1) The Director may from time to time make orders not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act or any regulations made thereunder to be called Fire Service Orders.

Fire Service Orders.

(2) Without prejudice to any other provisions of this Act, such orders may provide for —

- (a) classifications and promotions;
- (b) instructions and examinations;
- (c) inspections, drills, exercises and parades;
- (d) fire-brigade services and duties of every description and the manner in which they shall be carried out;

- (e) the institution and maintenance of messes and reading rooms;
- (f) buildings, grounds, stores, furniture and equipment;
- (g) transfers of fire officers, the places at which they shall reside and the particular services to be performed by them;
- (h) the manner and form of reports, correspondence and other records;
- (i) the performance of any act which may be necessary for the proper carrying out of the provisions of this Act or any regulations made thereunder or for the efficient discharge of any duty imposed by the same; and
- (j) such other matters as may be necessary for rendering the Fire Service efficient in the discharge of its duties, and for carrying out the provisions of this Act or any regulations made thereunder.

Service of notices.

31.—(1) A notice required or authorised by this Act or any regulations made thereunder to be served on any person may be served —

- (a) by delivering it to the person to whom it is addressed or by delivering it at the last known place of abode of that person to some adult member or servant of his family;
- (b) by delivering it at the usual or last known place of abode or business of that person in a cover addressed to that person; or
- (c) by forwarding it by post in a prepaid letter addressed to that person at his usual or last known place of abode or business.

(2) A notice required or authorised by this Act or any regulations made thereunder to be served on the owner or occupier of any premises shall be deemed to be properly addressed if addressed by the description of the owner or occupier of the premises without further name or description.

(3) A notice required or authorised by this Act or any regulations made thereunder to be served on the owner or

occupier of any premises may be served by delivering the notice or a true copy thereof to some adult person on the premises or, if there is no such person on the premises to whom the same can with reasonable diligence be delivered, by affixing the notice to some conspicuous part of the premises.

32. The Minister may make regulations in respect of all or any of the following matters: Regulations.

- (a) the organisation and distribution of the Fire Service;
- (b) uniforms, equipment and accoutrements to be provided;
- (c) the administration of the Fire Service Welfare Fund;
- (d) conduct and disciplinary control of national servicemen enlisted in the Fire Service;
- (e) pensions, gratuities and other benefits payable to national servicemen in respect of their deaths and injuries sustained whilst serving in the Fire Service;
- (f) establishment, maintenance and regulation of fire safety officers in premises or class of premises as may be prescribed by the Minister;
- (g) prescribing of fees and charges for the purposes of this Act; and
- (h) such other matters as may be necessary and expedient for rendering the Fire Service efficient in the discharge of its duties, and for carrying out the purposes of this Act.